



East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau Weekly Update

04/12/2020

Armed Services Advice – Good News Story

ERCAB offers the ASAP service to provide specialist advice and support to veterans, and also to people who are currently serving in the forces, and their families. The Armed Service Advice Project (ASAP) has helped a total of 15,900 clients over the decade since 2010, putting a total of £17.6m into their pockets through welfare benefits, unpaid wages, compensation and other funding sources.

ASAP is run by Citizens Advice Scotland and funded by a coalition of military charities, led by Poppyscotland.

A client's wife approached ERCAB for help. Her husband is an Army war veteran who hadn't worked since January 2018. He had several complex health conditions, including PTSD and mobility issues. They have a young family and rely on the use of their car for school etc. Their family car was in a state of disrepair and they couldn't afford repairs or a new car.

The client was awarded Personal Independence Payment in August 2018 but had been declined the Mobility component. They had challenged this decision themselves by lodging a mandatory Reconsideration. This had been declined.

The client was advised that ERCAB could support them in lodging an Appeal, as the Mandatory Consideration was still dated within the 13 month period of challenge. An Appeal was lodged on behalf of the Client, challenging the Mobility descriptors for PIP and submitting targeted evidence.

Within 1 month of lodging the Appeal, the decision was overturned and an award was made to the client for the Enhanced Mobility component of PIP. This was backdated to August 2018. This resulted in a client financial gain of **£6970** as a lump sum, with an ongoing increase in their monthly income of **£250** per month.

The client was advised that also as a result of being awarded Enhanced Mobility on PIP, this offered them eligibility for the Mobility scheme. The client has now accessed this scheme and has a new family car.

"We can't thank you enough, this has literally changed our lives"

Clients can contact our Armed Services Advice Adviser, Rosie on **07471 095334**

Helplines

ERCAB continue to participate in all the National Helplines including;

- Scotland Citizens Advice Helpline – **0800 0281456**
- The Patient Advice and Support Service – **0800 9172127**
- Help To Claim Helpline – **0800 0232581**
- Money Talks – **0800 0857145**
- Armed Services Project – **0808 8001007**

Clients can also contact ERCAB advisers directly on – **0141 881 2032**

Warm Home Discount

The Warm Home Discount is now open for applications. ERCAB have been dealing with warm home discount applications where customers could be entitled to £140 off their electricity bill. You may be eligible if you receive the guarantee credit part of pension credit or are on a low income.

Please contact our Money Talks adviser, Mark on **07539 378806** to see if you are eligible.

Benefit Appeals

ERCAB benefits advisers have reported an increase in vulnerable clients requiring additional support when transitioning from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment. PIP awards are frequently lower (due to differing descriptors), and clients are losing premiums due to this. Outcomes in 2 cases this week, both initially from 2019, where clients presented with 0 points from their PIP assessments. ERCAB undertook successful challenges at mandatory reconsideration and appeal stage. This resulted in a backdated amount of £13,201 in case 1, and £11,353 in case 2. Both clients have an increased weekly income of £220, and are delighted and relieved to have financial pressures removed from them.