



# Lewes District Citizens Advice

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[www.lewesdistrictcab.org.uk](http://www.lewesdistrictcab.org.uk)

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## **Jackie Wilkes, Chief Officer of Lewes District Citizens Advice:**

Staff and volunteers at Lewes District Citizens Advice hear stories every day of families whose lives have been turned upside down by this pandemic.

Some had never needed support from the benefits system before, while others were already struggling to get by before Covid struck. In total we've given **665** people one-to-one advice on Universal Credit since the first lockdown in March. **49%** of people seeking our support on benefits used our services for the very first time.

We know that the government's £20 a week boost to the Universal Credit at the start of the pandemic often made the difference between empty cupboards and food on the table.

But that lifeline is currently set to end in just a few short months. It's a cut that's likely to push people into missed bills, mounting debts and a daily struggle to make ends meet. It's a cut that will also drain spending power from our fragile economy.

With an ongoing pandemic and a bleak outlook in the jobs market, we're urging the government to keep that lifeline. It's the right thing to do to support people who've lost livelihoods through no fault of their own.

**We give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.**

### **Citizens Advice Helplines**

- **Adviceline** call **03444 111 444**. Monday- Friday 9am to 5pm.
- Email advice [www.eastsussexcab.co.uk](http://www.eastsussexcab.co.uk)
- Chat online to an advisor on our website [citizensadvice.org.uk/contact-us](http://citizensadvice.org.uk/contact-us).
- **Consumer Helpline** on 0808 223 1133
- **Universal Credit** Help to Claim line 0800 1448444.

### Notes to editors:

1. The Citizens Advice service comprises a network of local bureaux, all of which are independent charities and the national charity Citizens Advice. Together we help people resolve their money, debt, legal and other problems by providing information and advice and by influencing policy makers. For more information please visit our website [www.lewesdistrictcab.org.uk](http://www.lewesdistrictcab.org.uk). We are also on Twitter @lewescab1.
2. The advice provided by the Citizens Advice service is free, independent, confidential and impartial and is available to everyone regardless of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or nationality.
3. The majority of our staff are trained volunteers, working at around 3,500 offices across England & Wales.