

Harrogate Experience of Full UC Service

1. Harrogate went live with new claims for UC from single people on 24 February 2014, taking on couples later that year and families with children in early 2015. They have been providing support under US-LD. Volumes have been lower than estimated but even so it is not running smoothly. Their experience is that all the nationally reported problems are happening to them. When they compare UC social tenants to HB social tenants, rent arrears are significantly higher. When they request direct landlord payments from the DWP the delays mean that tenants with issues such as addiction (that have led them to have more than 8 weeks rent arrears) continue to receive payments themselves. Housing providers have higher rent arrears and a disproportionate number are on UC. Information provided to them by the DWP via the data-hub is incomplete and delayed.
2. In 2015 the unemployment rate in Harrogate amongst economically active residents was 2.1% compared to 3.4% in York¹. Although unemployment in York is higher than in Harrogate we do not expect a disproportionate impact from the introduction of the 'full' UC service.

¹ Source Official labour market statistics NOMIS:
<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157115/report.aspx#tabeinact>