

Short Case Study - October

My client Claude, though young, comes from a complex background as a prison leaver, an unpopular demographic who tend to fall through the cracks. Claude is a funny, intelligent young person, whose problem was that he had been placed by his local authority in accommodation where the rent was too high for his benefits to fully cover it. The local authority had only taken into account that Claude was exempt from being able to receive the 'shared' rate of universal credit housing costs and was entitled to the 'one bed' rate, normally only for people over 35 years old. However, they had not taken into account that the rent of the property he was placed in was higher than the one bed rate, and also took Claude over the benefit cap, which he was not exempt from. Because Claude's personal allowance then had to be used to cover the excess rent, this left him with no income at all.

Claude was in the process of applying for discretionary housing payment from his local authority but was having difficulty gathering the paperwork. He also did not have a phone and could not afford to buy a new one, even a cheap basic one, which also made it very difficult for him to accomplish the tasks he needed to. We helped him with this, and also wrote to the local authority asking why such a situation had been allowed to happen. We were also able to give Claude a new phone, kindly donated by one of our supporters, which he was over the moon about. This meant that it was easier for us to refer him to more affordable accommodation providers, now that he could be contacted by them for viewings. He is hoping to find a better place which will be within his budget soon.