

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET29 November 2018Report by Deputy Chief ExecutiveWELFARE CONTINGENCY FUND – CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU:
HELPING EAST RENFREWSHIRE ONLINE (HERO) PROJECT**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To bring forward a bid to the Welfare Contingency resources to fund a shortfall in external funding for East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau's Helping East Renfrewshire Online (HERO) project in the next 12 months.

RECOMMENDATION

2. The Cabinet is asked to consider the East Renfrewshire Citizen Advice Bureau's (ERCAB) bid for £22,288 of welfare contingency funding over the next 12 months (split 50:50 in 2018/19 and 2019/20) to meet a shortfall in resources for their Helping East Renfrewshire Online (HERO) project.

BACKGROUND

3. In June 2018 Cabinet considered a report which set out the arrangements the Council was making to deal with the implications of the full roll out of Universal Credit by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) in East Renfrewshire from 26 September 2018.

4. It was also noted that £200,000 of welfare contingency funding had been made available in the revenue estimates for each of the next 3 financial years. Proposals from the Money Advice and Rights (MART) and the Scottish Welfare Fund teams were considered and approved at that time. The same report also highlighted that ERCAB had indicated they were seeking council support for their Helping East Renfrewshire Online (HERO) project - the final amount sought and potential State Aid implications were still to be confirmed.

REPORT

5. ERCAB has now collated its external funding in respect of the HERO project (totaling £91,495 across 3 years, with £48,740 in 2018/19). Today's report brings forward their proposal seeking Cabinet agreement to fund a shortfall of £22,288 in their HERO funding for the next 12 months only. Their project commenced in September 2018. Their proposal, which explains the work of the HERO project, is attached as Annex 1.

6. It has been hugely difficult to predict the specific impact of Universal Credit (UC) and the need for additional support provision, particularly in the area of digital support. This is something that has been looked at carefully over the summer with partner colleagues. A group to specifically look at the area of UC digital support was convened, including ERCAB, and has produced a useful directory of digital support in the local area. This Directory outlines a good level of local provision and has been publicised as part of arrangements for communicating the support arrangements in place for local residents dealing with the national roll out of UC. It is attached as Annex 2 for interest.

7. Advice from library colleagues in other areas and our senior DWP representative is that there should not be a spike in demand for digital support in the early weeks of Universal Credit. This will give us some time to learn in a live environment about the implications and impacts of UC and consider how well our existing services are able to cope with demand. DWP suggest that c.90% of claims in other areas are being completed successfully online, but for some individuals it is the ongoing maintenance of the client accounts that presents the challenge.

FINANCE & EFFICIENCY

8. In June 2018 Cabinet agreed to continue additional grant funding for ERCAB in 2018/19 and 2019/20 based on a Service Level Agreement held with the Council. The funding totaled £157,000 per annum over 3 separate funding streams including advice, housing, and money advice services. In addition, Cabinet agreed to continue to award a further £40,000 from welfare contingency funding to fund a full time member of staff in ERCAB for benefit-related work. Support to ERCAB in 2018/19 therefore totals £197,000 to date.

9. Welfare Contingency Funding of £200,000 has been made available in the revenue estimates for each of the next 3 years – the table below shows spend and commitments to date. The Head of Accountancy has confirmed that there are sufficient funds remaining for 2018/19 and 2019/20 for the ERCAB HERO bid of £22,288 over the next 12 months to be supported should Cabinet choose to approve this. However, given the timing of the project, starting midway through a financial year, it is recommended that any funding be split across 2018/19 and 2019/20 rather than all in 2018/19 as requested in the bid. This funding would be for this 12 month period only and does not seek to cover future years' funding gaps. ERCAB has also confirmed total external funds of £48,740 going towards the HERO project over this 12 month period.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
Total welfare contingency funding available	200,000	200,000	200,000	600,000
Contribution to Citizens Advice Bureau	40,000	40,000	TBC	80,000
Money Advice & Rights Team request	22,982	32,190	14,079	69,251
Scottish Welfare Fund Team request	13,480	27,840	0	41,320
Total left in welfare contingency fund	123,538	99,970	185,921	
Contribution to ERCAB HERO project (if approved)	11,144	11,144	0	22,288
Total then left in welfare contingency fund	112,394	88,826	185,921	

10. There remain substantial gaps in ERCAB HERO funding for future years and this report gives no commitment to provide further contributions. ERCAB are aware of this position and believe they are in a position to obtain this funding elsewhere. As announced in recent weeks by DWP, CABs across the UK will be in receipt of new DWP funding from 2019/20 for provision of 'Universal Support' including personal budgeting and digital support. ERCAB believes this will help their onward projections. This funding, previously came to the Council and totaled £2,964 for digital support and £5,795 for personal budgeting in 2018/19 – it is unclear what level of funding CABs can expect and our experience is that this can vary widely from year to year. There was no prior DWP consultation with councils or CoSLA on the decision to move this provision to Citizen Advice Bureaux in future. This will not however affect current service delivery through the Council's Money Advice and Rights Team, which will continue with current revenue funding

CONSULTATION

11. Advice was sought from the Scottish Government in respect of potential State Aid implications for this project. Colleagues from the State Aid Unit confirmed they had no objection to this proposal.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

12. ERCAB works very closely with the Council and other local partner agencies including Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire. ERCAB has been part of the Council's project management arrangements overseeing the plans to manage the implications of Universal Credit, alongside colleagues from Housing, Customer First/MART, the DWP and the Culture and Leisure Trust.

CONCLUSION

13. There has been a comprehensive, joint approach taken across 2018 to prepare local services to deal with the implications of the national UC roll-out in East Renfrewshire. The communications campaign has been strong and there are various support arrangements in place and we will continue to monitor the effectiveness of these. There is potential for ERCAB's HERO project to augment these arrangements and the Council will continue its close working relationship with ERCAB as we work together to provide services for vulnerable local residents.

RECOMMENDATION

14. The Cabinet is asked to consider the East Renfrewshire Citizen Advice Bureau's (ERCAB) bid for £22,288 of welfare contingency funding over the next 12 months (split 50:50 in 2018/19 and 2019/20) to meet a shortfall in resources for their Helping East Renfrewshire Online (HERO) project.

Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive

REPORT AUTHOR

Report author: Louise Pringle, Head of Business Change & Revenue Services.

13 November 2018

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Universal Credit Implementation, Cabinet 21 June 2018
- Support for East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau, Cabinet 15 March 2018
- Welfare Reform Contingency Fund and Update on Welfare Reform, Cabinet 15 June 2016

Helping East Renfrewshire Online (HERO) PROJECT PROPOSAL FROM ERCAB

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1.BACKGROUND

In November 2012 the UK Government launched their digital strategy which set out the policy intention to move towards a service delivery model of “digital by default”. In 2017 Ofcom reported that internet usage in Scotland was significantly lower than in the rest of the UK, with 20% of the population falling into this category. In addition, it was also reported that 23% of Scottish households do not have access to the internet at all.

Digital exclusion is of acute concern where services are essential for people to access their basic rights, such as their rights to social security and justice e.g. moving social security procedures online by default presents a risk of causing significant detriment to potentially vulnerable people who require income.

“It took ... five and a half hours to complete [the] universal credit application online by myself as my hand tremors meant I constantly pressed the wrong buttons ... it timed out three times because I was unable to type fast enough.”

In June 2017, Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS) surveyed over 1,200 clients from 33 Scottish Citizens Advice Bureaux about digital access. Respondents were asked about using computers, what devices they use to go online, where they go online, their abilities to perform basic tasks such as completing electronic forms, and any barriers they faced trying to use the internet.

The research (Disconnected: Understanding Digital Inclusion and Improving Digital Access, February 2018) found that there are still a significant number of bureaux clients who face digital exclusion. The level of digital exclusion varies between a number of factors including people’s age and where they live. A lack of access to hardware and internet services, poor digital skills, the cost of going online, and connectivity issues, are all reasons which contribute to the on-going group of people who are either not online, or unable to access digital services without support.

Respondents seeking advice on benefits matters were some of the least frequent users of the internet, with 31% of those seeking benefit advice reporting they either hardly ever (12%) or never (19%) used the internet. Only one quarter of respondents seeking benefits advice could apply online for a benefit with no problems at all (25%), with almost two-thirds either needing help (32%), or not able to manage at all (32%). Respondents seeking help with a health and/or disability related benefit were some of the most likely to experience difficulties when trying to apply for benefits online. Only one in every five of these respondents seeking advice on a health/disability benefit could complete a benefit application online on their own with no problems (21%), compared to one in three respondents seeking advice about other types of benefits (33%).

Two of the three most common barriers preventing respondents from using the internet related to money. Broadband costs were a barrier for 18% of respondents, while phone and data costs were a barrier for 17% of respondents.

Universal Credit (UC) was first introduced in East Renfrewshire on 13th February 2016 and is due to go fully live in September 2018. This means that anyone on an existing legacy benefit (e.g. Employability and Support Allowance, Job Seekers Allowance, Housing Benefits, Tax Credits, Income Support) who reports a change of Circumstances will then be paid Universal Credit, which in many cases will be at a lower amount than the legacy benefit.

The potential for benefit claimants on UC to fall into / increase the level of pre-existing rent or mortgage arrears is well documented e.g. according to a report published earlier this year by East Lothian Council (East Lothian was the first area in Scotland to be introduced to UCFS by DWP around 2 years ago), rent arrears for council tenants claiming UC increased by £166,897 in 2017/18 whereas rent arrears owed by council tenants not claiming UC reduced by £121,698.

- Welfare reform changes continue to impact residents, with Universal Credit full digital service rolled out in East Renfrewshire in September 2018. There is no transitional protection for this group. Claimants will be expected to maintain their benefit claim online and conform to the strict conditions of their benefit. Residents will need support with ICT access and digital online claims.
- The demand for assistance in relation to Welfare Benefits continues to rise in East Renfrewshire ... Welfare Benefits is the highest demand advice service offered by East Renfrewshire CAB with total financial gains reaching £3.2 Million from 1/4/17 to 31/3/2018.
- The demand for benefits advice is expected to increase further over the next few years, with the introduction of Universal Credit and CAB will be impacted with increasing caseload and demands for services.

East Renfrewshire Council's Welfare Reform Planning group is meeting monthly to discuss steps to prepare services and residents for UC full service roll out. The Manager of East Renfrewshire CAB attends these meetings, along with representatives of DWP,

2.HERO (Helping East Renfrewshire Online).

ERCAB took part in a nationwide survey in March 2013 to assess whether CAB clients had access to the internet and the skills and confidence to use it to apply for jobs and benefits online:

- 42% of our clients said they could not apply for benefits online, even with help (only 27% said they would be able to apply online for benefits "on my own, no problem")
- Nearly half (46%) of our clients said they could not apply for jobs online, even with help
- The main difficulties faced by our clients in applying online for jobs and benefits were that they had never used a computer (45%); they had a health issue (36%); or they did not have a computer (27%).

Research by CAS in 2015 found that East Renfrewshire is the local authority area with the lowest proportion of internet connections at home and one of the local authorities with the lowest level of individuals likely to have computers at home.

Although naturally over the years digital access has increased, there still exists demand from a high volume of clients in our area that are being disadvantaged as a direct result of being digitally disconnected. This is especially the case for those with lower incomes unable to afford computers and for those clients who have disabilities or learning difficulties that make computer use without assistance effectively impossible.

Recent ONS statistics for East Renfrewshire (Jan 2017 to Dec 2017 – see <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157415/printable.aspx>) report that 23% of people in East Renfrewshire (13,100) are economically inactive (slightly higher than the figures for Scotland (22.5%) and Great Britain (21.6%)). This includes students (3,900), those looking after family / home (2,700), long-term sick (2,400), retired (2,200) and other (1,500). 3,000 of the 13,100 people (23%) want a job and many more will be claiming working age benefits.

We recognise the need to move forward with the modernisation of services whilst prioritising clients' needs. We are aware that other organisations offering computers only permit members of the public if there are supervised sessions - these are often in open spaces with little if any privacy.

Declaration

ERCAB were therefore delighted to launch our HERO Project in October 2013 with funding from Scottish Legal Aid Board (SLAB) to provide digital access and skills to get online via an accessible, supportive service for our clients. Our services included a daily drop in service, mainly used by jobseekers requiring access to computers with our support.

The work of the HERO Project team involved one-to-one and group support, providing advice on how to improve difficulties with areas such as literacy, numeracy, financial management and budgeting. All of the venues we used provided access to PCs so that the team could focus on guiding clients with online claims.

The project contributed to an extensive decline in sanctions locally over its four year lifespan because of our dedication to provide IT support, combined with our excellent working relations with partner agencies (e.g. every new JSA / UC claimant at the Jobcentre is handed a HERO Project leaflet and, more often than not, attendance at the HERO Project forms part of their Claimant Commitment). Our close working relationship with the Jobcentre is vital to clients trying to navigate the ever complex benefit system and allows us to help them at the very earliest stage.

In the year from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, the full-time HERO Project assisted 179 new clients. There were 1,416 client contacts and a resulting Client Financial Gain (CFG) of £310,561.

Funding for the HERO Project ended in March 2017 as SLAB funds for 2017/18 had to be re-prioritised to support projects in geographic areas where the roll-out of full service UC was taking place that year.

Since then, we've managed to sustain a greatly reduced service for clients twice a week within Auchenback Resource Centre (Tuesdays from 10am to 1pm) and the East Renfrewshire Council offices (Wednesdays from 12noon to 3pm). N.B. With most people coming into Barrhead for the JobCentre and other services it made sense for us to focus our limited resources here.

In 2017/18, the part-time HERO Project assisted 38 new clients. There were 220 client contacts and a resulting CFG of £26,841.

We're seeking your support to help re-launch the HERO Project and to make it fully operational again to cope with the ever increasing demand for benefits advice, especially ICT access and digital online claims.

The re-launched HERO Project will still maintain its focus on building skills and resilience amongst vulnerable and at risk claimants in East Renfrewshire who are most likely to require help to apply for welfare benefits online and/or who are most likely to struggle with money budgeting skills.

We will deliver a co-ordinated, rolling programme of practical assistance in areas and venues which are easily accessible to residents without them having to worry about the hassle and cost of travel. The project's remit will include one-to-one and group work focused on literacy, numeracy, financial management (e.g. opening bank accounts, setting up direct debits e.g. for rent payment), budgeting, providing people with the skills and access to get online if they are not already (venues will have access to suites of pcs) and intensive one-to-one support to help claimants with online claims. Advice will be given over the phone, by email or in person (either at a drop-in session or via a home visit).

This targeted assistance will help approx 180 new clients p.a. to successfully cope with the transition to UC. We anticipate that demand for the HERO Project will remain consistent throughout most of our clients' lifetimes. This is especially the case for those with lower incomes unable to afford computers and for those clients who have disabilities or learning difficulties that make computer use without assistance effectively

3. OUTCOMES / Who Will Benefit

How many people do you expect to directly engage with/benefit from this work?

540

In the last year of full-time service provision, we assisted 179 new clients. We estimate that we will once again help at least 180 new clients p.a. over 3 years = 540.

Beneficiary Percentage Total

100

Older People (66-75) 5

Young People (11-26) 20

Adults (27-65) 75

Outcomes:

The project team will seek to build skills, confidence and resilience amongst vulnerable and at risk claimants in East Renfrewshire who are most likely to require help to apply for welfare benefits online and/or who are most likely to struggle with money budgeting skills.

OUTCOME 1:

An increased number of vulnerable / at risk people in East Renfrewshire will be supported to access all the welfare benefits they are entitled to:

- 180 new clients p.a. will be offered a welfare benefit check
- New benefit claims, forms completed with clients and SSC1 appeals will comprise around 75% of the cases handled by the project team
- At least £250,000 will be secured for clients of the project including applications to Scottish Welfare Fund and mandatory reconsiderations

Outcome 2

Vulnerable / at risk people in East Renfrewshire will have improved digital access, skills and/or confidence to get online:

- 100% of new claimants at Barrhead/ Newlands JobCentre will be made aware of the HERO project
- Min 20 hours / week drop in sessions in accessible venues (ER CAB and our partners)
- On average, each client of the project will have access to 2.5 hours of practical support and assistance each week

Outcome 3

People likely to be most affected by the transition to UC will have improved financial resilience:

- We will educate approximately 100 people p.a. by running small group sessions and delivering one-to-one support covering budgeting, shopping around for the best deals, online payments / direct debits, low cost credit options and better off calculations
- Min 20 hours / week drop in sessions in accessible venues (ER CAB and our partners)
- On average, each client of the project will have access to 2.5 hours of practical support and assistance each week

4. EVALUATION

We have well-established and effective procedures for recording and monitoring the work of the HERO project – for example, we will track the number of new clients accessing the service, the number of people assisted through appointments / drop in home visits / group sessions, the number of referrals into and out of the project, the actual advice and practical support given, the reason(s) why advice and/or practical support is required, the outcome(s) e.g. financial gains for clients and any social policy issues highlighted as a result of the work of the project.

Feedback will be sought on an ongoing basis from clients about the service received and what difference this has made to them. We will also record unprompted comments and compile case studies to bring the quantitative information to life. We will evaluate the success of the project on at least a quarterly basis through analysing client statistics, client financial gains, declines in sanctions, feedback from clients / partner agencies and case studies.

We will assess and take action where we see gaps in services, trends in certain types of enquiries and on the basis of client feedback.

In the year from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, the full-time HERO Project assisted 179 new clients. There were 1,416 client contacts and a resulting Client Financial Gain (CFG) of £310,561.

5. YEARS 2 & 3 HERO PROJECT

The UK Government Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced that her department will fund the Citizens Advice network in Scotland (alongside Citizens Advice England and Wales) to deliver a comprehensive, enhanced support service helping people to make a Universal Credit claim. It will bring £5.5 million in funding for the network in Scotland across the coming 18 months.

As we're all aware, Universal Credit is the fastest growing advice issue across our network. Since the rollout began, bureaux have collectively helped thousands of people with Universal Credit problems. Over the last few years Citizens Advice Bureaux have worked together to urge UK Government to fix the problems people are having with the system. Improving the support available to people making a claim has been a vital part of that and the government has recognised and responded to the evidence bureau has presented.

With Universal Credit set to affect 7.2 million households by the end of the rollout there is a growing need for consistent support to help people make their first claim. Together, we have the experience and the structure to provide this service in the way that people need it. In agreeing to deliver this service we will continue the work that the Citizens Advice network in Scotland has always done: supporting individuals to resolve the problems they face, and advocating nationally addressing the root causes of those problems.

The structure in place for East Renfrewshire is the HERO project and this funding will be assigned to continue this successful project.

6. HERO FUNDING

Projected Expenditure (please list individual costs and amounts)	Year 1 2018/19	Year 2 2019/20	Year 3 2020/21
2 x full time HERO Project Officers			
Salaries (@ £24,807 each in Year 1 with 2% Cost of Living annually)	£49,614	£50,606	£51,618
Employers NI (@ £3,969 each in Year 1)	£7,938	£8,097	£8,259
Pension contribution @ 6% (i.e. £1,488 each in Year 1)	£2,976	£3,036	£3,097
Project management	£2,000	£2,040	£2,081
Marketing and publicity	£1,000	£1,020	£1,040
Admin support	£2,700	£2,754	£2,809
Volunteer costs	£2,400	£2,448	£2,497
Mobile telephones	£1,200	£1,224	£1,248
Stationery	£1,200	£1,224	£1,248
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£71,028	£72,450	£73,899
Confirmed Income	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Robertson Trust	£20,000	£18,000	£18,000
Scottish Legal Aid Board	£6,755	£6,755	TBC
Bank of Scotland	£12,000		
Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations	£5,985		
SCVO (Capital)	£4,000		
DWP National CAS support		TBC	TBC
Scottish Government / CAS Financial Health checks		TBC	TBC
TOTAL CONFIRMED INCOME	£48,740	£24,755	£18,000
CURRENT (ACTUAL) SHORTFALL	£22,288*	£47,695	£55,899

(* NB. It would be the Council's intention to split this funding over 2018/19 and 2019/20 if Cabinet approve this funding, due to the timing of the project starting in September 2018)

7.UC HERO TIMETABLES

Regular Timetable

Universal Credit Outreach					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	10-1 Hero at CAB	10-1 Hero at ARC	10 - 12 MART at Thornliebank Library	10-12 Hero at CAB	10-1 Hero at Neilston Library
PM	1:30-4:30 MART at Mearns Library	2-4 Mart at Neilston Library	12-2 Hero at ERC	1-3 Hero at CAB	1:30-4:30 MART Clarkston Library

Talking Points Timetable

Universal Credit Outreach - Talking Point Weeks: 23/10, 20/11, 18/2					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	10-1 Hero at CAB	10-1 Hero at ARC	2-4:30 MART at Thornlie Bank Library	10-12 Hero at CAB	10-1 Hero at Neilston Library
PM	1:30-4:30 MART at Foundry	1-3 Mart at Mearns Library*	12-2 Hero at ERC	1-3 Hero at CAB	1:30-4:30 MART Clarkston Library
	*With Talking Points 23/10, 20/11 & 18/12				

Dunterlie Timetable

Universal Credit Outreach - Dunterlie Weeks: 24/10, 7/11, 21/11, 5/12, 19/12					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	10-1 Hero at CAB	10-1 Hero at ARC	2-4:30 MART at Thornlie Bank Library	10-12 Hero at CAB	10-1 Hero at Neilston Library
PM	1:30-4:30 MART at Foundry	1-3 Mart at Mearns Library	2-4 Dunterlie*	1-3 Hero at CAB	1:30-4:30 MART Clarkston Library
	24/10, 21/11, 19/12	Ainsley			
	7/11, 5/12	Katy			

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East Renfrewshire digital support directory

Organisation	Locations	Support provided	Access information
East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure library and information services	<p>We have public libraries in almost all localities in East Renfrewshire –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrhead • Busby • Clarkston • Eaglesham • Giffnock • Mearns • Neilston • Netherlee • Thornliebank • Uplawmoor 	<p>Libraries are universally accessible, welcoming spaces which offer a wide variety and range of digital support options depending on your needs.</p> <p>We offer free access to PCs in all of our libraries. We can also help you with printing and copying. If you have your own device we also offer free public WiFi. You do not have to be a library member to use any of these services.</p> <p>We offer learning opportunities for people who would like to learn basic ICT skills which can range from keyboard and mouse skills to accessing the internet and creating email addresses.</p> <p>We offer informal support from trained library staff to help you get online and access your accounts. While we can't offer specific advice about your claims we can signpost you to the best people to talk to.</p>	<p>Public libraries have a range of opening times all of which can be found here –</p> <p>https://www.ercultureandleisure.org/libraryopeninghours</p> <p>Please contact your local library to find out more about basic ICT classes which cover both PCs and tablet devices.</p> <p>Barrhead – 0141 580 1174 Busby – 0141 577 4971 Clarkston – 0141 577 4972 Eaglesham – 0141 577 3932 Giffnock – 0141 577 4976 Mearns – 0141 577 4979 Neilston – 0141 577 4981 Netherlee – 0141 637 5102 Thornliebank – 0141 577 4983 Uplawmoor – 01505 850564</p>
East Renfrewshire Adult Learning Services	<p>We offer learning opportunities in community venues and libraries across East Renfrewshire including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrhead • Neilston • Thornliebank 	<p>Adult Learning Services provide a range of courses, information and support in relation to the digital skills and knowledge required to maintain benefits online.</p> <p>Support includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching and applying for work online 	<p>A member of the Adult Learning team will arrange a meeting with you at a time and date that suits you to discuss your needs and goals.</p> <p>Please contact us for an informal chat about the right support for you. Tel: 0141 577 3306</p>

East Renfrewshire digital support directory

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giffnock • Clarkston • Mearns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editing and saving your CV • Sending and receiving emails • Attaching your CV to emails • Communicating with your work coach online • Keeping an online record of job searching activity • Brush up on reading, writing and spelling required for communicating online (Adult Literacies and ESOL) <p>All of our learning opportunities are tailored to meet individual needs and support progression. Our aim is to build capacity within families and in the community, promoting independence.</p> <p>Adult Learning Services have also developed an effective partnership with West College Scotland to deliver a number of courses as a progression route for local residents which includes SQA ICT qualifications.</p>	<p>Email: adult.learning@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk</p>
<p>Voluntary Action East Renfrewshire SCIO</p>	<p>56 Kelburn Street Barrhead G78 1LR</p>	<p>We have 6 laptops that people can have access to which will enable them to get on the internet for job searches online claim etc.</p> <p>We also have a computing club that runs on a Wednesday from 1-3pm. This is a drop in session and most people bring their own devices. The volunteers who facilitate the club help people with specific elements that they need to carry out the activity they wish</p>	<p>Please feel free to drop in we are open 9am to 9pm Monday to Friday or for more information email reception@va-er.org.uk or call 0141 876 9555</p>

East Renfrewshire digital support directory

		<p>to engage in so the club is tailored to people's needs.</p> <p>VAER has several members of staff that are digital champions, subject to availability can be on hand if required to assist digital requirements of individuals.</p>	
Money Advice & Rights Team (MART)	<p>MART can support residents digitally to make benefit claims and manage their finances. We go to where people need us to carry out this work. For example we can attend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrhead council Office • Eastwood Council Office • Clarkston Health Centre • Job Centres • Libraries • Home Visits 	<p>MART will give residents advice and information about a wide range of benefits, tax credits, Debt and Budgeting advice. This advice can be given over the telephone, through our internet pages and if required face to face. MART staff will advise residents how /where to claim the appropriate benefits.</p> <p>For those people that cannot claim benefits for themselves because they are vulnerable, MART will support them with their new claim on line applications for benefits and the upkeep of their on line universal credit journal if they are having difficulty maintaining this.</p>	<p>For more information on the digital help MART can provide you with please contact us via one of the methods below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MART Internet home page HERE • call us on 0141 577 8420 • text us on 07860077341 • email us at mart@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk
		<p>MART staff will provide Personal Budgeting support to residents that are having difficulty managing their income because of universal credit. MART will be able to signpost to on line tools that can help with budgeting.</p> <p>If a resident cannot access these tools</p>	

East Renfrewshire digital support directory

		<p>digitally MART staff will support residents to do this digital work to enable the resident to budget and make appropriate choices re switching on line to more affordable plans for example: changing gas/electricity supplier via a comparison website</p> <p>MART staff have laptops that can be used whilst on outreach in local communities and residents homes to be able to support them on any on line application or process regarding benefit claims or budgeting support.</p>	
Barrhead Housing Association	Barrhead Housing Association 60-70 Main Street, Barrhead G78 1SB	<p>Welfare Rights Service to Barrhead Housing Association tenants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Support to make a Universal Credit Claim – Barrhead Housing Association Tenants Only • Access to a computer to update journal (BHA Tenants) • Help to update journal to report changes in circumstances (BHA Tenants) • Assistance with claiming council tax reduction and DHP applications for UC claimants 	<p>Contact our Welfare Rights Officer on 0141 881 0638</p> <p>Or</p> <p>vivienb@barrheadha.org</p> <p>or</p> <p>enquiries@barrheadha.org</p>

East Renfrewshire digital support directory

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance to apply to Scottish Welfare fund for UC Claimants • DIGI know – a digital project which will support people to access the internet and learn how to do online transactions/forms. Launching Autumn 2018 – open to all local residents 	<p>Please note this is a new project and has still to be finalised so we can update once the project has gone live</p>
East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau	<p>HERO PROJECT East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau 214-218 Main Street Barrhead G78 1SN</p>	<p>ERCAB offers digital support to residents to make and maintain benefit claims and any other assistance as required through our HERO Project. We currently offer this service at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERCAB office • Barrhead council Office • Auchinback Resource Centre • Home Visits (if client housebound) <p>Our Benefits Advisers provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Support to make a Universal Credit Claim – offered to all residents of East Renfrewshire • Access to a computer to update journal – offered to all residents of 	<p>Contact any of our benefits advisers on:</p> <p>0141 881 3660</p> <p>Or</p> <p>bureau@eastrenfrewshirecab.casonline.org.uk</p>

East Renfrewshire digital support directory

		<p>East Renfrewshire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to update journal to report changes in circumstances – offered to all residents of East Renfrewshire • Assistance with claiming council tax reduction and DHP applications for UC claimants – offered to all residents of East Renfrewshire • Assistance to apply to Scottish Welfare fund for UC Claimants– offered to all residents of East Renfrewshire <p>HERO project can also provide Personal Budgeting support to residents that are having difficulty managing their income ; maintaining rent payments while adjusting to universal credit.</p>	
Neilston Development Trust	The Bank 84 Main Street, Neilston G78 3EA	<p>We offer a drop-in computer club on Thursdays from 9.45am-10am – 11.45am. The club is run by well skilled volunteers who can show you how use your laptop or tablet to get online, how to use applications like outlook and word, how to set up email accounts, etc.</p> <p>Most club members bring their own devices but we have some that you can use if you don't have your own.</p>	<p>Please contact -</p> <p>Laura.carswell@neilstontrust.co.uk</p> <p>Tel: 0141 561 1201</p> <p>For further information.</p>

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		Costs: £3 per session.	

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