

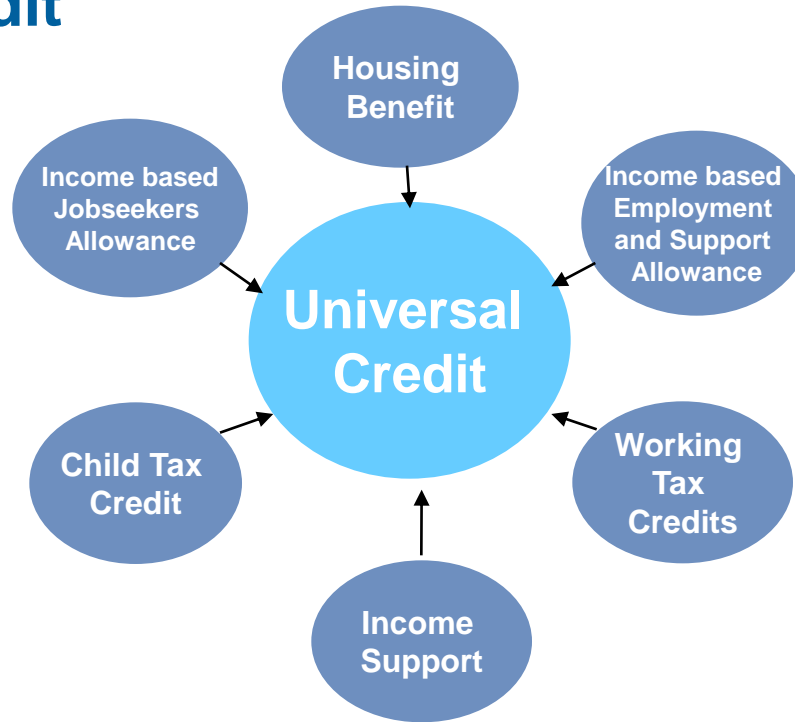


# Universal Credit

**October 2015**

**V1.0**





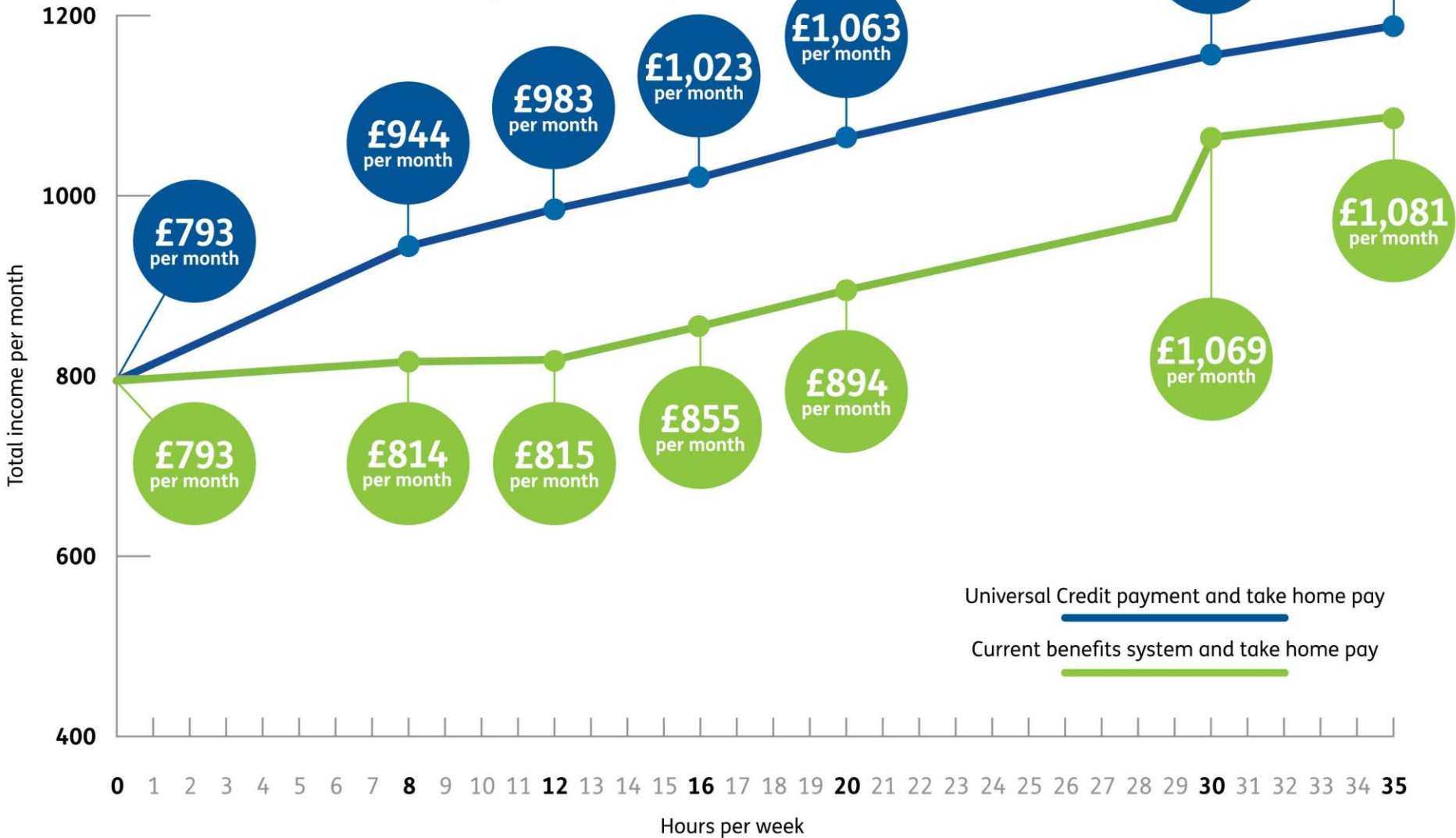
- Replaces six benefits with one simple payment
  - Is paid monthly in a single payment to a household rather than an individual
  - Includes housing costs
  - Is paid monthly in arrears
  - Uses PAYE Real Time Information to adjust payments to take into account an earnings
- Allows claimants to keep more of their earnings

# What's different about Universal Credit?



## Making work pay

This example shows how a **single person aged 25 or over**, earning the National Minimum Wage, with rent of £110 a week (£478 a month), is better off in work with Universal Credit than they are under the current system. With **Universal Credit** claimants' take home pay is topped up with Universal Credit payments to make sure they are better off for every additional hour they work.



N.B. Total income consists of net earnings (after Tax and National Insurance) and benefit income, including help with housing costs. All figures are set to 2014/2015 rates.

- As of 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015 **Universal Credit** is now available in **314 sites** across Britain with thousands of claimants benefitting
- The **North West** have rolled out into all their Jobcentres singles, couples and families
- We are now into **Tranche 3** of national roll out for single claimants
- Tranche 4 starts in December 2015 – **Stockton 7/12/15**
- We are now looking ahead to the rollout of the **digital service**
- Supporting all of this has been the roll-out of **digital jobcentres** – placing access to free wi-fi and computers in all jobcentres
- **Over three-quarters** (78%) of Universal Credit claimants feel confident about their ability to budget with monthly payments
- Universal Credit claimants are doing **more to get into work** than jobseekers claiming under the current system – 27.1 hrs / week versus 13.6 hours /week

# What does this mean for Stockton



- DWP and Local Authority colleagues have been working together to complete implementation activities across a range of services
  - Revenues and Benefits
  - Customer Service
  - Welfare Rights
- Stockton LA have taken a collaborative and forward looking approach actively seeking out the experience and support of colleagues in other LAs
- This is leading to a Delivery Partnership that will enable residents in Stockton access digital support and personal budgeting support
- DWP and the Local Authority are hosting landlord forums for both the social and private sector to support landlords to support their tenants
- Stockton is in a strong position to support their residents to get the best from their Universal Credit experience

## Universal Credit claimant journey

I get information or advice about how to claim Universal Credit.

I receive a telephone call inviting me to attend an interview in the jobcentre.

I attend my interview at the jobcentre, taking along any paperwork that has been asked for. I sign my Claimant Commitment, which records the activities I've agreed to do in return for receiving Universal Credit.

I receive my Universal Credit decision letter. It tells me when I will receive my payments, and confirms what I need to do in return for getting Universal Credit.

I telephone the helpline if there is a change in my circumstances, including if I start work. My Claimant Commitment is reviewed and may be changed to take into account my new situation.

I make my claim online at GOV.UK. If I need help, I can telephone the Universal Credit helpline for assistance.

I receive a text message to remind me about my interview at the jobcentre.

I begin looking for work. I can get advice on jobseeking, budgeting and going online from my work coach.

I regularly visit the jobcentre where my work coach and I discuss the actions we've agreed in my Work Plan.

If a change in my circumstances means my Universal Credit payments change, I receive a letter confirming the new details.



# Personal Budgeting Support

- **Personal planner** on gov.uk to help claimants **understand** and **prepare** for financial changes.
- **Online budgeting** tools for claimants who can help themselves - such as those offered by Money Advice Service and Citizens Advice.
- **Jobcentre Plus Work Coach** will direct claimants to help and advice in their area for telephone or face to face support to enable them to.
  - develop the confidence and motivation to manage their finances
  - complete and maintain a budgeting action plan relevant to their circumstance
  - understand the type of bank accounts available, what they do, and where they are available locally, and the benefits of each of those bank accounts to help them manage their money
- **Alternative Payment Arrangements** available to support claimants in the short term to make the transition to UC
  - paying the rent directly to the landlord
  - making more frequent than monthly payments
  - splitting the payment within the household



# 'About Universal Credit'

'About Universal Credit' was created to get the **right information, to the right people, at the right time.**

- It is an internet-based system similar to most internet web pages.
- It contains all guidance on Universal Credit business processes in one place, for DWP staff, DWP claimants, DWP partners.
- It can be used by the claimant to help them make a claim online, and can be accessed by selecting the '**About Universal Credit**' hyperlink on the gov.uk webpage
- DWP staff can also use it to help them answer the claimant's queries on the telephone or face to face.
- It can be used by everyone involved in supporting, administering or claiming Universal Credit and is available to help at all times.

