

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit Impact Report 2015/16

Our value to society: the impact of
Surrey Welfare Rights Unit in 2015/16

Why is Surrey Welfare Rights Unit needed?

Everyone experiences problems – sometimes they can be quickly resolved, other times it's not that simple.

Welfare Benefit problems are particularly complex and often affect households who are facing multiple disadvantages and/or extremely low income levels.

Welfare Benefits problems can lead to debts, homelessness, loss of other payments, ill health and loss of opportunity.

The current pace and extent of welfare reforms is unprecedented. Contacts to the Unit increased by 47% in 2015/16 compared to the previous year.

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit is a specialist support organisation that delivers services to over 70 local Surrey services. Our advisers are experts in Social Security law.

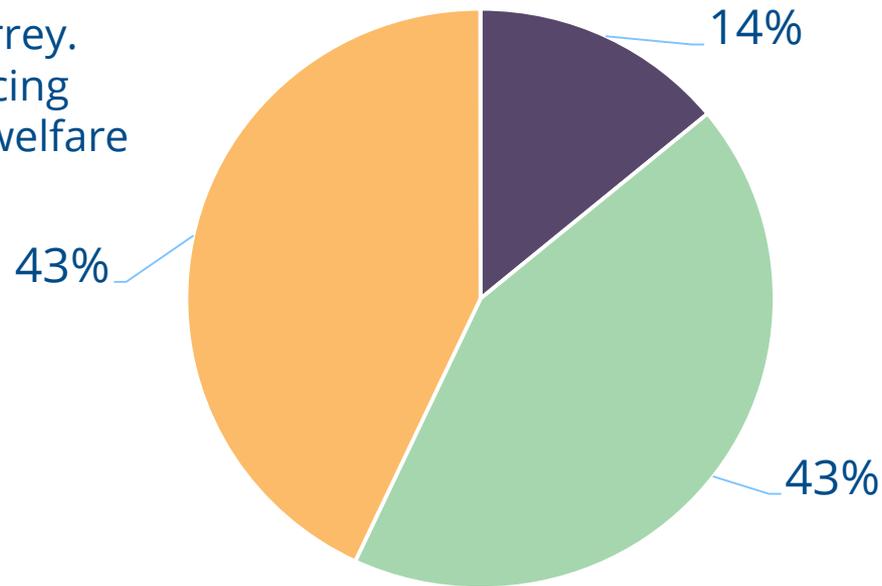
The Advice Line is open Monday to Friday, 10am – 4pm. The advice team undertake casework for complex issues including First-tier and Upper tribunals.

The Unit also provides expert support to a number of statutory networks and policy groups including the County Council's Welfare Reform Coordination Group.

We work with local MPs as well as Government committees and advisory groups.

We helped those most in need

We know from our client profiles that our support reaches the most vulnerable individuals across Surrey. These clients are often experiencing multiple negative impacts from welfare reforms.



■ Disabled ■ Long-term health condition ■ No health problem

Who we helped

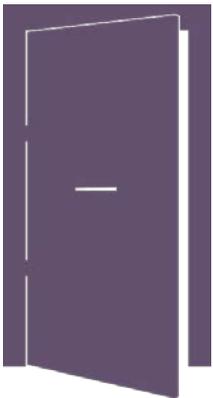
62% were female



74% were white British



40% were social housing tenants



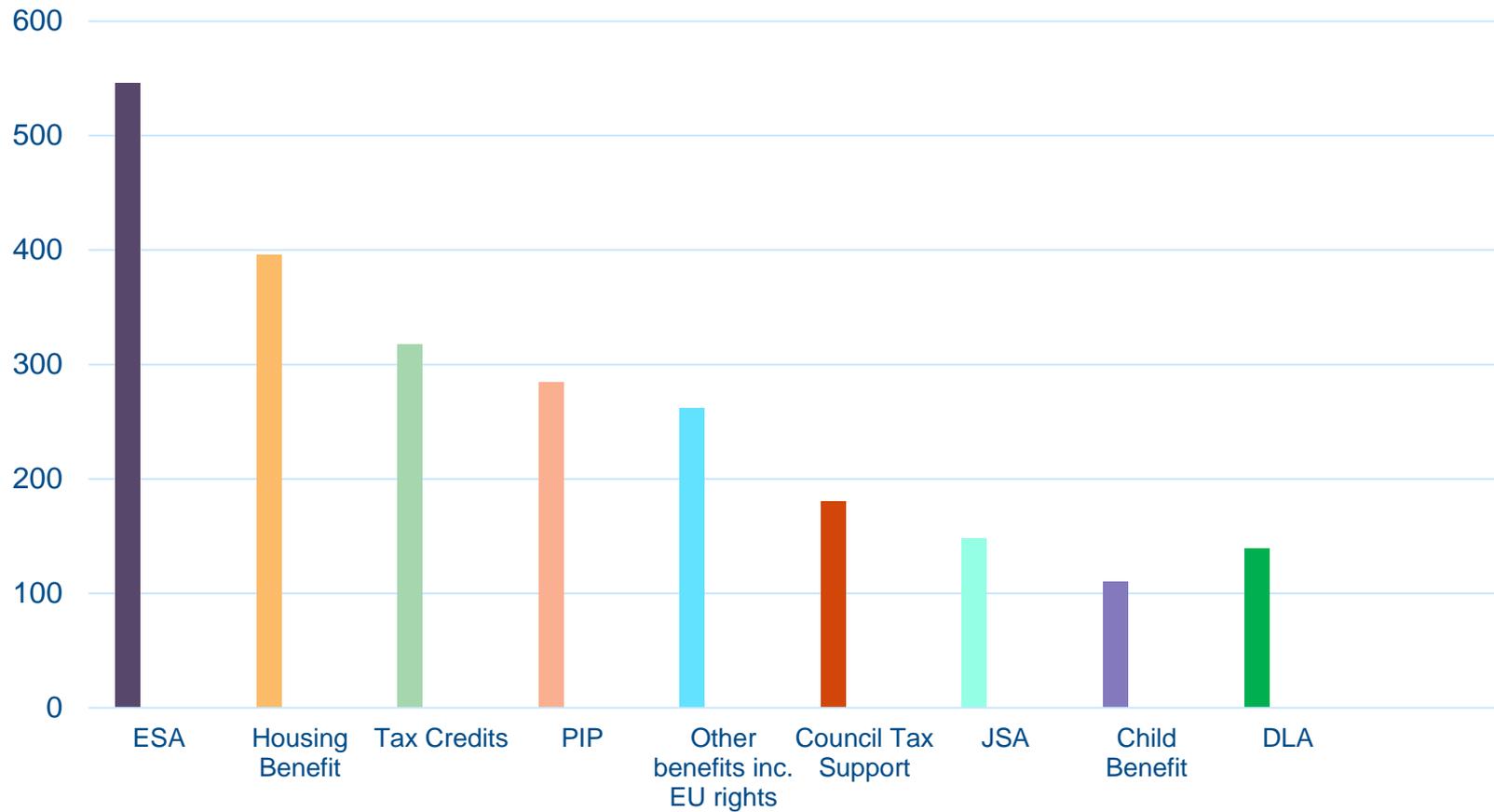
21% were private tenants



4% were homeless

What we advised on

Top Ten Issues



Value of our advice provision

Advice helps to prevent poor outcomes for individuals and families.

We can put a financial value on our advice:

- Keeping people in employment or helping them back to work
- Preventing housing evictions and statutory homelessness
- Reducing the demand for mental health and GP services
- Improved client mental wellbeing and family relationships
- Some of the financial outcomes accruing directly to individuals – this income is spent locally, benefiting local communities.

Savings to local and national government (fiscal benefits)



£112,854

reduction in health service demand, local authority homelessness and out-of-work benefits

Wider economic and social benefits (public value)



£1,076,943

improvements in health, well-being, participation and productivity

Benefits to the individual (financial outcomes)



£3,273,679

income gained through benefits and debts written-off and consumer problems resolved

Benefits to individuals also benefit society



£3.27m in benefits to individuals

income gained through benefits and debts written-off and other problems resolved

Maximising available income ensures people can get on with their lives – preventing more critical and costly intervention by the state.

It helps reduce financial difficulty, promotes inclusion and benefits the economy.

Our value is greater:

Maximising clients' income has further beneficial effects including:

- for individuals' families,
- benefiting health and well-being,
- contributing to local communities and economies
- giving choice and independence to people to sort out their own issues
- providing the information people need when making decisions to move into work, change jobs or increase their paid hours
- Promoting individuals other rights such as accessing social care, employers' duties and help with childcare costs

Our value is likely to be greater

We also add value through:

- Our training courses, ensuring that the advice sector in Surrey is competent, informed and delivering quality advice
- Our research and campaigns work that adds value not just for our clients but for all clients affected by welfare reform
- Our direct contact with hundreds of local people. Information and advice empowers people and helps them sort out their own benefit issues. We delivered many talks and workshops to Surrey residents, answering their questions and providing up-to-date information on all the welfare changes

What our clients said.....



“Fantastic news J has been awarded higher rate mobility.... This means he can go out to groups etc. and his life will be changed”

“Your advice is very much appreciated and such in depth information. Thank you.”

“We have received excellent feedback on your speech from Carers who found it very informative and they found the information on welfare reforms very useful.”

“The feedback from delegates was overwhelmingly positive about your presentation and all those “who expressed a preference” found it the most useful part of the day.”

“Without you I would never have been able to cope with all the mess I was in. You have worked so hard to help me out over the past year.”

“A huge thank you for everything.”

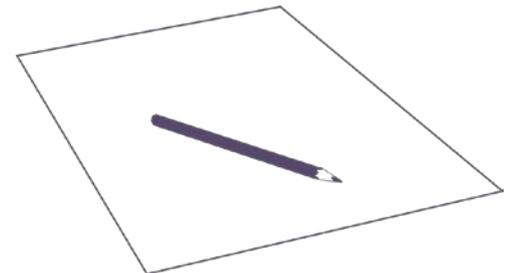
Our training activity

28 SWRU courses delivered
341 local advice workers trained



19 commissioned courses delivered
372 local staff and volunteers trained

3 courses delivered outside Surrey
51 advisers trained



Advising Surrey Residents

We delivered many talks and workshops to Surrey residents at the invitation of a wide group of organisations and teams including:

Carer Support Guildford

Carer Support Woking

Action for Carers (Surrey)

Guildford Advice Services Conference

North West Surrey Carers Conference

Spelthorne Sure Start Information Bus

Spelthorne Home Start

Surrey Coalition AGM

Surrey and Borders NHS Trust – Mental Health and Young People event

Citizens Advice Mole Valley

Let's Talk North West

Asda, Sheerwater

Epsom Carers Event

Burhill Childrens Centre

Valuing People – East Surrey

Valuing People - South West Surrey

Health and Wellbeing event for cancer patients – CCG Event

Face 2 Face Parent Carers Group, Reigate

Valuing People Partnership Board

Surrey Choices

Surrey and Borders NHS Trust – Wellbeing event for people with a learning disability

Surrey Vision Action Group

Supporting the advice sector

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit
Benefit Rates from April 2016

Income Support / Income Based JSA
Personal Allowances

Single person		
under 25	57.90	
25 or over	73.10	
Lone parent		
under 18	57.90	
18 or over	73.10	
Couple		
both under 18	max 87.50	
both 18 or over	114.85	
(seek advice if one is under 18)		
Premiums		
Disability		
single	32.25	
couple	45.95	
Enhanced disability #		
single		
child		
couple		
Severe disability		
single		
couple		

Housing Benefit
As for Income Support except:
Personal Allowances

Single over Pension Credit age	155.60
Couple one/both over pension credit age	237.55
Single 65 or over	168.67
Couple, one or both 65 or over	252.30
Child Dependant	66.90
Premiums	
Family premium	17.45
Non-dependant	
Under 25 -	Nil
25 -	10.00
30 -	15.00
35 -	20.00
40 -	25.00
45 -	30.00
50 -	35.00
55 -	40.00
60 -	45.00
65 -	50.00
70 -	55.00
75 -	60.00
80 -	65.00
85 -	70.00
90 -	75.00

Attendance Allowance
Higher rate 82.30
Lower rate 55.10

Bereavement Benefits
Bereavement Allowance
Standard rate (over 55) 112.55
Variable rate (45-54) 33.77 - 104.67
Widowed Parents Allowance 112.55
Bereavement Payment 2000.00

Carer's Allowance
Weekly rate 62.10
Earnings limit 110.00
Adult dependant 36.55

Child Benefit
Eldest child
Other children

Disability Living Allowance
Care component
Higher rate 100.00
Middle rate 60.00
Lower rate 25.00
Mobility component
Higher rate 50.00
Lower rate 25.00

Employment and Support Allowance
Contributor's Assessment phase
Single under 25 11.50
Single 25 or over 155.65
Severe disability premium for women 11.50

Industrial Injuries Benefit
Contact SWRU for rates

Jobseeker's Allowance - Contribution Based
18 - 24 57.90
25 or over 73.10

Maternity Allowance
Standard rate 139.58

Personal Independence Payment
Daily Living
Enhanced 82.30
Standard 55.10
Mobility
Enhanced 57.45
Standard 21.80

Universal Credit
Per annum

	1 bed		2 bed		3 bed		4 bed	
	Weekly	CME*	Weekly	CME*	Weekly	CME*	Weekly	CME*
Blackwater	£347.27	£141.24	£613.72	£176.56	£767.20	£210.70	£915.54	£312.00
Blackwater	£365.17	£170.67	£741.60	£222.96	£968.81	£276.67	£1,164.65	£349.61
Blackwater	£368.65	£173.41	£753.51	£221.71	£963.43	£272.54	£1,202.20	£382.64
Blackwater	£345.66	£151.50	£658.30	£185.81	£807.39	£236.96	£1,464.17	£309.57
Blackwater					£1,219.27	£344.89	£1,064.11	£334.43
Blackwater					£280.60	£82.63	£1,212.93	£312.77
Blackwater								£1,359.06

Getting ready for Universal Credit
Universal Credit (UC) has arrived in Surrey. During 2016 UC can only be claimed by individuals who meet certain criteria known as gateway conditions. This means most claims during this year will be restricted to jobseekers who don't have children, a mortgage or certain benefits in payment. There are other restrictions to check before claiming.
Claims for UC are made online
<https://www.universalfcredit.service.gov.uk/uc/>
Before you start the claim you will need the following information:
• National Insurance number
• Bank, building society, or credit union or Post Office account details for your UC payment
• Rent agreement (if you have one)
• Details of savings or other capital
• Details of any other unearned income
• Details of any other benefits being claimed (if you have a partner)

Local Housing Allowances 2016/17

Useful Contacts
Surrey Welfare Rights Unit
0345 600 0723

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit Training

Benefit Rates From April 2016

Benefit Rates From April 2016

SURREY Welfare Rights Unit
1483 770285
www.swru.org

We use four key variables

We have identified some of the main areas we can evidence we have a positive impact, and used a Treasury-approved cost benefit tool to estimate the value of our work.

Affected Population

Number of people receiving advice about a specific issue



Impact

Taken from NOIR
Impact of advice on specific outcome



Deadweight

What would have happened anyway without advice



Optimism Bias

Accounting for best practice, timeliness and independence of research



Who we are

Staff

Maggie Ashall – Training Administrator
Linda Bowman – Families Caseworker
Sarah Fell – Welfare Rights Adviser
Helen Haws – Welfare Rights Adviser
Carol Gibbs – Welfare Rights Adviser
Maureen Prendergast – Welfare Rights
Adviser
Ray Savage – Finance Administrator
Maria Zealey – Unit Manager

Trustees

Margaret Hurcombe - Chair
David Booth - Treasurer
Alison Cox - Secretary
Sandra Bolton
Jane Bourgeois
Roger Hurcombe
Dudley Beal
Anne Haigh

We would like to thank:

Surrey County Council
Woking Borough Council
Tandridge Borough Council
Elmbridge Borough Council
Guildford Borough Council

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit aims to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

We provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit
Company number: 3335128
Charity number: 1062826
FCA number: FRN 617760
OISC Registered
Advice Quality Standards in
Welfare Benefits Casework
and Telephone Support