

**WELFARE
RIGHTS TEAM
CAN:**

Provide a benefits check to see what you may be

entitled to

Help complete forms

Help and advice if things go wrong

**FIND OUT
MORE
ABOUT:**

Personal Independence Payments

Employment & Support Allowance

Save £140 on your electric

Council Tax Consultation

Help for Carer's

Welfare Rights

Newsletter

Helping the residents of Sandwell

Personal Independence Payment

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is a benefit to help with the extra costs of living with a long term disability or health problem.

It is replacing Disability Living Allowance for people age 16 to 64.

If you have a child under

Once they reach their 16th birthday they will be asked to claim PIP.

PIP is not a taxable benefit and is paid on top of any other benefit or tax credits. It can still be claimed if the disabled person is working or studying.

If you or your child has a disability, contact the Welfare Rights Team for more infor-

mation. We can explain the criteria for PIP and may be able to help with claim forms.

If someone in your family received DLA or PIP they may be entitled to additional benefits within tax credit or housing benefit.

Employment and Support Allowance

Employment and Support Allowance is replacing Incapacity Benefit and Income Support for people who are unable to work because of health problems.

Welfare Rights can support you with detailed information for any one who is un-

happy with a decision on their ESA Claim.

Please contact us for further advice if you disagree with a decision that you do not qualify for ESA.

For most people, ESA is a means-tested after 12 months. If you

have other resources for example private pensions or if your partner works, your ESA may reduce or stop.

If you are in this situation, contact our advice line on 0121 569 3158 for further assistance.

Benefit Cap Reduction



The Benefit Cap is a limit on the total amount of money people can get from certain welfare benefits, including

housing benefit—£26,000 a year for couples and people with children and £18,200 for single people.

After November 2016 these amounts will reduce further to £20,000 (around £385 a week) for couple and people with children, and £13,400 (around 258 a week) for single people.

Those affected by the new limited will

be receiving letters from the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) over the next few weeks.

If you are worried or know someone who has concerns, please contact our advice line on 0121 569 3158

*Need Help or
advice*

*telephone the
Welfare*

Rights Advice

Line on

0121 569

3158

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

People that are affected by the Benefit Cap may be able to get help through a Discretionary

Housing Payment from Revenues and Benefits to help make up the shortfall.

Applications can be made on-line at **Sandwell.gov.uk**

Tax Credits and reporting

The Tax Credits digital service has expanded to enable tax credit customers to report all changes in their circumstances

throughout the year not just during renewals. The expansion of the service means customers can go online to update their circumstances, or

check their next payment details. They can do this at the time of day or night that suits then without having to telephone the Contact Centre



Local Council Tax Reduction Consultation

Sandwell's Revenues and Benefits Service are carrying out a consultation on the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme or LCTR which replaced the old Council Tax Benefit.

Each council sets its own rules for LCTR which are reviewed and updated annually.

At present there are no proposed changes to Sandwell's rules so the intention at present is that the existing

scheme will remain unchanged in 2017.

You can see the current rules or make a contribution to the consultation at http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200149/council_tax_reduction/3538/lctrs_consultation_201617

The consultation period closes on 8th November 2016.



Local Gains for Local People

In the first 6 months of 2016 Welfare Rights Team have achieved **£10.5 million** in additional benefits straight into the pockets of the citizens of Sandwell and we have dealt with **5411 residents of Sandwell.**





Sandwell Welfare Rights

**Advice Line:
0121 569 3158**

**Email:
welfarerights_team@sandwell.gov.uk**

What we do:

Help claim millions of pounds of under-claimed benefits

Represent clients where claims have failed

Refer for debt advice

Who for:

Older People

Families with Children

People with health problems

Carers

People with mental health problems

People with learning disabilities

Those in low paid work

Are you a carer?

A carer is someone who looks after a friend, relative or neighbour who is elderly, ill or disabled and could not manage without the carers help.

Caring can be time consuming and stressful, so carers need to make sure that they look after themselves as well as their loved one.

Some carers can be paid carers allowance of £62.10 per week and older carers may get extra payments in their pension credit or housing benefit.



Case study

A citizen of Sandwell and her partner live with parents. Welfare Rights visited them and they were receiving Job Seekers Allowance, Child Tax Credit and Child Benefit for their 6 month old son.

A Personal Independence Payment form was completed for the client because she had a learning disability and suffers with anxiety outdoors.

The claim was successful and Enhanced Rate Care and lower rate mobility was awarded, Carers Allowance has been claimed and additional income support. The family received extra benefit gained of £204.80 per week.