



Advice, Support and Representation for all Established 1983

# Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres

Annual Report 2020



# Contents

About us .....	2
The Chairman writes .....	4
The Co-ordinator writes .....	5
Your Voice Your Rights! .....	6
Universal Credit .....	7
Henry Smith Charity .....	8
Tudor Trust .....	9
Help is Here .....	10-11
Our Funders 2020 .....	12
Statistics .....	13-15
<b>Around the Area</b>	
Chesterfield .....	16-18
Bolsover .....	19-21
North East Derbyshire .....	22-24
Amber Valley .....	25-27
Obituaries .....	28-29
User Feedback Survey 2020 .....	30
Where to get advice .....	31
Trustees 2019/2020 and thanks .....	32

# About us

**Established in April 1983, Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centres (DUWC) provides help, advice and representation regarding benefits and credits. This work is carried out in North and East Derbyshire with three main offices in Chesterfield, Shirebrook and Alfreton**

The organisation was set up at the instigation of the local Trade Union Council with the financial support of Chesterfield Borough Council. Subsequently North East Derbyshire District Council, Bolsover District Council and Amber Valley Borough Council have given support at various times. The Derbyshire County Council provided financial support open until 2017 when the present Administration was elected. The support of the Local Authorities, Town and Parish Councils gives DUWC the ability to draw in much inward investment to the Centres.

DUWC is a charity and has 14 trustees drawn from the considerable wealth of support and expertise around the organisation.

As well as are well respected advice and representation work, the DUWC, as part of a wider network of unemployed workers' organisations endeavours to keep full employment high up the political agenda and lobbies for dignity and respect for all benefit recipients.



## Our Work

The majority of the people who use our services do so for benefits and credits advice. Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres also supports people who wish to challenge decisions made by the Department for Work and Pensions. In many cases our advisers act as representatives at Appeals Tribunals in Chesterfield, Derby and Nottingham. During the Covid pandemic nearly all tribunals have been carried out by telephone conference call.

Our organisation proactively looks to make sure that people across Derbyshire are getting all their entitlements. This means that we undertake take-up campaigns and use our website and social media to alert people to the help we offer in order that they can maximise their income.

This year we dealt with 5,202 enquiries. The lockdown, due to the pandemic, meant for a period we were only able to offer a telephone helpline service. In July we were able to safely open our three main offices at Chesterfield, Alfreton and Shirebrook and shortly afterwards, during the summer, we were able to open six of our outreach offices.

The Centre brought in £4,473,369 through advice work, money that goes into the local economy helping to save and create jobs, so supporting local business.

## Volunteers

Nearly all the staff at the DUWC started off as volunteers. Many of them have faced redundancy or have had periods of ill-health before returning to the labour market. This year saw the usual comings and goings of volunteers at the Centres. Elizabeth Mullins has left us to train us to be a doctor at Nottingham University. Michelle Francis was successful in finding employment at Pathways of Chesterfield (a service for the homeless and those at risk of homelessness). Michelle has expressed her gratitude at the chance she was afforded by the DUWC helping her to land this job.

With the current pandemic it has been more difficult to recruit volunteers. Coming into the organisation, joining the ranks of our organisation is Pat Boyle, who brings a wealth of experience to the organisation. Our new lottery community funded project 'Help is Here' has recruited two new volunteers. Originally from the Ukraine, Mykhaylo Motrynets is helping with the translation from Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian speakers. Alena Kupcova, from Slovakia is acting as our interpreter from Czech and Slovakian speakers.

Many thanks go to our long term volunteers Keith O'Neill, Lyndsey Nichols, Dick Banker, Janet Fields, Jon Jarvis, Andy King, David Eccles, Rosie Smith and Graham Baxter. Please contact us if you would like to volunteer with the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres.

# The Chairman writes

**The DUWC have been in existence since 1983. With the Bank of England forecasting that the coronavirus crisis will push the UK economy into its deepest recession in 300 years, unemployment will undoubtedly rise to 1980's levels at the very least. It is important to recognise that an organisation that was set up precisely to help alleviate the issues accompanying mass unemployment is still in a good position to continue its work.**

Throughout the lockdown DUWC staffed a helpline from 8am until 4pm and opened up the three main offices in Chesterfield, Alfreton and Shirebrook as soon as it was safe to do so. Those running charitable food deliveries out of Chesterfield reported that approximately 30% of people receiving help had no internet access and often no mobile phone credit to ring for help. That is why we opened up our services as soon as we could.

Like many community organisations, DUWC have had to become more project focused with a constant emphasis on new work. This has coincided with the squeeze on core funding from Local Government sources. Clearly the fallout from the pandemic has highlighted

the importance of the core services needed to support our people through difficult times. Our advice services are accessible in the mixed town and rural setting of the former North Derbyshire coalfield. The increasing reliance on telephone and on-line services in order to engage with the social security system is going to be a challenge to many within our communities and our core services are going to be a lifeline. Alongside this issue is the huge number of people who will need to access benefits and credits for the first time and maybe unaware of its complexities and thus needing help.

It is vitally important that all our Local Authorities continue to recognize the role of the DUWC and fund our vital service providing face-to-face outreach advice throughout some of the most deprived areas of Derbyshire. Derbyshire County Council and North East Derbyshire District Council need to reconsider their reckless decisions to withdraw funding and do the best by their constituents.



*Graham Baxter MBE,  
Chairman of DUWC's  
Management  
Committee*



## The Co-ordinator writes

**It has been an unusual year! DUWC has been successful in attracting funding to the organisation from a variety of sources. The contribution of our volunteer David Eccles in helping to put together the bids has been outstanding. In February the lottery community fund began to grant aid our 'Help is Here' project that is worth over £300,000 over five years. The Tudor trust is supporting our 'Street Talker' project for £120,000 over three years starting from October 1 2020.**

Notification of these successes was swiftly followed by the lockdown and all the challenges that brings. With the help of our supporting local authorities, risk assessments were carried out and the necessary changes to working practices were made. As a result we were able to open safely at the beginning of July.

The nature of our work has changed considerably during the pandemic. In the first instance the majority of calls to our helpline were from people seeking charity rather than advocacy. As the lockdown eased and tribunals began to be heard (nearly all on telephone conference calls) our workload has

steadily increased. We are now braced for an avalanche of enquiries as unemployment begins to bite and those on benefits face a renewed squeeze on their entitlements.

With many organisations still not open and the withdrawal of many mental health services, we are increasingly dealing with people who need services that we cannot offer. Our staff are doing their best in difficult circumstances but the infrastructure of support for vulnerable people has been seriously damaged by a decade of government cuts. Lessons need to be learnt from this pandemic experience. In the meantime, we will do our utmost to help Derbyshire people, maximising their incomes, working together giving them a voice as well as lobbying on their behalf.



*Colin Hampton,  
Co-ordinator of the  
Derbyshire Unemployed  
Workers' Centres*

# Your Voice Your Rights!

**DUWC has continued to support calls for immediate changes to Universal Credit (UC). We have supported the lobbying of Government to take urgent action to stop punishing the unemployed and disabled people with punitive benefit sanctions. Our experience and evidence has consistently shown that benefit sanctions plunge people into destitution, debt and poverty by withdrawing the social security safety net. For many, including disabled people, sanctions are unavoidable, unfair and have a negative impact on health. Most importantly they rarely help people into work or closer to the labour market.**

DUWC is also supporting the call for an end to the five week wait for payment for new Universal Credit claimants.

At the beginning of the lockdown, the Government rightly suspended benefit sanctions. But it did not take long for that decision to be reversed, even though there are far more people joining the dole queue and hardly a job to be found.

DUWC also joined with others asking for the Government to make permanent the £20-a-week temporary additional payment provided to UC and Working Tax Credits claimants to help during the pandemic. The £20 should also be made available to all claimants.

Hundreds of thousands of people, who have lost their jobs during the crisis, are learning for the first time what it is like to live under Britain's brutal and discredited welfare system. With the prospect of countless more being forced to submit benefit claims, the pressure for social security reform will continue to grow.

## Why we need a Welfare Charter

**Despite the United Kingdom being one of the richest nations in the world, in 2019 the UK had 14 million people in poverty, and this includes 4.1 million children.**

During the past year, the Trussell Trust report that 1,583,668 three-day emergency food supplies were given to people in crisis in the UK. More than half a million of these (577,618) went to children.

Work is not necessarily a route out of poverty, 57 percent of those living in relative poverty are in working households and 70 percent of children living in poverty are in households where at least one adult works.

Since 2010, welfare cuts have happened on an enormous scale, creating severe financial hardship for those on low incomes. Annual spending on the social security system will have reduced by £37 billion in the 11 years to 2021. The current benefit sanctions regime has also become incredibly harsh and unfair and is deepening the hardship faced by claimants.

We need a social security system that enables everyone to have a safe, warm home, good food, proper clothing and be able to participate in society. There is no place for a system that sees pushing people into poverty, the threat of hunger and eviction as a legitimate punishment for not being in work.



# Universal Credit and Council Tax Reduction Nightmare

**In May 2020 DUWC was contacted by a mental health Support Worker from the charity P3. She was working with a man residing in the North East Derbyshire Area, who was experiencing ongoing problems with his Universal Credit (UC) and Council Tax Reduction claim (CTR) (in fact from the time we began helping him, he had no live CTR claim and had built up Council Tax arrears – resulting in court action).**

He was receiving Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and was found to have Limited Capability for Work Related Activity –essentially he was unfit for work and had no Conditionality attached to his UC claim.

In the summer of 2019 he found that his UC entitlement was either reduced or stopped because of earnings being apportioned to his UC claim. The knock on effect of the earnings attachment was that they were then used to work out his CTR claim. His CTR claim was assessed again and closed, over time arrears of council tax increased; court action against the man became inevitable.

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) accepted that the man was fully incapable of working and earning so launched an investigation, involving Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the employer paying the wages.

By May 2020 the man's UC/CTR problems remained unresolved. He was still being underpaid Universal Credit.

On becoming involved, we decided to contact the DWP's regional Complaint section. We advised the man to reclaim CTR and request

backdating. We also contacted his Local Authority –providing documented evidence that the earnings attachments were an ongoing error.

In time, we received Complaints responses from both the DWP and the man's Local Authority Revenues Section. The DWP explained that the root cause of the problem was the automated action that was taken by HMRC's Real Time System (in reporting earnings). The man had somehow been linked to another individual because they both shared the same date of birth, first name and lived in the same city at the time. Consequently, when the other individual was paid by the employer, their information was posted to the man's PAY AS YOU EARN record under the Real Time System.

As for the man's CTR and Council Tax problems. The Revenues section came back to inform they had reinstated his CTR claim and changed their earlier CTR decisions for the Council Tax liability year 2019/2020; he was fully entitled to CTR from 2019 to 2020 and in to the future; all arrears had also been removed.

The man recently contacted us to say that he now had no issues with any of his benefits – he commented that he could not see how anyone could sort out his problems so quickly, especially during these difficult times.

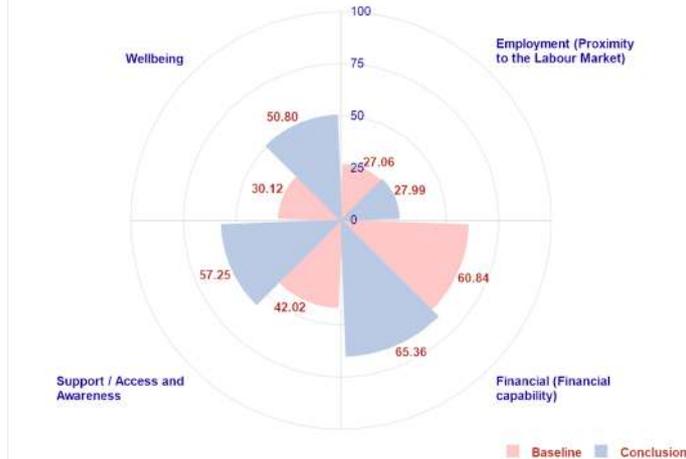


# Henry Smith Charity 'Crisis Prevention Project'

**Our Henry Smith project is the final report stage this year. Our successful bid was aimed at those who use our services requiring a lengthy input of advice support and representation. Over the duration of the project, 303 people had engaged with our project worker Andy Parkes.**

New engagements:	Disengagements:	In progress:	Conclusions:	Service utilization:
303	0	47	256	1,123 hr : 0 min (150.00 workdays)

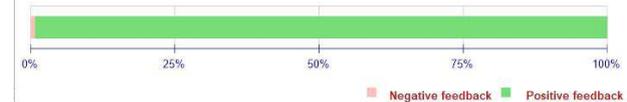
Average section indicator scores



The number of cases that went to Appeal was 282. The vast majority had a positive outcome, both financially and the benefits shown through our soft outcomes indicators (see table). The Appeals Tribunals generated by Andy's work brought in a total of £587,104.56 in lump sums and £712,529.48 in annualised additional weekly payments.

Client service satisfaction:

Feedback scores for the service offered



Random comments (if entered) from positive scores (max of 5 comments displayed):

- 2018-11-12  
So pleased for your help it takes the pressure off when there is someone else helping to fight your corner.
- 2020-05-04  
THANKS FOR THE HELP
- 2020-09-30  
Thank you from Grace and me.
- 2020-04-22  
Thanks sent through Katie Brewster Tenancy Support Worker
- 2020-09-30  
Thank you so much for your support

Random comments (if entered) from negative scores (max of 5 comments displayed):

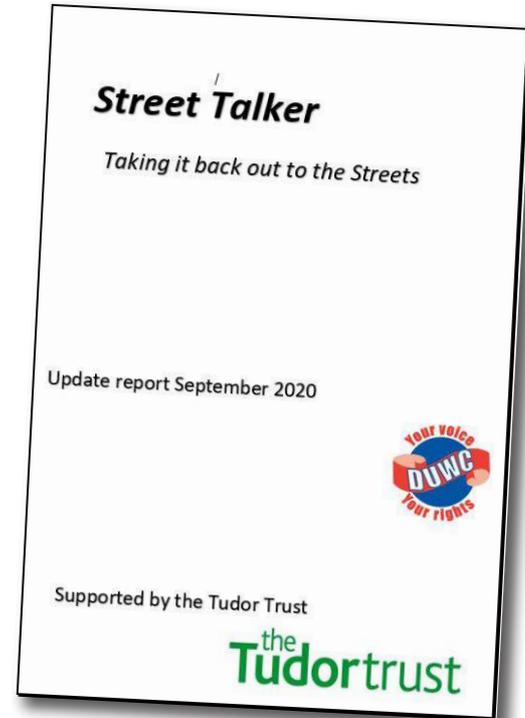
- 2019-11-25  
EXPECTED TO WIN MY APPEAL
- 2019-12-18  
Not entirely happy -a good result with the appeal. di not like the fact that there was a change of representative at the last minute.

# Tudor Trust – taking it back out to the streets

**After a delay due the pandemic we are starting our 'Street Talker' Project on October 1st 2020. The project aims to bring together people who are being adversely affected by policies, forming local communities of interest who can give voice to the unemployed and low-waged.**

We will engage with people locally where possible, at service points and through partner organisations. We will offer an 'accessible' service – recognising transport needs, times of service and vulnerability of any individual – giving advice on welfare and benefit rights and signposting to other services and provision.

We will give voice to individuals and 'communities of interest' by organising in appropriate ways and through the creation of social media groups. Although the project, envisaged in different times is difficult to progress, it is needed now more than ever. Watch this space!



# Help is here

**The Project has certainly hit the ground running! The migrant advice project has helped 58 people since it started in March 2020. This has resulted 122 advice slots, many regarding benefits and credits as well as other social payments and over double figures regarding settled status. As well as the settled status cases the project has called on the help of the Derbyshire Law Centre regarding employment, debts, state pension and housing.**

Ms AL from Nottinghamshire found our advert in the Polish newspaper – “East Midlands po polsku” and came to our office in Shirebrook. She is a single mum with mortgage to pay and working only part time. She had tried to claim Universal Credit (UC) four times, but every time it was unsuccessful due to various spurious or trivial reasons. She was finally successful after our intervention (phone call and conversation with a Job Centre Plus officer). UC was awarded from 28 August 2020 and she now receives a sum of £437 every month.

Ms MS from Shirebrook came to us after unsuccessful claim for Personal Independence Payment (PIP). She was awarded Standard daily living PIP after an appeal

# Pomoc jest tutaj

submitted with the help of our team. A lump sum of £4,525.74 arrears was awarded and a weekly payment of £59.70.

Mrs BT of Shirebrook came to see us at our Shirebrook venue. Her case is still in progress. She came to us regarding her state pension. She came to UK 10 years ago and was working all this time and reached pension age in November 2018. We found out from HMRC that she is not eligible for a state pension as the Best Connection Employment Agency wrongly recorded her as a pensioner in 2013 and stopped deducting pension contributions from her wages. HMRC is to bring the case up with “Best Connection” and they will be probably liable to pay to HMRC the missing amount of the woman’s contribution which is calculated at over £3000.

This project helps people with a whole range of problems. Not all of them are connected directly to their finances and benefits. Many of them connected to deteriorating health conditions and individuals without a sufficient level of English to manage problems by themselves.



**Joanna Zon and Marcin Proc**

We have observed a quite common belief between Polish people, that they cannot claim PIP while still working. This is because in Poland, Polish law prohibits working people from claiming disability allowance.

Overall our experience is that there is not a lot of knowledge between our migrant clients about PIP and how benefits work in general. Universal Credit is better understood.

We have so far recruited 2 volunteers who will be trained.

Both of them live locally and came to us initially as clients with very complex needs. With their support and advertisements in their native languages on social media we hope to attract more migrants from other than the Polish community.



## **'Help is here'**

*User feedback comments*

*Kind and professional approach to the problems I would not have been able to resolve myself.*

*I am very happy with solid and professional service. I will surely recommend to anybody seeking help.*

*I am very happy with gentle, professional service. I will with pleasure recommend to the others.*

# Our Funders 2020

## Local Authorities

- Chesterfield Borough Council
- Amber Valley Borough Council
- Bolsover District Council
- North East Derbyshire District Council

## Parish And Town Councils

- Alfreton Town
- Belper Town
- Brimington Parish
- Clay Cross Parish
- Clowne Parish
- Eckington Parish
- Elmton with Creswell Parish

- Grassmoor Parish
- Heanor and Loscoe Town
- North Wingfield Parish
- Pinxton Parish
- Pilsley Parish
- Pleasley Parish
- Scarcliffe Parish
- Shirebrook Town
- Somercotes Parish
- Sutton come Duckmanton Parish
- Warsop Parish

## Grants And Donations

- Community Lottery Fund
- Alex Ferry Foundation

- Henry Smith
- Money Sorted in D2N2 – European Social Fund – Big Lottery Fund
- Tudor Trust
- Derbyshire One Fund For All
- Unite East Midlands Region
- GMB – Yorks and N. Derbyshire
- GMB Chesterfield Holding Branch
- Thompsons Solicitors
- Graysons Solicitors
- Grassland Hasmoor Futures
- Anonymous Charitable Donations



CHESTERFIELD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Amber Valley  
Borough Council



North East  
Derbyshire  
District Council



Bolsover  
District Council



unite  
the UNION



GMB  
UNION



Money Sorted in D2N2



COMMUNITY  
FUND



European Union  
European  
Social Fund

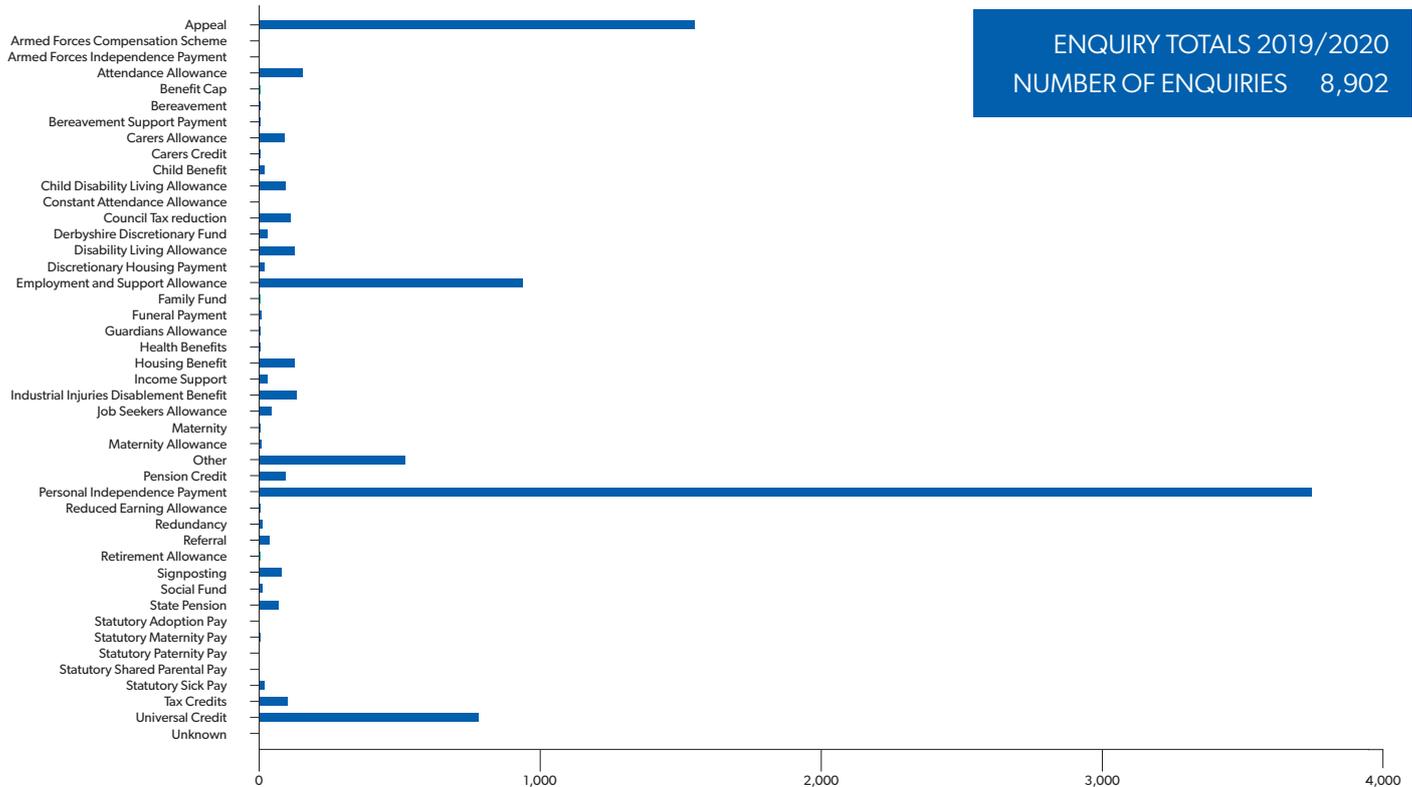
# Statistics Oct 1st 2019 – Sept 30th 2020

Lead issue:	Abandoned:	Pending:	Completed:	Arrears amount:	Weekly amount:
Attendance Allowance	2	1	2	£0.00	£58.70
Bereavement	0	0	1	£700.00	£0.00
Carers allowance	0	0	1	£50.00	£0.00
Child Disability Living Allowance	0	3	7	£26,249.00	£477.48
Council tax reduction	0	1	0	£0.00	£0.00
Disability Living Allowance	1	6	7	£10,852.00	£325.77
Employment and Support Allowance	26	40	56	£62,549.68	£2,387.66
Housing benefit	1	1	2	£0.00	£0.00
Income support	0	3	0	£0.00	£0.00
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	0	8	2	£2,577.60	£71.60
Job Seekers Allowance	0	0	1	£0.00	£0.00
Other	0	1	0	£0.00	£0.00
Pension credit	0	0	1	£160.00	£0.00
Personal Independence Payment	69	221	295	£919,545.20	£19,054.78
Tax credits	1	3	0	£0.00	£0.00
Universal credit	11	22	24	£46,724.64	£1,053.78
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>£1,069,408.12</b>	<b>£23,429.77</b>

**As a result of these tribunals, the following amounts were awarded:** Lump Sums Arrears: £1,069,408.

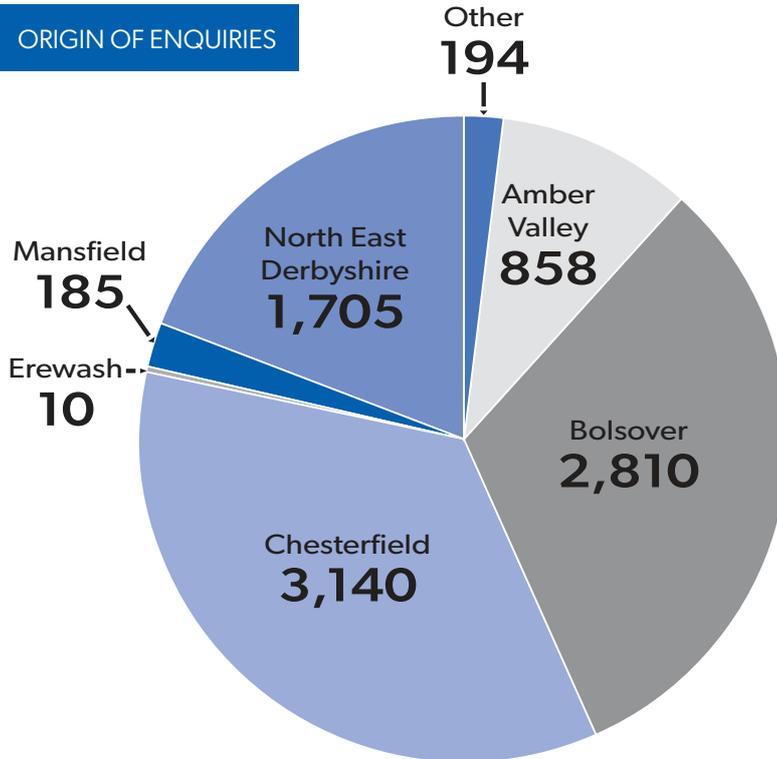
Ongoing Weekly Benefits: £23,429 (over a year this equals £1,218,348). In 2020, general enquiries and take-up work resulted in payments of £2,185,613 for Derbyshire Residents. **During this year, this has meant a total of £4,473,369 has been won through our advice and representation services.**

# Statistics



# Statistics Oct 1st 2019 – Sept 30th 2020

## ORIGIN OF ENQUIRIES



## UNIQUE SERVICE REQUESTS

**Home Visits**  
**19**

**Telephone enquiries**  
**1,625**

**Email and Facebook**  
**104**

**In Person**  
**3,450**

# Around the area - Chesterfield



**Our outreach at Hasland and has moved from the Penmore Business Centre up to the Hasland**

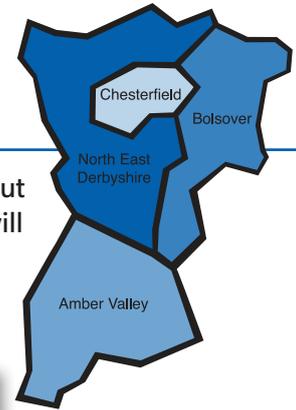
**Working Men's Club. We hope that the more central venue will be more convenient and accessible to the people of the area. Brimington advice sessions began again in September 2020 with safe working practices employed. The Staveley outreach is closed as the library has been unable to undertake room bookings for the whole of the lockdown period and beyond. DUWC operated a helpline out of our Chesterfield HQ from 8 am to 4 pm between April and July.**

There is a definite need for face-to-face advice and support. Many people are unable or unwilling to access services any other way other than a drop in facility. DUWC has endeavoured to meet this need whilst operating safely for our staff, volunteers and members of the public. At the time of going to print

the threat level from Covid is rising but our doors are still open though we will endeavour to help remotely where possible.



*Brigit Long  
– Adviser*



# Around the area - Chesterfield

## Case study

**A Brampton woman who had a long standing indefinite award of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) was transitioned to Personal Independence Payment (PIP). She has cancer that kept returning then going into remission. She had developed other health conditions from repeated chemo and radiotherapy. The appeal process was started by the woman who then came to us at a later date for representation. She was going to withdraw the appeal due to ill health and stress, but with our support she was convinced to continue. We represented at the tribunal and she won. Arrears of over £8000 were paid and the PIP award of daily living and mobility was awarded indefinitely. This again shows the**

**value of our representation service to people who often are not in a good place to fight for their rights and entitlements.**



*Lynn Bagshaw (Administrator)*

# Around the area - Chesterfield

## Case study

A Chesterfield resident came to us as Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had removed Personal Independence Payment (PIP) following a medical assessment. The claimant had significant health issues and we advised to take this case to appeal. Some 13 months later we represented him at an appeal in which he was successful. However, DWP felt that their original assessment was fair and challenged the tribunal decision. We then contacted DWP and asked their decision maker to explain their case. The decision maker could not see any merit in the challenge and they consequently withdrew their opposition. As a result the claimant retains the PIP award. This increased their weekly income of £83 a week and arrears of £5994 to date. However, the stress and worry endured over the 18 month period, came free.

*You are all amazing people! Many, many thanks for helping me 3 or 4 times. Knowing that someone is there to help means so much to so many people. **J.T., Staveley***

*Thank you all for your professional expertise and support in navigating my way through a PIP tribunal. You were absolute stars and I could not have done it without you. I really appreciate your unwavering support, your sensitivity and understanding. Thank you for simply being there.*

**P.M., Chesterfield**

*Sending a heartfelt thanks to all of you who helped with my PIP and Pension Credit. Could not have done it without you. Once again thank you. **M.H., Brimington***

# Around the area - Bolsover



**Outreach offices are again open at Pinxton, Clowne and Creswell. Bolsover library is not accepting room bookings at the moment so outreach there is temporarily suspended.**

**Our new building on Patchwork Row, the former town council building, has been renovated following fire damage in 2019.**

**The Centre has a new roof and new windows on one side of the building. The ramp at the front has been replaced and the new computer system and telephone system have been installed all thanks to the Community Lottery Fund.**

**The pandemic has prevented us from opening in the way we would have liked. However, before the lockdown we did have an opening ceremony that ended with a showing of the Ken Loach film 'Sorry we Missed You' at the Shirebrook Miners Welfare.**



**The grant from the Community Lottery Fund has allowed us to extend our opening hours for all.**



**Karen  
Seymour  
(Adviser)**

# Around the area - Bolsover

## Case study - Shirebrook

**Navigating the Benefits system can be difficult at the best of times and sometimes seem insurmountable if your command of English is limited. So found one Shirebrook man who came from Bulgaria, who wished to claim Child Benefit.**

He had applied for Child Benefit and sent all the forms and documents the DWP had requested. However, some they had lost and some they said were not what they asked for. Despite several phone calls to the DWP the matter could not be resolved.

He had got to the stage of thinking that the fault was his and in frustration he contacted our Shirebrook office and sought assistance under our "Help is Here" project.

Our adviser went through with him what paperwork was needed and with some help from translation services and some improvised sign language managed to get all information needed.

Our adviser rang on his behalf and discovered he had indeed sent in all the necessary documentation but the holdup was

that the DWP needed the original documents not copies. Understandably this had made him very anxious as the documents they were requesting were passports and birth certificates, which he had to renew when previously they been lost when he had sent them to another government authority.

He agreed to send the originals. Our adviser photocopied all of them so at least he would have evidence if they got lost again. He rang every week for three weeks and eventually the process was completed and documents returned. He finally got his payments and his Child benefit was back dated for six months which was how long he had been struggling.



*Opening of new centre in Shirebrook*

# Around the area - Bolsover

## Case study - Langwith

A Langwith man, who has previously been to see us for help after suffering a stroke, sought our assistance again as he had his Personal Independence Payment (PIP) stopped, despite suffering 2 more strokes.

This man had been a supervisor for an employer who he had worked for 19 years making aircraft components. The company due to his loyalty and previous hard work had assigned him light duties following the strokes.

Due to the effects of his strokes he suffered from Aphasia (an impairment affecting his speech and the ability to read or write). He relied heavily on his daughter to assist him amongst other things; to show him alternative ways to drive to work in case one route was closed for any reason, and if this route was closed to come home. She also cooked all his meals and reminded him to dress and bathe.

In addition, he could only sort money by notes and managing his finances had to be written down for him. He also did not socialise due to his condition and even sat outside at work during meal times as he could not face being in the canteen with other work colleagues.

However due to him being able to work and drive he received nil points following his Personal Independence Payment assessment.

We assisted him through the appeal process and represented him at the Tribunal hearing. Upholding his appeal and reinstating his PIP, the Tribunal judge "recommended that he never gets assessed again".

*Thank you is not enough for all the help and support you have given me. **L.M., Bolsover***

*Just to say I will never forget what you have done for me. Thank you so much.  
**S.H, Shirebrook***



**Andy Parkes, Adviser and Assistant Co-ordinator**

# Around the area - North East Derbyshire



**In the autumn of 2019 the North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) wrote to DUWC informing us of their intention to withdraw all funding to the organisation. DUWC has been supported continuously by NEDDC since 1987. Outreach services**

**exist in Clay Cross, Eckington, Grassmoor and North Wingfield. Over the years Homewood and Killamarsh have also had a service in their communities. Residents also access services in Chesterfield, Staveley and Alfreton.**

Following the intervention of the then leader of the Council Cllr Martyn Thacker MBE, NEDDC gave us a one off grant of £10,000 for 2020–2021. This allowed us to maintain a presence in Grassmoor and North Wingfield. Since the



lockdown Clay Cross adult education centre has been closed. Eckington Parish Council informed us that they would no longer support us so the local outreach service has had to be closed. People from that area, who are able, have had to come in to Chesterfield for advice and representation. It appears unlikely with the new political leadership that the Centre will receive grant aid in 2021. We

hope that they will see sense, amidst the current crisis, to do the right thing by their constituents and maintain DUWC outreach services throughout the district.



*John Power, Personal Navigator*

# Around the area - North East Derbyshire

## Case study - Grassmoor

**A Grassmoor couple came for to see us for advice at the Community Centre. The woman was sick and had been claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), her husband was part of her claim. Having been assessed for her capability for work the woman was found fit for work and the claim was closed.**

The couple had learning disabilities and found dealing with benefit issues very challenging and stressful. They were wrongly advised to claim Universal Credit (UC) and sent away without any support or idea how to make a new claim. This led to a situation of ongoing hardship as they were unable to make an online claim – and so were left without any income, for quite a period of time.

We became involved and helped the couple make a new UC claim. We argued for a telephone claim on the grounds that the couple would be unlikely to maintain their UC claim online and there would be a real risk of

benefit being lost through a sanction; the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) reluctantly accepted a telephone claim.

At the same time we helped the woman appeal the loss of her ESA by submitting strong evidence of her learning difficulties obtained from her GP. Her appeal was successful and should have resulted in the woman's sick status being transferred to the couples UC claim. Unfortunately, and through poor administration –the correct amount of UC was not paid out to the couple for a number of weeks.

On her behalf we contacted the DWP's Complaints Team about the couple's situation. We had to argue strongly and with the aid of benefit regulations before the matter was resolved. A significant sum of backdated UC was paid to the couple along with an apology for poor administration and advice from the DWP.

# Around the area - North East Derbyshire

## Case study - Clay Cross

A claimant from Clay Cross was issued a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) review form. She completed this and shortly afterwards she attended a face to face assessment (Medical). The decision maker at Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) decided to remove her existing award despite her having a degenerative condition and letters of support from, Consultants and Physiotherapists.

We appealed and were successful. The DWP offered to award the Care element of PIP but the limitations to her mobility were not recognised. So, we further disputed this and were able to secure both Mobility and Care elements of PIP resulting in her being £83 weekly better off and will also receive over £4,500 in arrears.



*I want to thank you for all your help in resolving my issue with PIP it is very much appreciated, don't know what I would have done without your help and guidance.*

**S.R., Clay Cross**

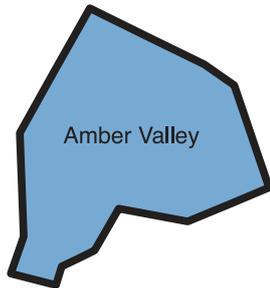
*Thank you all so much for all the hard work you guys do. Without you all it would be a nightmare to navigate the minefield that is the British Benefits system. Every time we needed you there was no hesitation. Words cannot begin to express the level of gratitude we have for you all.*

**P.S., Grassmoor**

*A very big thank you to you all, the work you do is brilliant, you are amazing and we couldn't do it without you.*

**L.P., Eckington**

# Around the area - Amber Valley



Thanks to the continued support given by Amber Valley Borough Council we have been able to continue our services in the Borough. We were able to reopen our Alfreton Office in July and shortly afterwards opened our outreaches again in

Somercotes and in Belper. Heanor Town Hall is still as yet unavailable. The lockdown couldn't have come at a worse time for our long-awaited return to Belper. Our intention was to move into the new library on Derwent St but the pandemic has caused a delay. In the meantime, we are using the Belper Community Cottage. We hope to be able to make our services better known in the area, re-establishing our presence in the coming period. As unemployment rises and the associated problems increase we hope to be able to offer help, support and representation to all in Amber Valley.



**Paul Marklew**  
(Adviser)

# Around the area - Amber Valley

## Case study - Heanor

A woman from Heanor contacted us. She had been diagnosed with a brain tumour. She was worried about coping when her 28 week Statutory Sick Pay would end in the next 2 weeks. Our Adviser explained that she needed to make sure she was claiming new style Employment and Support Allowance as this would allow her 6 month's payments without her other income affecting it. Our adviser asked how her health was being affected by the tumour. When she explained it was suggested that she should make a claim for Personal Independence Payment (PIP). She also thought that she could not claim PIP as she has an autistic grandson that both she and her husband

look after. Her husband claims carers allowance with this regard. She was assured that she was entitled and she rang for the form. She came back the following week and we gave her help to make the claim. She told us she had applied for her ESA in advance after our advice and this had been put through. She broke down in tears and thanked us as she said before she came to us she had been to the local jobcentre and all they had said to her was 'everything is online now' with no further help or explanation. She had seen our leaflet and called as a last hope and now could not thank us enough for taking a lot of pressure from her.





# Obituaries

## Jane Marriott (1953 - 2020)

In September 2020 DUWC was informed that former worker and volunteer Jane Marriott had died after a

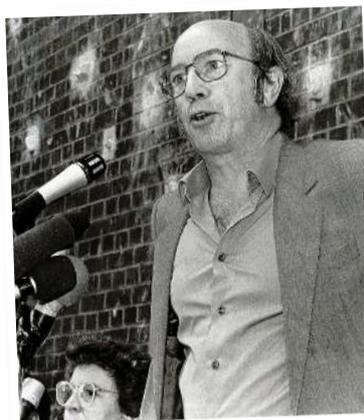


short illness in the Northern General Hospital. Jane joined us first as a volunteer in 2010 and subsequently she was employed in the organisation. Following her retirement Jane came back for a short while to volunteer as her desire to help and make a difference was so strong.

Jane was very well respected within our organisation and a popular member of our team. Our condolences go out to the family.

## Barry Johnson

Barry Johnson, former President of Chesterfield & District Trades Union Council and trustee of Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centres died in January after a long illness.



*Speaking in Hucknall during the miners strike, 1984.*

Barry, who originated from Hucknall, moved to Chesterfield to work at the College in the late 1970's where he developed the Trade Union studies department. Barry was already involved in politics, his father had been blacklisted from the pits and his mother was active in the Unemployed Workers Movement of the 1920's and 1930's. As a delegate from the College Lecturers Union he became

# Obituaries

President of the Chesterfield & District Trade Union Council, helping to establish the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centres based in the town. He was an accomplished orator, having the experience as a young man of drawing an audience stood on an orange box in Nottingham' Slab Square. Many people will remember Barry's enthusiastic and uplifting performances as the master of ceremonies at Chesterfield's May Day celebrations during the 1980's and 1990's. He stood down, as a matter of principle when he retired from work insisting that the President should be active in the workplace. Barry had a long association with, and gave unstinting support to, the miners working tirelessly during the strike in support of the communities where he had been raised and now resided. On retirement he took the time to study for an MA in local history at Leicester University and produced two short books, one on the General Strike in Mansfield and also a study of the operation of the 'butty system' in the local coalmines. His continued support for the Unemployed Workers' Centres (UWC) was crucial and he served on both regional and national committees gaining the respect of people throughout the country.

On his eightieth birthday a celebration event was held in

the Winding Wheel with performers from far and wide taking part, the proceeds going to the UWC.



*Memorial meeting for Barry Johnson at the Winding Wheel*



*Mountain of Unemployed in the European Union – Barry takes the megaphone*

# User Feedback Survey 2019

## **Details of how long individuals waited to see an adviser, broken down into five bands.**

0-5 mins	37
5-15 mins	22
15-30 min	12
30-60 min	16
Over 1 Hour	10

**Each individual was asked if they would use our service again.** 97 said they would. 100% positive

**Each individual was asked if they would recommend us to someone else who was in need of benefits or credits advice.** 97 said they would. 100% positive

## **Each individual was asked how they had heard of the service we provide.**

Family/friends	52
Previous Visit	13
Law Centre	2
CAB	2
Local Council	1
Jobcentre	10
Sign outside	9
No Comment	8

## **Each person was asked how they felt about our service.**

Very Happy	86
Satisfied	11
Dissatisfied	0
Very Unhappy	0
None of above	0

## **Comments about our service (a limited sample)**

*"Really helped me, don't know what I would do without this service."*

*"Always helped me over the years."*

*"Couldn't do without this essential service, very important to me."*

*"Great service. Helpful adviser. Very happy with this service."*

*"Excellent service, understood every issue my son has with his disabilities."*

*"Adviser was brilliant, couldn't have done it without her."*

*"Adviser was professional and caring, made me feel at ease."*



# WHERE TO GET ADVICE

(During Covid Pandemic please  
check website for updates)

Chesterfield & North East Derbyshire  
**1 Rose Hill East, Chesterfield  
S40 1NU**

**Tel: 01246 231441**

**Email: [info@duwc.org.uk](mailto:info@duwc.org.uk)**

**Monday - Friday 9.30am - 1.00pm**

Brimington

**Community Centre, High Street  
Monday 9.00am - 12 Noon**

Clay Cross

**Adult Education Centre,  
Market Street**

**Monday 9.30am - 12.30pm**

North Wingfield

**Community Resources Centre,  
Whiteleas Avenue,  
Thursday 1.00pm - 3.30pm**

Hasland

**Hasland Working Men's Club,  
Hampton St, Chesterfield  
Wednesday 1.00pm - 3.30pm**

Grassmoor

**Community Centre, New Street  
Thursday 10.00am - 12 Noon**

Staveley

**Staveley Library, Hall Lane  
Tuesday & Thursday  
9.30am - 12.00pm**

Bolsover District

**44 Patchwork Row, Shirebrook,  
NG20 8AL**

**Tel: 01623 748161**

**Monday - Thursday  
9.00am - 11.30am**

Bolsover

**Bolsover Library, Church Street  
Tuesday 9.30am - 12.00am**

Clowne

**Community Centre, Recreation Close,  
Wednesday 1.00pm - 3.30pm**

Creswell

**Limestone House, Elmtun Road  
Thursday 1.00pm - 3.30pm**

Pinxton

**Village Hall, Kirkstead Road  
Tuesday 1.00pm - 3.30pm**

Amber Valley

**Suite 4, Alfreton House, High Street  
Tel: 01773 832237**

**Tuesday 9.00am - 12 Noon**

**Wednesday/Thursday  
9.00am - 12 noon/1.00pm - 4.00pm**

Heanor

**Heanor Town Hall Buxton Room  
Thursday 9.00am - 12 Noon**

Somercotes

**Parish Hall, Nottingham Road  
Monday 1.30pm - 4.00pm**

# Trustees 2019/2020

The Trustees would like to thank all those who have given freely their time and talents throughout the year in pursuit of the aims and objectives of the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres.

**Graham Baxter**  
**Ian Rutledge**  
**John Knight**  
**Hilary Cave**  
**Cllr. Mary Kerry**  
**Nicolo Ferrera**  
**Elaine Tidd**  
**Cllr. Amanda Serjeant**

**Christine Smith** (from September 2020)  
**Sarah Roy**  
**Angela Webster**  
**Cllr. Mary Dooley**  
**Bethany Holt**  
**Cllr. Steve Marshall- Clarke**  
**Barry Johnson** (Deceased January 2020)

# Centre Staff 2020

<b>Colin Hampton</b>	Co-ordinator
<b>Andy Parkes</b>	Assistant Co-ordinator/ Welfare Rights Adviser
<b>Lynn Bagshaw</b>	Administrator
<b>Katrina Hudson</b>	Welfare Rights Adviser
<b>Glynn Power</b>	Welfare Rights Adviser
<b>Tim Wilkinson</b>	Welfare Rights Adviser
<b>Brigit Long</b>	Welfare Rights Adviser
<b>John Power</b>	Welfare Rights Adviser
<b>Paul Marklew</b>	Welfare Rights Adviser
<b>Karen Seymour</b>	Welfare Rights Adviser
<b>Maria Kazimirska</b>	Bilingual Buddies Project
<b>Joanna Zon</b>	Co-ordinator 'Help is Here Project'
<b>Marcin Proc</b>	Administrator 'Help is Here Project'

## Thanks

To all our funders, our Trustees,  
our OFFA Contributors and all our supporters.

*Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres are funded by Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, North East Derbyshire District Council, Brimington Parish Council, Alfreton Town Council, Pinxton Parish Council, Somercotes Parish Council, and many town and parish councils across Derbyshire as well as contributions raised through the One Fund For All.*

