

Your neighbourhood

Universal Credit

There has been an increase in customers in Hartlepool transferring to the new benefits system called Universal Credit. We have had calls from people telling us that they are concerned about how it works, so we'd like to give you a few details about the benefit.

Briefly, as part of Universal Credit (UC), customers receive any help with their housing costs along with other benefits as one UC payment. UC is paid to you monthly and in arrears.

This means that if you have received Housing Benefit in the past, it might take time to get used to budgeting for these

monthly payments. If you receive UC, you will be responsible for budgeting for your rental payments within this new system.

If you have made a claim or you need more details about Universal Credit, you should contact Thirteen on **0300 111 1000**.

We are here to help and can arrange for you to receive support from our money advice team or tell you how you can get more information.

- Register for Thirteen's customer self-service website at **www.thirteengroup.co.uk/SelfService**.

Neighbourhood walkabouts

Tim Fuller and Helen Wainwright, the neighbourhood officers for your area, are regularly out and about in your neighbourhood. They carry out walkabouts on your estate, and you're welcome to join in.

The walkabouts, also known as estate inspections, involve walking around the areas where our homes are located and identifying issues that might need to be addressed.

The dates, times and meeting places of walkabouts in your area are:

Area	Time	Meeting point	Dates
Greatham	10.45am	Saltaire Terrace	22 Jan 2018
Elwick & Dalton	2pm	Meeting at Martindale Close	24 Jan 2018
Hart & Clavering	10am	Bamburgh Court	6 Mar 2018

Please come along and tell us what you think about your neighbourhood. If you can't make it to one of the walkabouts and there's something you'd like us to look at, please contact us using the details below.

Keep your garden tidy

As part of your tenancy agreement, you're responsible for keeping your garden in a good state. Plants and lawns should be tidy, no rubbish or vehicles stored, and animal waste should be cleared daily.

There are lots of beautiful gardens in our villages so if your grass is cut, hedges and trees are under control and your garden is free from rubbish, this will help you to comply with your tenancy agreement. If you're on benefits you may qualify for the new gardening scheme starting in the spring. There is a charge so if you want to get more details about the scheme, please call Tim or Helen on **0300 111 1000**.

Rubbish and waste

Fly tipping spoils the appearance of our neighbourhoods and can be a health hazard. Bulky items of rubbish can be removed by Hartlepool Borough Council – just call **01429 523 333**.

The cost is currently £20 for up to three large items, so you could ask your neighbours if they have anything to move so you can share the cost between you. If you receive a qualifying benefit, the service is £10.

Also, please make sure the recycling in your grey bin complies with the council's recycling requirements – find out more at **www.hartlepool.gov.uk/recycle**. Alternatively, call the council who can send you an information leaflet.

Get in touch

If you'd like more information about anything in this update or if you have any issues you'd like to discuss about your neighbourhood, please contact:

- email: **tim.fuller@thirteengroup.co.uk** or **helen.wainwright@thirteengroup.co.uk**
- tel: **0300 111 1000**; Tim on **01642 947 552**; Helen on **01642 947 946**

Alternatively, visit the website for information about Thirteen or the self-service site to contact us:

- website: **www.thirteengroup.co.uk**
- self-service: **www.thirteengroup.co.uk/SelfService**