Member Case Study: Impact on the landlord

UC went live in [local authority area] on 27th July. Prior to the switch the [landlord] was receiving three new UC cases per week, after the switch this increased to an average of 20. In July, the arrears were 10% below target and are currently approximately 10% over target

With the digital service there has been an emphasis on communication via the online journal which has had the following impact:

* Rent verification by the [landlord] does not override what the customer has put on their claim leading to incorrect payments.
* Having to send housing costs verifications several times.
* Service centres refusing to discuss digital claims with the [landlord].
* Confusion by service centres over live and full service UC claims.
* No contact with the service centre unless customer present.
* Information in journals not always giving sufficient details of date and amount of payment.

There have been changes as a result of the digital service which had an impact on how and when payments are received:

* Information from DWP stating payments will be made but no payment is received.
* A delay in making initial UC payment leading to APA requests (which may not be appropriate) causing further confusion.
* Monthly APA schedule now received on the 5th of each month and on average these payments are up to the 15th of the previous month - in addition to being paid four weeks in arrears.

As well as impacting on arrears there has been an impact on the [landlord] with:

* a 90% in increase in calls from customers.
* increasing concern as to whether the right action is being taken to manage arrears. Delays in claims and uncertainty over payments being made potentially lead to legal action being considered when payments are due. The alternative is not taking action and no payment being received.
* court cases being adjourned until the outcome of the UC claim is confirmed, adding to additional arrears and time.

Claimants are not being informed when deductions are made, for what reason, or how the repayment period has been calculated.