

Capita's 2nd National Conference

# Housing Benefit in Scotland

Wednesday 5th December 2012 – Edinburgh



**Chair: Keith Dryburgh**  
Social Policy Officer  
Citizens Advice Scotland

**Speakers Include:**

**John Giblin**  
Housing Delivery Division  
Department for Work and Pensions

**Graeme Russell**  
Housing Services Director  
Dunedin Canmore Group

**Alison McKenzie-Folan**  
Director, Policy and Customer  
Wigan Council

**Carol McHarg**  
Board Director  
First Alliance Ayrshire Credit Union

**Nicola Thom**  
Executive Director  
Irvine Housing Association

**Karen Allan**  
Access to Housing and Customer Strategy  
Manager  
The City of Edinburgh Council

**Natasha Clough**  
Head of Innovation and Digital Inclusion  
BT Digital Champions

Contributors

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### About the Event

The **Welfare Reform Act** ushers in the biggest change to the welfare system in over 60 years, with the introduction of **Universal Credit and direct payments from October 2013**. This programme of change for the housing benefit system has far-reaching implications for claimants. **Capita's 2nd National Housing Benefit in Scotland Conference** comes at a crucial time to provide guidance on mitigating the risks of impending reform.

The conference programme offers clarification on the **practical implications of the reform and a likely timetable for implementation**. Key experts provide guidance on overcoming the challenges of **under occupancy, financial and digital inclusion**, and improving **partnership working with the private rented sector**.

Sessions include the lessons learnt by early implementers with **input from the Edinburgh Direct Payment Demonstration Project and cross-border learning from a Wigan-based Universal Credit Pathfinder**.

Bringing together leading practitioners and key stakeholders, this conference also covers:

- **Government policy and draft regulations update** on plans for implementation
- **Targeting vulnerable tenants early** to support them through the transition
- Proactive **partnership working with the private rented sector**

Take the opportunity to **engage with early adopters** and innovative thinkers to **address the challenges ahead**. Attend this event to gain advice on **implementing strategies to manage the transition to the new housing benefits system**.

### Benefits of Attending

- Gain advice and guidance from the **Department for Work and Pensions** on budgets, allocation and how discretionary housing payments should be used
- Hear from a **Universal Credit Pathfinder Council** about **early preparation work** and plans for future implementation, as well as how they established a **social letting agency with Citizens Advice**
- Benefit from the experiences of the **Scottish Direct Payment Demonstration Project** already making tenants more responsible for their budgets
- Explore best practice on how to **ensure greater financial inclusion through local partnership working and establishing relationships with credit unions**
- Take away valuable advice and guidance from BT Digital Champions on their work with housing associations to **facilitate digital inclusion**, reduce costs and **ensure tenants can access their benefits and pay rent on time**
- Gain insight into how the **private rented sector can remove the barriers for housing benefit claimants**



### Who Should Attend

Representatives from Local Authorities, Housing Providers, Voluntary and Community and Private Rented Sectors including:

- Chief Executives and Senior Management Teams
- Councillors
- Heads of Housing Management and Services
- Finance Directors
- Welfare and Benefits Advice Teams
- Housing Policy Teams
- Rent and Arrears Teams
- Housing Advice and Options Teams
- Finance, Revenue and Support Services Teams
- Customer Service Teams
- Homelessness Teams
- Sheltered and Supported Housing Teams
- Tenant Participation Teams

### Forthcoming Events

**Transforming Social Housing Allocations** – Friday 19th October – Central London

**Rent Arrears** – Monday 19th November – Central London

**Housing Chief Executives Forum** – Tuesday 27th November – Central London

### Sponsorship and Exhibition Opportunities

We offer a range of flexible packages which offer your organisation a platform to network and communicate with key organisations in the public sector.

For further information please contact Matt Turton on 0207 960 7717 or email [matt.turton@capita.co.uk](mailto:matt.turton@capita.co.uk)

## 09.20 Registration Tea and Coffee

### 09.50 Chair's Opening Remarks

**Keith Dryburgh**, Social Policy Officer  
Citizens Advice Scotland

## Keynote Address

### 10.00 Housing Benefit Reform: Putting Policy into Practice

- Addressing changes to the discretionary social fund
- Timescales for Universal Credit implementation
- Update on the Universal Credit partnerships

**John Giblin**

Housing Delivery Division

Department for Work and Pensions

### 10.20 Questions and Discussion

### 10.30 Tackling the Practical Issues Associated with Under Occupancy

- Communicating the changes to tenants
- Identifying and targeting most vulnerable tenants
- Incentivising moving and downsizing
- Developing a strategy to mitigate the risks of under occupancy

**Karen Allan**

Access to Housing and Customer Strategy Manager

The City of Edinburgh Council

### 10.50 Questions and Discussion

## Transition to the New System

### 11.00 Examining the Results from the Early Implementation of Direct Payments

- Supporting tenants to make the adjustment
- Partnership working to prevent rent arrears
- Reducing the risk and impact to landlords
- What changes should be made to internal systems?

**Graeme Russell**, Housing Services Director  
Dunedin Canmore Group

*One of the six Direct Payment Demonstration Projects*

### 11.20 Questions and Discussion

### 11.30 Networking Tea and Coffee Break

### 12.00 Making the Transition to Universal Credit – Lessons Learnt So Far

- Early preparation and planning update
- Developing schemes to protect local residents
- Practical solutions to ensure IT and administration works smoothly

**Alison McKenzie-Folan**, Director, Policy and Customer  
Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council

*One of the four Universal Credit Pathfinders*

### 12.20 Questions and Discussion

### 12.30 Interactive Problem Solving Session: Addressing the Challenges Ahead and Managing the Changes

*Delegates break up into groups to share common issues, challenges and ideas. Take this opportunity to discuss and come up with solutions together.*

**Karen Allan**, Access to Housing and Customer Strategy Manager, The City of Edinburgh Council

**Graeme Russell**, Housing Services Director

Dunedin Canmore Group and

**John Giblin**, Housing Delivery Division

Department for Work and Pensions

## Driving Forward Claimant Inclusion

### 13.05 Engaging, Educating and Empowering Tenants to Ensure Digital Inclusion

- Provision of internet access and online services through partnership working
- Making support available for tenants via a help-desk facility
- Bringing jobs to the community
- Ensuring the move to Universal Credit is smooth for tenants and housing associations

**Natasha Clough**, Head of Innovation and Digital Inclusion  
BT Digital Champions

### 13.25 Questions and Discussion

### 13.30 Networking Lunch

### 14.30 Encouraging and Developing Financial Capability

- Offering financial support and helping tenants maximise income
- Establishing debt support groups
- Facilitating money advice services

**Tony Quinn**, Project Coordinator

Greater Easterhouse Money Advice Project

### 14.55 Questions and Discussion

### 15.05 Partnership Working with Credit Unions to Mitigate Risk

- Developing a workable business partnership
- Identifying a business model and cost analysis
- Experiences and lessons learnt so far

**Carol McHarg**, Board Director, First Alliance Ayrshire Credit Union and **Nicola Thom**, Executive Director Operations  
Irvine Housing Association

### 15.30 Bridging the Gap Between Social Housing and the Private Rented Sector

- Creating equality of opportunity within the private lettings market
- Facilitating housing advice and housing outcomes
- Why deposits can be a bad thing
- How tenancies were sustained in spite of LHA reduction

**Angela McLachlan**, Director of Operations

Orchard and Shipman Group

### 15.55 Session Questions and Discussion

### 16.05 Chair's Closing Remarks and Close of Conference



# Booking Form

## Housing Benefit in Scotland

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BOOKING SOURCE CODE: MKNW PDF

### DELEGATE DETAILS (Please use BLOCK CAPITALS and complete in full)

#### Correspondence Address

Organisation
Address
Postcode

#### 1st Delegate

Surname	Title
Forename	
Job Title	
Organisation	
Department	
Email	
Telephone	
Dietary/Access requirements	

#### 2nd Delegate

Surname	Title
Forename	
Job Title	
Organisation	
Department	
Email	
Telephone	
Dietary/Access requirements	

#### 3rd Delegate **\*BOOK A 3<sup>rd</sup> DELEGATE @ 1/2 PRICE**

Surname	Title
Forename	
Job Title	
Organisation	
Department	
Email	
Telephone	
Dietary/Access requirements	

### EASY WAYS TO BOOK

FAX your completed form to 0870 165 8989

ONLINE [www.capitaconferences.co.uk](http://www.capitaconferences.co.uk)

POST your completed form to:  
Capita Conferences Administration, Ground Floor,  
17-19 Rochester Row, London, SW1P 1LA



ENQUIRIES 0870 400 1020

**EMAIL** [conference.events@capita.co.uk](mailto:conference.events@capita.co.uk)

### PAYMENT DETAILS

**Public Sector** @ £350.00 plus VAT No. of delegates   
**Private Sector** @ £545.00 plus VAT No. of delegates   
**\*Concessionary Discount** @ £225.00 plus VAT No. of delegates

\*Discounts cannot be combined  
Only charities registered with the OSCR are eligible for this discount

TOTAL NUMBER OF DELEGATES

Scottish Charity No.

TOTAL COST £ \_\_\_\_\_

Your Purchase Order/Reference Number \_\_\_\_\_

### INVOICE ADDRESS

Surname	Title
Forename	
Job Title	
Organisation	
Address	
Postcode	Telephone
Email	

**Payment terms are 30 days and payment must be received before the conference date.**  
We will issue an invoice upon receipt of your booking and payment can be made: online by credit/debit card; BACS or cheque.

**I have read the terms and conditions and understand the cancellation policy**  
**Signature required**

#### Purchase of Delegate Pack Only

If you are unable to attend the event, but would like to receive supporting documentation please indicate below:

PDF Electronic Version @ £95 – plus VAT   
 Hard Copy Paper @ £95 – no VAT

Invoices issued after the event when order processed. See payment options below.

### PAYMENT INFORMATION

**Payments to CAPITA BUSINESS SERVICES LTD.**  
Bank: Barclays Bank Plc  
Sort Code: 20-67-59  
Account No: 60864978  
Email remittances:  
**cbsremittances@capita.co.uk** or fax  
to 020 7504 3551

Please send payments, quoting conference code **SC12121**, to: Capita Business Services Ltd. Accounts Receivable, PO Box 212, Faverdale Industrial Estate, Darlington DL1 9HN.

A VAT invoice will be issued on receipt of payment  
VAT No: 618 1841 40

### HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

The conference fees do not include accommodation. For discounted accommodation rates, please contact Capita Business Travel on Tel: 0871 521 9816 or email [capexternal@capita.co.uk](mailto:capexternal@capita.co.uk). Please quote the title of the Conference for preferential rates.

### TERMS & CONDITIONS

**CANCELLATIONS** confirmed in writing 14 days before the conference date will be refunded, minus an administration fee of £50.

We regret that no refund can be made after that date, although substitutions can be made at any time.

Capita are not able to offer refunds for cancellations arising from events outside of our control.

**VENUE AND REGISTRATION DETAILS** will be sent within 14 days of the event date. We cannot be held responsible for non arrival of this information, if you have not received within 7 days of the event date, please call us on 0870 400 1020.

**PROGRAMME AMENDMENTS** Capita reserves the right to alter the programme or venue without notice due to unforeseen circumstances.

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