



# SFHA updates on Welfare reform

Scotland's Housing Network  
Welfare Reform Forums  
January/February 2016

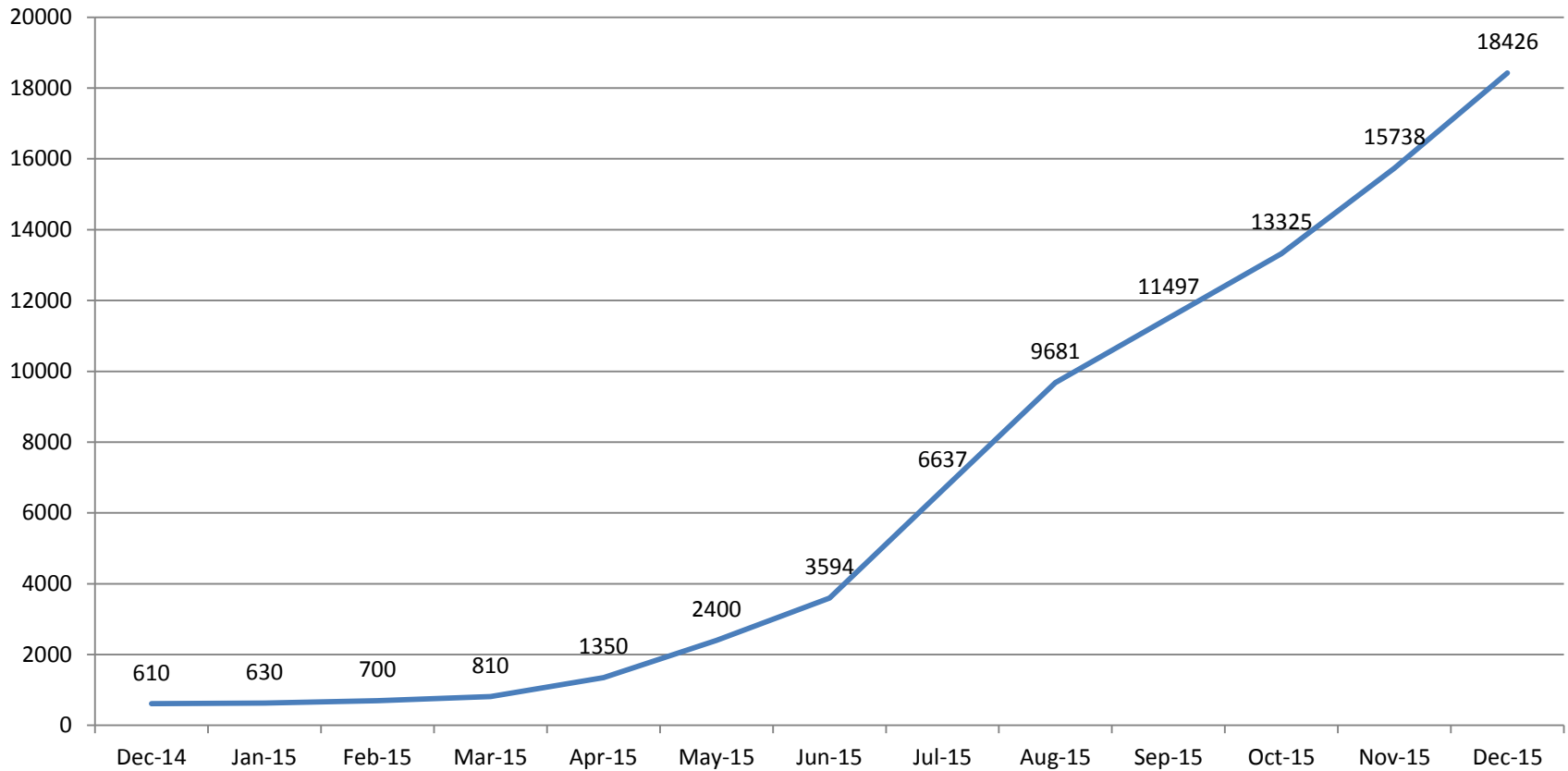


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# Universal Credit progress

## UC Rollout, December 2014-December 2015



## Tranche 4

- Final group of job centres to offer Universal Credit to new single claimants:

East Ayrshire Council	15 February 2016
East Renfrewshire Council	15 February 2016
Argyll and Bute Council	7 March 2016
Fife Council	11 April 2016
Angus Council	25 April 2016
Perth and Kinross Council	25 April 2016

## Full Service – so far

- “Full service” to replace “Live Service”
  - Known before as the digital solution
- Tested out in 3 job centres
  - Sutton Croydon and London bridge
- Five more to be added before National Rollout
  - Musselburgh one of the five

# Full service roll out

- National Rollout to start in May
  - Gradual process initially – 5 JobCentres per month during 2016
  - Probably one JobCentre in Scotland
- Pick up pace in 2017
- Relationship with devolution
  - Full system needed as the mechanism to exercise new social security powers.

# April Rent changes

- No bulk data transfer
- Claimants need to advise DWP of rent change
  - Must quote National Insurance Number
  - Must provide evidence from landlord
    - Headed paper
    - Full breakdown of rent and service charge changes
    - Payment frequency details

# LHA Cap

- Announced in Chancellor's Autumn statement
  - Did Treasury consult?
- All social housing rents subject to LHA maxima, including shared accommodation rate for under 35s
- Will be applied to new tenancies from April 2016
- Takes effect from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018



# LHA Cap

- Widespread concern of effect on range of housing – potentially disastrous for:
  - Hostels for homeless
  - Domestic Violence refuges
  - Temporary Accommodation
  - Supported accommodation
  - Housing for Under 35s
- Opposition day debate 27/01/2016

# Reducing the Deficit

- Removal of child element of Tax Credit and Universal Credit from larger families
  - For third or further children born after April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
  - For new claims after April 2017.
- Tax Credit cut proposals reversed in Autumn Statement
  - But still lose out if put on UC without transitional arrangements?

# UC Work Allowances

		BEFORE SUMMER BUDGET		AFTER SUMMER BUDGET	
		WITHOUT HOUSING COSTS	WITH HOUSING COSTS	WITHOUT HOUSING COSTS	WITH HOUSING COSTS
Single	NO DEPENDENT	£111	£111	<b>ABOLISHED</b>	
	WITH DEPENDENT	£734	£263	£397	£192
	WITH DISABILITY	£647	£192	£397	£192
Couple	NO DEPENDENT	£111	£111	<b>ABOLISHED</b>	
	WITH DEPENDENT	£536	£222	£397	£192
	ONE OR BOTH WITH DISABILITY	£647	£192	£397	£192

# Benefit Sanction Pilot

- Welfare Reform Committee recommendation:
  - Concern over number of sanctions, and number overturned on appeal
  - Implement warning system
- DWP answer: two weeks' notice prior to imposition of sanction
  - Claimant opportunity to show 'good cause'.
- Trial to take place in Scotland, from March



# In work progression and Trusted Partner

- Plan to test conditionality for UC claimants in work:
  - Claimant expected to look for more hours, or better pay.
  - Could be sanctioned.
- Trusted partner – to identify vulnerable claimants needing APAs from day one - test and trial with around 20 landlords