

As you know the Welfare Reform Bill provides for the introduction of a 'Universal Credit' to replace a range of existing means-tested benefits (including Housing Benefit) and tax credits for people of working age, starting from 2013.

Besides introducing Universal Credit and related measures, the Bill makes other significant changes to the benefits system, such as:

- abolishment of Housing benefit and Council Tax Benefit
- introduces Personal Independence Payments to replace the current Disability Living Allowance
- restricts Housing Benefit entitlement for working age social housing tenants whose accommodation is larger than they need
- up-rates Local Housing Allowance rates by the Consumer Price Index
- amends the forthcoming statutory child maintenance scheme
- limits the payment of contributory Employment and Support Allowance to a 12-month period
- caps the total amount of benefit that can be claimed

The Bill has now moved to the House of Lords and has had its first reading. The second reading is scheduled for 19 July 2011. You can track the movement through the following link;

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/welfarereform.html>

The Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) has been asked by the Minister for Welfare Reform to undertake an independent review of Passported Benefits (Income Support, and provide advice on possible approaches to the provision of Passported Benefits under Universal Credit. As part of the review the Committee would like to hear from individuals, organisations and other bodies with views on Passported Benefits under Universal Credit. The consultation period begins on **16 June and ends on 22 July 2011**. The links below gives you more information and a list of questions to answer to formulate your response.

<http://ssac.independent.gov.uk/>

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/newsroom/press-releases/2011/jun-2011/dwp069-11.shtml>