



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Sir Stephen Timms MP
Minister for Social Security and Disability
Department for Work and Pensions
Caxton House
Tothill Street
London SW1A 9NA

12 November 2024

Debbie Abrahams MP

Chair of the Work and Pensions Select Committee

Dear Debbie,

I wanted to bring to your attention the Written Ministerial Statement that I have laid in the House today.

This government is committed to getting Britain working. Completing the implementation of Universal Credit will support this mission. Universal Credit provides greater support and incentives to get people into work and increase the hours they work than the benefits it replaces.

Move to UC statistics published today show that, by the end of September, the department had, since 2022, notified 943,343 households of the need to make the transition to UC. The latest published complaints data show that as of March 2024 with over 500,000 households asked to move to UC, DWP had only 35 complaints about the process, with 10 upheld. Plans have now been agreed to notify the remaining households receiving income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), building on the insight that DWP has gathered through the summer. This insight, and the learnings from scaling the move to Universal Credit for all legacy benefit customers, will be published by the end of 2024.

DWP is investing up to a further £15m in Help to Claim to support Employment and Support Allowance customers moving to Universal Credit. This means that free confidential and impartial support will continue to be available to help people make a new Universal Credit claim and manage their claim, up to receiving their first correct payment.

DWP will steadily increase the number of migration notices being sent to people receiving ESA over the next months and are aiming to issue 63,000 migration notices

each month from February, sending the final notices in early December 2025 and fully moving people to Universal Credit and closing legacy benefits by the end of March 2026.

As DWP moves into this final phase for Move to UC, it will make the transition from delivering 'Move to UC' from a Programme-led approach to a 'business as usual' operation. I am therefore announcing today the intention to formally close the Move to UC Programme by the end of March 2025, as the work of the Programme will be complete by then.

My department will continue to work closely with stakeholders throughout this transition and under the new operating model. It will also publish all the remaining UC Programme Board papers in April 2025 when the Programme closes.

This has been a major undertaking for DWP. As the department heads towards such a significant milestone, I would like to thank officials who have delivered this transformational reform, and I would also like to thank all MPs and external stakeholders who have shared their insight and expertise to make this process work for those we are supporting and realise this transformation fully.

The Work and Pensions Select Committee has played a significant role in improving the design and delivery of Universal Credit since it was announced in 2010. Your scrutiny and constructive feedback has helped DWP to iterate the service and focus on problems you have highlighted. This has contributed significantly to the strong position the programme is now in. I would therefore like to thank you and committee members over the years for your hard work and support to get us to this point.

Sir Stephen Timms MP

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen Timms". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" and the last name "Timms" clearly distinguishable.

Minister for Social Security and Disability