



Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres

Annual Report 2019

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Who are we?

Since 1983, The Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centres have been providing advice, support and representation to claimants in the former coalfields area of Derbyshire.

The organisation has an enviable reputation locally, regionally and nationally of delivering consistent quality and local services. DUWC became a Charity in 2016 with 13 trustees drawn from a considerable wealth of support and expertise around the Centres. Although there are far fewer Unemployed Workers Centres in the United Kingdom than back in the 1980's, we continue to punch above our weight, keeping full employment and dignity for benefits recipients on the political agenda.

The organisation has strong links with the communities it serves. Most of the staff started as volunteers and some originally service users, this giving an added steel of commitment to the aims and objectives of the Centres.



What do we do?

Most people contact us when they have problems with benefits and credits. Help is given to people who have to fill out complicated forms and to those who wish to challenge decisions made about their claims. The DUWC does not just sit back and wait for people to come to us, but proactively tries to make our services known to the hardest to reach and most vulnerable within our communities.

Each year we deal with over 11,000 enquiries at our Centres and many outreach venues. We have received over £5 million in lump sum payments and increased weekly benefits and credits for the people of Derbyshire. This money is vital both for the individuals and families concerned, but also for the regeneration of the local economy. The money people receive is mostly spent locally, thus helping to preserve jobs and support local businesses.

Our services are provided by a few paid staff and a team of volunteers across Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire, Bolsover and Amber Valley.

We have been successful in training volunteers from our communities, many of whom have moved on into paid employment.

Volunteers

Joining the ranks of volunteers this year have been Janet Fields (at Shirebrook), Charles Robinson (from Alfreton), Michelle Frances (Staveley), Graham Baxter (Dronfield) and Elizabeth Mullins (Newbold). They have come aboard the good ship DUWC with established volunteers Shirley Peirson, Allison Jarvis, Keith O'Neill, Dick Banker, Jon Jarvis, Will Nightingale, Ian Christian and Lyndsey Nicholls.

Dr Sue Wheatcroft has left to pursue her interest in mental health issues, and Georgia Durose is continuing her studies.

Andy King and Rosie Smith helped with the Universal Credit survey research, number crunching and analysis; Dennis Clayton and Shay Boyle took out the 'Climbing out of Poverty' Snakes and Ladders game round the Galas and Shows during the summer.

The Volunteers add a vibrancy to our work bringing new enthusiasm and character to the organisation. The work is rewarding and often leads to progression of the individual, whether into work or further study or voluntary interests. Please contact us if you would like to be involved.

The Chairman writes

North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) have announced the withdrawal of the grant funding to the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centre (DUWC).

The Council have given financial support to the DUWC since 1987. Before 1987, residents of the District would travel to Chesterfield to seek advice from the Centres offices. In recognition of the work that the organisation was providing for the community, NEDDC began to fund the Centre alongside Derbyshire County Council and Chesterfield Borough Council. Later Bolsover District and Amber Valley Borough Councils came on board.

Over the next 32 years DUWC has consistently provided a superb service to workers and those in receipt of benefits and credits. In 1988, Arkwright Colliery was closed, followed by Renishaw Park in 1990. The DUWC developed outreach centres in Holmewood and Clay Cross. Later, Outreach advice sessions are developed in North Wingfield, Eckington, Grassmoor, and for a time in Killamarsh. As well as the pits, the Centres advice workers gave invaluable help,

advice and support to workers at Bryan Donkin Renishaw Foundry and Bi-water pipes of Clay Cross, providing on-site advice to the people made redundant. Whoever was in Government, the DUWC stood up for the people in our community. DUWC campaigned successfully to keep open the Eckington Jobcentre, although it was closed later, and fought hard to save Dronfield and the one at Clay Cross. Throughout this period advice workers continued to help low paid and insecure workers, as well as those struggling with the complexities of the benefit system. They are now needed more than ever with the introduction of Universal Credit and the explosion of exploitative insecure work with zero hours and agency labour replacing previously decent, secure employment. The local authority funding DUWC receives allows it to draw inward investment through grants from charities and trusts. The grant withdrawal decision is petty and shortsighted and all at the DUWC implore them to think again!



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



The Co-ordinator writes

It is a difficult enough job supporting, advising and representing people battling against adversity in the benefits and tax credits system – without having to defend the organisation itself from swingeing grant cuts. However, we will not be ground down.

The elected members of the Conservative administration at the County Council and North East Derbyshire District Council have set their priorities. Our work, and presumably the people who benefit from our assistance, are low on their list. In the last five years we have helped over 1800 individuals in North East Derbyshire district. If you include the benefit to family members, this is a significant percentage of the people living in the area. Each year we help around 80 people go to court to overturn decisions made to reduce or take away their benefits and credits. The vast majority are successful. Tribunal work alone has put in £2.5 million into the pockets of people in the towns and villages of North East Derbyshire over the last 5 years. When take-up work is included, this total exceeds £10 million in this period. Against this

evidence, the Councils decisions do not appear to be in the interests of many within their constituencies.

On a more positive note, adversity has brought out the best in those who do support our work, and the recipients of our advice and representation.

Chesterfield Borough Council has consistently grant aided the DUWC since 1983, and Bolsover District Council since 1993. Amber Valley Borough Council have decided to begin giving us grant aid again that will allow us to provide services in Heanor and Belper, as well as Alfreton and Somercotes. Our funders are listed in this Annual Report and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them, on behalf of the Trustees, staff and volunteers for their continued support that has been truly humbling.



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

Your Voice Your Rights!

Extracts from the Survey of 107 Universal Credit Claimants

More than half of claimants had a bad experience of Universal Credit

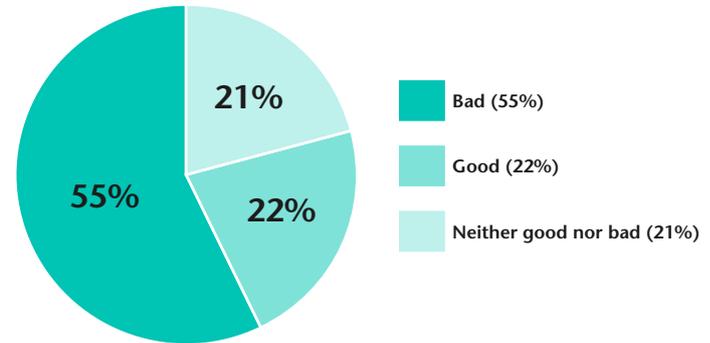
More than half of people surveyed said they had a bad experience of claiming Universal credit. 47% of 50 people we spoke to had used a foodbank at least once. 57% said they had to rely on friends and family to help them out.

35% of people did not think they were receiving all the benefits they are entitled to.

Two thirds of people we spoke to would prefer to be paid fortnightly, and only a fifth were happy to be paid monthly as is the current system.



What is your experience of Universal Credit?



"When I started to work, they presumed that I was earning the same amount as the first month. I was with an agency. Now I am working part-time I am glad I'm not relying on it 100%."

"Makes people worse off, designed to do that."

"Should get more help with council tax. No extras at all in life. Just get by."

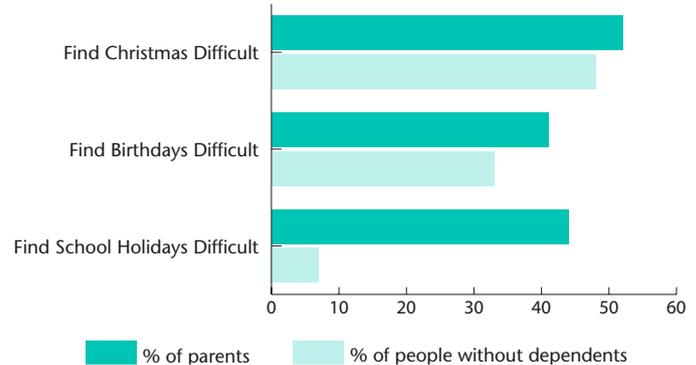
"Not working, not listening, not able to manage."

Your Voice Your Rights!

Families

A quarter of people surveyed had dependent children or caring responsibilities for vulnerable adults. Of women who were surveyed, 46% had dependent children, compared with only 14% of men. This is found to add extra strain to women claiming Universal Credit. 31% of women find school holidays difficult, while 8% of men reported the same. Out of everyone we spoke to, only 7% reported that they had difficulties affording school trips, school uniforms and school equipment. Of course, this figure is much higher for claimants with children, 74% of whom had found affording school trips, uniform and equipment. From our survey results, it appeared that it was the same parents who couldn't afford any of these things.

Parents were also far more likely to find school holidays difficult than those without dependents, as well as finding birthdays and Christmas or other religious events slightly more difficult.



"There should be a minimum living allowance. Deductions take me to £300 a month to live on. I have two children and I am pregnant and should get £1019."

"I would not be able to exist without the child element and child benefit"

Your Voice Your Rights!

Debt

More than half of people we spoke to had fallen into debt while claiming Universal Credit. 37% said they had accrued debts, and 17% said they had been driven further into debt. 70% of people who had fallen into debt had to rely on friends and family to get by.

The majority of people (58%) claiming Universal Credit while unemployed had been put into debt or further into debt during that time. Those in work fared better, but still around a third were in debt or further in debt.

"Took all overpayments out of January's money. Left with £75 to last month."

"Always behind with bills and paying back friends"

"If I hadn't got savings and hadn't already funded my own retraining, I would be in debt."

DUWC carried out a survey in July 2018, seven months after the full digital roll out of Universal

Credit in Chesterfield. Nearly a year later, we agreed to take part in a wider survey of UC recipients. The survey built on the learning gained from the previous experience, and although it featured a different set of questions, some comparisons can be made. Last year 50.5 % reported a bad experience of UC – this year that has risen to 57% indicating that nothing has improved in the eyes of those receiving the benefit despite the claims of a 'test and learn' approach. 57% reported having to rely on family and friends to help them out while they were on UC. It is alarming how the welfare system, once seen as the safety net, is descending into support so poor that people's independence is being seriously compromised. Many people reported that they were not receiving what they were entitled to, often because of the extent of deductions from their Universal Credit leaving them struggling to cope. The monthly payments were not popular, as budgeting a low income over a period becomes more difficult the longer the time between payments. The unfairness of the 'digital by default'

Your Voice Your Rights!

system was, like last year, highlighted with a huge age disparity in responses, with older people finding the system difficult for them and others.

The loss of free school meals during the school holidays adds between £30 and £40 a week to parents outgoings. Our survey showed that parents were far more likely to face difficulties in the school holidays as well as finding it hard to make ends meet at birthdays, Christmas and other religious events.

The statistics on foodbank usage, debt, and rent arrears make stark reading. Universal Credit, far from being a route to employment, appears for many to be a pathway to destitution. The figures should be making government take notice of the problems it is creating for the health of its citizens, as well as their precarious financial position. The situation concerning rent arrears and evictions is alarming. It makes no sense, under the auspices of saving money for the exchequer, to plunge people into serious financial problems with life changing

consequences that bring a greater burden to the taxpayer in the long run. It appears that despite knowing how Universal Credit is forcing people into poverty, the government is still intent on ploughing ahead regardless, pushing families to the brink of survival.



Our survey was used as part of a National Report on the state of Universal Credit Policy. The report is available on the Unite the Union website.

Pomoc jest tutaj

Our new project will help support migrant workers in training to be advisers, thus allowing us to reach many more within our communities presently unable to access our services. The Lottery Community Fund project is part of the 'reaching communities' strand, and will be based at our new Shirebrook premises at 54 Patchwork Row.

The Bilingual Buddies Service Project (BBS) alerted us to the scale of the latent demand for advice services among the migrant communities of North Derbyshire and North Nottinghamshire. The BBS has helped people on issues covering housing, benefits, debts, as well as family issues, employment problems and food referrals. It provides a limited service to people whose first language is not English.

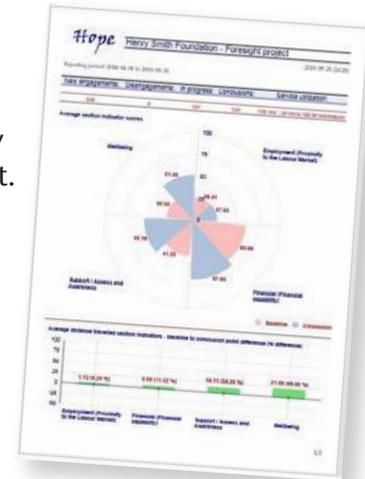
The ambition of our Community fund project is that it will bring people together, with a single point of access. It will develop a sustainable programme that will enable volunteers from the migrant

community to train with us to expand our services and maximise the use of our facilities, resources and talents for the good of all within this area.

Henry Smith

Our Henry Smith funded project is a crisis prevention initiative. We are now half way through this innovative project. We are now able to show the 'soft' outcomes of our work (see caption*). 236 people have already been supported under this programme. The 'indicators' developed under this project have been pivotal to improving our reporting capabilities.

**Our 'soft' outcomes measure wellbeing, access and awareness of services, control of finances and proximity to the labour market.*



Pomoc jest tutaj

Money Sorted

The 'Money Sorted in D2N2' project has been such a success that it has been extended until March 2022. It is funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund. 'Money Sorted' offers a programme of person-centred support, and a range of bespoke interventions designed to enable people experiencing financial crisis and hardship to build confidence and improve their money management skills. The route back to the job market is one that often requires a holistic approach to the issues that an individual faces on that journey. Our 'Personal Navigator' John Power has taken on the caseload from this project.



Bilingual Buddies

Our project, base in Shirebrook has helped 104 people and families since its inception in 2017. Our adviser Maria Kazimirska staffs the service on Wednesday mornings and at appointments throughout the week. The majority of people have been helped with issues such as housing, benefits, debts as well as family issues.



Our Funders 2019

Local Authorities

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

Parish And Town Councils

- Alfreton Council
- Ault Hucknall Parish Council
- Belper Town Council
- Brimington Parish Council
- Clay Cross Parish Council
- Clowne Parish Council
- Eckington Parish Council

- Elmton with Creswell Parish Council
- Grassmoor Parish Council
- Heath and Holmewood Parish Council
- Langwith Parish Council
- North Wingfield Parish Council
- Pinxton Parish Council
- Pilsley Parish Council
- Pleasley Parish Council
- Scarcliffe Parish Council
- Shirebrook Town Council
- Somercotes Parish Council
- Staveley Town Council
- Sutton cum Duckmanton Parish Council

- Tibshelf Parish Council
- Warsop Parish Council

Grants And Donations

- Henry Smith
- Derbyshire One Fund For All
- Money Sorted in D2N2 - European Social Fund-Big Lottery Fund
- Unite East Midlands Region
- GMB –Yorks and N.Derbyshire
- Thompsons Solicitors
- Graysons Solicitors
- O.H Parsons Solicitors
- Big Local
- Leigh Day Solicitors



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
Social Fund

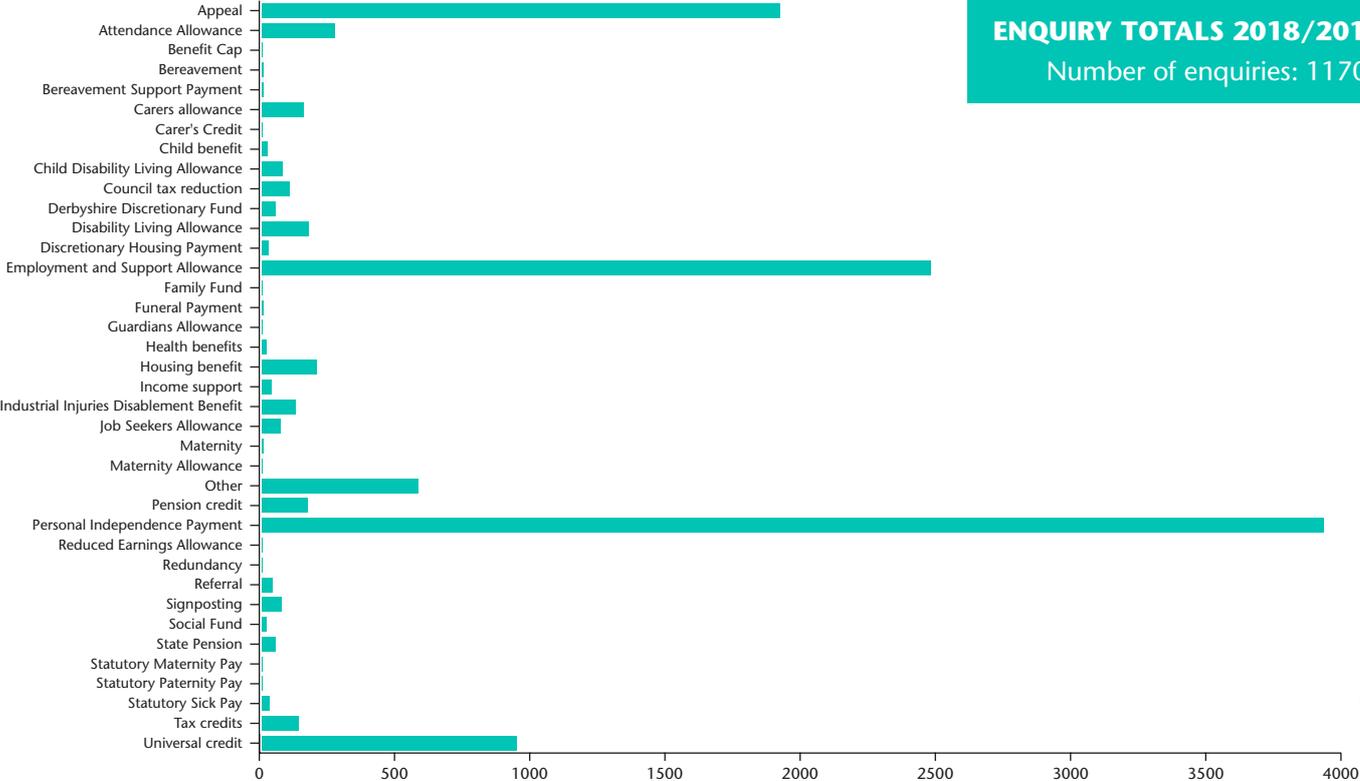
Statistics

Type of Appeal (Oct 1 st 2018 - Sept 30 th 2019)	Abandoned:	Pending:	Completed:	Arrears amount:	Weekly amount:
Attendance Allowance	4	5	4	£1,051.80	£230.55
Bereavement	1	0	0	£0.00	£0.00
Carers allowance	1	0	1	£0.00	£0.00
Child Disability Living Allowance	2	7	2	£4,208.40	£103.50
Council tax reduction	2	0	1	£0.00	£0.00
Disability Living Allowance	5	7	6	£17,843.80	£226.35
Discretionary Housing Payment	0	0	1	£0.00	£0.00
Employment and Support Allowance	141	95	221	£161,720.53	£18,127.20
Housing benefit	6	1	8	£1,893.28	£89.00
Income support	3	1	1	£0.00	£0.00
Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit	3	4	3	£1,206.12	£52.44
Job Seekers Allowance	9	2	2	£2,102.00	£73.10
Pension credit	1	3	0	£0.00	£0.00
Personal Independence Payment	146	275	343	£884,081.69	£25,892.70
Reduced Earnings Allowance	2	0	0	£0.00	£0.00
Social Fund	1	0	0	£0.00	£0.00
Tax credits	8	3	9	£0.00	£0.00
Universal credit	14	25	17	£27,309.23	£7,112.94
TOTALS	349	428	619	£1,101,416.85	£51,907.78

As a result of these tribunals, the following amounts were awarded: Lump Sums Arrears: £1,101,417.
 Ongoing Weekly Benefits: £51,908 (over a year this equals £2,699,216). In 2019, general enquiries and take-up work resulted in payments of £2,785,307 for Derbyshire Residents. **During this year, this has meant a total of £6,585,940 has been won through our advice and representation services.**

Statistics

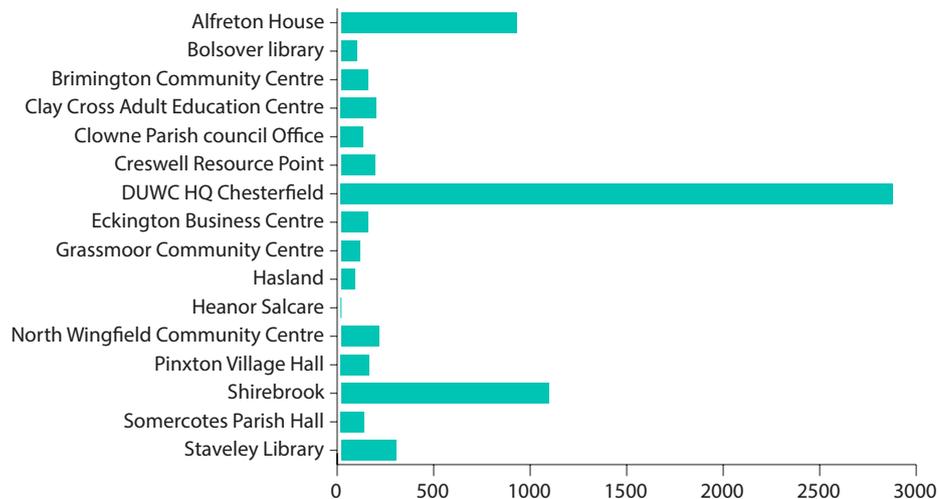
ENQUIRY TOTALS 2018/2019
 Number of enquiries: 11703



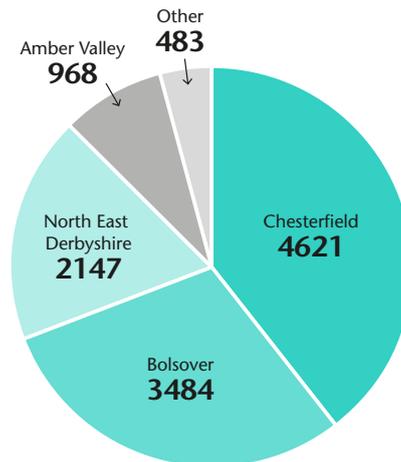
Statistics

VENUE CALLER TOTALS 2018/2019

CALLS: 6598



ORIGIN OF ENQUIRIES



Home Visits	36
Telephone enquiries	511
Email and Facebook	65
In Person	6598

Around the area - Chesterfield



Chesterfield Borough Council continue to give grant support to the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centres, as they have done consistently since 1983. We provide a daily service from our headquarters at 1 Rose Hill East and outreach sessions at Brimington Community Centre, Staveley Library and Hasland Penmore Business Centre. The majority of telephone and email enquiries are also dealt with at the Chesterfield Office.

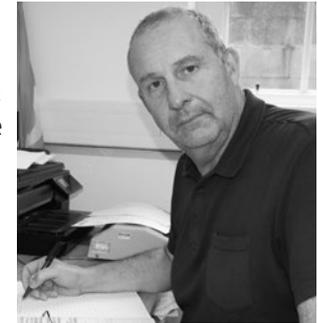
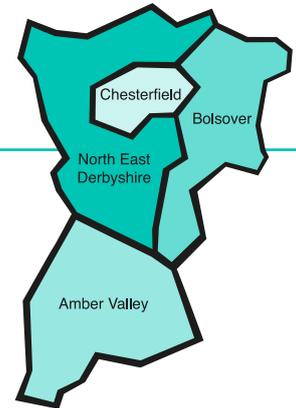
Staveley Library has reduced its opening time, so is no longer available to us on a Wednesday. Consequently from October 1st 2019 our Staveley sessions will be Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9.30am-12.00pm. This year we have represented 79 people in the Staveley area at Appeals Tribunals.

Brimington Parish Council continues to provide

fantastic support to our work. The Monday morning sessions are always well attended with 113 people making 272 service requests.

At Hasland, with the support of the Big Local, 13 people have been helped with representation at Appeals Tribunals. With their support, we are able to continue to offer a localised service.

Overall the DUWC have carried out 36 home visits this year, where people for a variety of reasons are unable to access our services any other way. These are usually for Attendance Allowance issues and Personal Independence Payment support.



Andy Parkes, adviser

Around the area - Chesterfield

Case study - Hasland

A resident of Hasland came in to our Outreach as he had lost his PIP money and did not know why. He had severe learning difficulties and had no idea what the letters meant. Our adviser rang PIP and confirmed that he had lost his PIP after a medical.

We challenged the decision and provided proof of diagnosis of learning difficulties and the previous decision by DWP that had awarded Disability Living Allowance. The DWP failed to accept our challenge, and the case was heard at tribunal. The tribunal panel confirmed that the claimant was on the learning difficulties register and awarded the enhanced rate of Daily Living and standard mobility. The Tribunal reminded

the DWP of the impact of learning difficulties, and suggested that they adapt how they assess this condition.

As a result, he was awarded over £6000 in back pay. He was very confused why, after waiting 14 months for a tribunal, it had been decided in less than 5 minutes. The DWP have accepted the decision and awarded with no date to be reassessed due to the severity of his condition.

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

*Thanks for all the work and effort that has been put into my PIP appeal, I was delighted and surprised that I won. **K.T, Chesterfield***

Around the area - Chesterfield

Case study

A young man from Boythorpe attended our Chesterfield Office. He had been living on his own with mental health problems for six years. He was on Personal Independence Payment, Employment and Support Allowance Support Group and Housing Benefit. The man came in to see what he would be entitled to when he got married, as was his intention. When he came in for this benefit check, it was pointed out that he should have been in receipt of severe disability premium (SDP) and that once he was married, this would be difficult to get back dated when on Universal Credit. Our adviser pursued the SDP and the man received six years back dated benefit worth over £16,000. This shows the value of benefit checks and the life changing interventions of our advisers.

Thank you so much for your help and advice for my PIP application. I have been informed today that I have been awarded the enhanced rates for both elements of the claim. Without your help I don't think it would have been successful.

D.H Brimington

Thanks for all your help and thoughtfulness towards me in getting my problems solved.

N.P Newbold

This place should be on top of the priority list for charity funding, as they do an amazing service for the people of Chesterfield.

S.E Staveley

I just want to thank you so much for your time, patience and wonderful effort towards helping me win my PIP appeal. I'm sure I couldn't have achieved it without your help.

C.P Brimington

Around the area - Bolsover



On July 1st the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centres' Shirebrook office moved to 54 Patchwork Row – the former Shirebrook Town Council Office, and erstwhile Jobcentre. The Town Council have been very helpful in providing the premises that have allowed us to move from our base at 44/46

Patchwork Row, where we have resided for 24 years. The move was timely, as our previous premises were involved in a fire four months later.

During this year we have seen 985 unique cases from the Bolsover district not counting the wider number of family members affected. We have represented at 146 tribunal appeals. This has brought in £230,671 in lump sum payments and £503,156 in annualised weekly additional payments.



The new Bishop of Derby, the Rt Revd Libby Lane came on a whistle-stop tour of the Bolsover District. After visiting a foodbank in South Normanton and the Freedom Project in Bolsover, she came along to our old Shirebrook Centre. Libby met and listened to the concerns of local people that have used our services. She wished us well with our endeavours. The Rev Karen Bradley, a former volunteer at DUWC, and now vicar of Shirebrook, accompanied Libby to the Centre. They are pictured with Centre staff and volunteers (above).



Thank you for all your help over the years you have helped my daughter and myself and to say how much it is appreciated and keep up the good work.
P.L Clowne



Around the area - Bolsover

Case study - PIP and JSA

A man came to see us at our Creswell outreach. He was accompanied by his next door neighbour. He handed over a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Tribunal Decision dated a number of weeks earlier. The man's neighbour explained that the man seeking our help had learning difficulties, and had recently showed him the Tribunal decision notice. The Tribunal's decision was in favour of the man, and awarded him both the Standard Daily Living and Mobility components—backdated at least 18 months. The man said he had not received any arrears lump sum and not in receipt of on-going PIP payments. He was also found to have major debt issues.

We were able to gather information from the man who told us he was also in receipt of Income Related Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) and that he lived alone. We quickly realised that the man was owed PIP and additional payments with his JSA. We rang the

DWP PIP Section who informed us that they had not received the man's PIP Tribunal Decision notice—explaining the absence of payments and arrears. We contacted the Tribunal Service who confirmed that they had e-mailed the Tribunal's decision to the DWP on the day of the hearing (which was at least two months earlier). They agreed to re-send the decision.

A week or two later the man came back to see us and informed that he had received PIP payments due to him (we checked the amounts for him). We then contacted the JSA section about additional payments of JSA, which would include both the Disability and Severe Disability Premiums.

At the time of writing we have had confirmation that the man is now in receipt of JSA with the additional amounts and fully backdated; a substantial amount of owed benefit. He has been able, with the help of other agencies, to sort out his debts. He is now receiving additional support from adult services locally.

Around the area - Bolsover

Case study - UC

We were visited at our Shirebrook Office by a woman claiming Universal Credit (UC). She was visibly distressed, and during our face to face conversation, revealed the extent of her difficulties being a UC claimant and the hardship she was experiencing. This also included rent arrears.

The woman had been advised to contact us by a friend who believed that her UC payments seemed a little on the low side. She said she was unable to work and was previously claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) before moving to UC, (she handed over to us a DWP letter confirming that she had ESA support group status) because she had moved to a new local authority area and had to seek help with her rent; the woman had a dependent child and received child benefit. She did have claimant commitment to obtain benefit, despite being quite ill.

We asked the woman if we could view her UC online account and her payments. She agreed and we were to discover why she was in so much hardship. Firstly,

we discovered that there was a shortfall in her rent (the UC housing element was not covering her actual rent) and secondly, there was no Limited Capability for Work Related Activity Element(LCWRA) within her UC standard amount. This was worth £336.20 a month.

We rang the DWP UC Section and highlighted the woman's problems. It was confirmed that when she moved to UC originally she had ESA support group status, so the UC equivalent LCWRA element should have been added to her claim. As for the housing element in UC, it was discovered that the DWP had her child as a non-dependent because they had the wrong date of birth on their system, thus reducing the housing element payable.

All the above issues were rectified, with a substantial amount of arrears of UC elements being paid to the woman. We also advised a claim for Personal Independence Payment (PIP). We were later contacted by the woman who thanked us and told us she was now in receipt of PIP.

Around the area - North East Derbyshire



North East Derbyshire District Council announced on Monday 9th September 2019 that after 32 years, the Council would not be renewing our grant as they had set new priorities which the DUWC is not part of.

During the last year, the staff and volunteers have supported 124 people to appeal tribunals. This work has brought in £240,516 in lump sums and £1,035,008 additional weekly payments.

627 people have sought our advice on issues ranging from Attendance Allowance to Universal Credit from our outreaches at Clay Cross, Eckington, Grassmoor and North Wingfield. People from the district have



accessed our services at Chesterfield, Staveley and Alfreton as well.

With these results consistently recorded year on year, it is bewildering to us that the Conservative led Council have cancelled our grant. The money that is won for the people of the District is spent mostly within the area, benefitting all. The Trustees of DUWC will have to consider the organisation's response to this cut, and the consequences for the services provided. The outreaches will definitely continue, up until March 31st 2020 as agreed with the previous administration.

I would sincerely like to thank everyone who helped me, I am forever grateful for all you did for me.

R.L, Eckington

Around the area - North East Derbyshire

Case study - Holmegate

A man from Holmegate was referred to us from Clay Cross Citizens Advice. He required help with an ESA50 form but because the CA operate an appointment system, by the time he had taken the form to CA it would not have been sent back within the specified time, and his benefit would have been stopped. We filled out the ESA50 with him and he has subsequently been placed in the Work Related Activity Group.

*Thanks for all your effort...
you've all made my life a lot easier.*

A.T, North Wingfield

After our first meeting with the man, due to his disability we also advised that he request a Personal Independence Payment form that we would help him with. When he received the form, he returned for our help and is now in receipt of standard daily living/mobility. This shows the value of having regular, accessible, open door outreach services.

*I just wanted to say a huge thank you for helping me, I will be forever in your debt! Thank you for all you are doing for me, for always listening to me, supporting me, encouraging and motivating me. **J.B***

Around the area - North East Derbyshire

Case study - Barlow

A couple from Barlow came into our Chesterfield headquarters. One of the couple had initially wanted to claim for Carers Allowance for her partner. They were advised that as they were over state pension age, it is an overlapping benefit. After a further discussion into their income, it was discovered that one member of the couple had not claimed his state pension for seven years. This was due to a mix up over his national insurance number that led him to believe he could not receive his pension.

The Pension Service was contacted and he had 23 years of national insurance contributions in ,which entitled him to a state pension of £120.37 per week plus the arrears of his state pension plus interest this will amount to £30,000.

The couple would also be entitled to Pension Credit of approx. £50 per week. This included the carer's premium as they were entitled to underlying carers allowance.

We just wanted to say thank you to each and every person at the DUWC. You are doing an excellent job helping people who desperately need you. Thank you.

E.B, Renishaw



Around the area - North East Derbyshire

Case study - North Wingfield

A couple came in, as they had been sent 5 separate letters from local authority. The letters all stated that due to a failure to inform a pension, they had generated an overpayment of over £2000 for council tax and housing benefit for the last 5 years.

The couple were extremely worried as they thought they were going to be sent to prison. They were also very confused as they had only one private pension and the figures had been provided whenever there had been an increase.

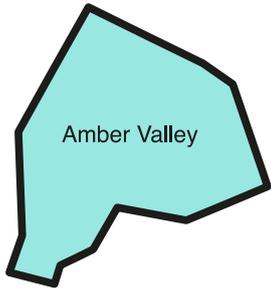
After reading through all 5 letters and going through the calculations, the local authority had recorded the pension but then not included it in the couple's income on each letter. The local authority also added that even

if the error was theirs, the couple should have informed them.

On this basis, DUWC challenged the decision. Our adviser argued that the correct information had been provided each time it was requested. I highlighted that the issue only occurred due to internal error by failing to add the reported pension to the couple's income. I also added that it is unreasonable to suggest that the couple should have known that the local authority had made a mistake.

After 5 weeks of hearing nothing DUWC chased up this case and was told that after reviewing all the paperwork and correspondence the local authority were removing the entire overpayment. They issued a revised decision which stated the error had been theirs, and did not expect the couple to have noticed it.

Around the area - Amber Valley



After a gap of eighteen years, Amber Valley Borough Council have renewed grant aid to DUWC. From 1993-2001, the council supported the provision of services across the Borough with

our base at Alfreton House.

For years, we have maintained a presence in Amber Valley, providing advice services in Alfreton, Somercotes and Heanor (until the Conservatives stopped our County Council funding). It has been the fantastic support of Alfreton Town Council and Somercotes Parish Council that has enabled us to continue to help residents in the most deprived areas of the Borough. Now with Council funding, we intend to expand our services in Belper, and back again for the people of Heanor and Loscoe.

Thank you for all you've done for me in the past regarding my benefits it was most gratefully appreciated.

A.T, Alfreton

Even before this fantastic support, the DUWC was still doing a fine job in Amber Valley. During this year we represented 34 people at Appeals Tribunals. This brought in £77,883 in lump sums awarded and £112,622 in annualised additional weekly payments. 271 people were advised and thousands of pounds brought into the local economy. These figures will substantially increase with the support of the new administration at Ripley.



Around the area - Amber Valley

Case study - Alfreton

A woman from Alfreton had been in receipt of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) from her employer due to illness. When her SSP ended after 28 weeks, she contacted the DWP helpline and was told she would have to make a new claim for Universal Credit (UC), which would include help with her rent. She was also informed that she would have to make a claim for UC online.

She requested our help with the UC claim, due to having a learning difficulty and not being computer literate. We advised that she had not been given the right information and because she was working for an employer, she would not have to claim UC. We rang the DWP helpline and a claim for new style Employment & Support Allowance (ESA). We advised her to return to us when she received her ESA50.

Case study - Somercotes

Mr. W from Somercotes called in for a routine benefit check because he was finding it difficult to pay his bills. Although he was still in receipt of ESA, he said it had been like that for several months after his Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit had been stopped following a new assessment.

We looked at his ESA payments & found that the DWP were still deducting £35.80 per week IIDB payments, even though he was no longer in receipt of that benefit.

We informed DWP of their error and requested that he should be reimbursed the money they had wrongly been stopping for 8 months.

Obituaries

Rod Marshall

Canon Rodney Marshall died on December 11th 2018. Rod Marshall worked for the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres from 1990 to 1997, in an extended sabbatical from his ecclesiastic duties.



Rod, originally from Manchester, was the vicar of Goldthorpe during the Miners Strike 1984-85. He was known as the Red Vicar for his unstinting support of the families of striking miners. Rod was featured on television when conducting the funeral service of two local boys who died whilst coal picking during the strike. He

was asked at a press conference his view on scabs. Rod, diplomatically, responded that in villages such as Goldthorpe and Bolton-on-Deerne, men who worked whilst their colleagues suffered the privation of striking

to save jobs for their community, were thought to be treasonous.

The next day, a 'left' wing newspaper ran the headline 'Vicar says Scabs should be shot!'

Following the Ambulance workers dispute 1989-1990 Rod Marshall came to work in Chesterfield for the DUWC organising our fundraising with the One Fund For All. He built our network of links with workplace trade unionists and issued a monthly bulletin with the heading 'Solidarity not Charity'. He also produced the May Day Programme from 1990-97.

Rod said he was as traditional in his religion as he was in his class politics. He left the Centre in a much better place than he found it and went back to become the Vicar of Athersley in Barnsley.

Many of you will have heard him on Radio 4's thought for the day over the last two decades. His packed funeral was attended by three Bishops, his friends from Derbyshire, and a good contingent of Yorkshire Miners, and their supporters.

Colin Hampton

Obituaries

John Gilbert

John was born in London a fortnight after the outbreak of the Second World War and with his mother was evacuated for a period to the north of England.

By the time he was 18 and long since settled back in London he appeared regularly on an ITV programme entitled "The Sunday Break", which was a form of Sunday Club for teenagers. It was a precursor to his later commitment to work for the Youth Service.

Later he studied full-time at the Coleg Harlech Adult Education College. This provided him with the necessary qualifications (and further commitment) to then move into running Youth services in North Derbyshire.

One of his particular achievements was to organise a relay run across Europe in 1985 for young people to attend the Youth and Student games in Moscow, which was a life changing experience for them.

On a voluntary basis, he assisted fully with the operations of the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre and the Derbyshire Law Centre. He is a sad loss and he will be remembered for his social commitments, abilities and his personal help.

Jim Miller

Jim Miller died after a long illness earlier this year. Jim gave fifteen years' service up until he 'retired' five years ago. Jim worked for Chesterfield Transport as an accountant until privatisation. He was very well liked and respected by all his colleagues at DUWC. He is pictured here with Lynn Bagshaw and Colin Hampton in 2006 celebrating the success of our campaign to make calls to claim JSA a freephone. Prior to our campaign, callers were charged and a proportion of the cost went to the DWP.



Lesley Shooter

Lesley Shooter, a long-time friend and supporter of the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres died in August this year. Lesley was a member of the Management Committee of the Centres back in the last century. She was active in the Centre's work and even in her later years, took a keen interest in our activities.



User Feedback Survey 2019

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

0-5 mins	132
5-15 mins	27
15-30 min	20
30-60 min	12
Over 1 Hour	6

Each individual was asked if they would use our service again. 197 said they would. **100% positive**

Each individual was asked if they would recommend us to someone else who was in need of benefits advice. 197 said they would. **100% positive**

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

Family/friends	93
Previous Visit	44
Law Centre	2
CAB	7
Local Council	6
Jobcentre	13
Sign outside	6
Pathways	1
Nenna Kind	1

Probation Service	1
Hospital/GP	8
Mental Health Service	2

Each person was asked how they felt about their visit to DUWC.

Very Happy	184
Satisfied	32
Dissatisfied	1
Very Unhappy	0
None of above	0

Comments about our service (a limited sample)

"When I needed support fantastic people. The person I saw was helpful. Excellent Service."

"Helped me challenge a decision. Could not wish for better support. Staff are very friendly."

"Made me feel at ease. Very Good. A very complicated situation explained. Really helpful."

"Thanks for getting my money back. Hope it never closes."

"I am totally satisfied with the help from Katrina."

"Be lost without you. 5 Star Service."

"Entered sad...but left happy."



WHERE TO GET ADVICE

Chesterfield & North East Derbyshire

1 Rose Hill East, Chesterfield
S40 1NU

Tel: 01246 231441

Email: 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

Eckington

Business Centre, Market Street
Wednesday 1.30pm - 3.30pm

North Wingfield

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

Hasland

Unit 2 Penmore Business Centre,
Hasland Road
Wednesday 1.30pm - 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

Somercotes

Parish Hall, Nottingham Road
Monday 1.30pm - 4.00pm

Trustees 2018/2019

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 Ferrara

Elaine Tidd

Cllr. Amanda Serjeant

Sarah Roy

Angela Webster

Cllr. Steve Marshall-Clarke

Cllr. Mary Dooley

(from July 2019)

Bethany Holt

Barry Johnson

Cllr. Steve Fritchley

(until July 2019)

Centre Staff 2019

Colin Hampton

- Co-ordinator

Andy Parkes

- Assistant Co-ordinator/
Welfare Rights Advisor

Lynn Bagshaw

- Administrator

Katrina Hudson

- Welfare Rights Advisor

Glynn Power

- Welfare Rights Advisor

Tim Wilkinson

- Welfare Rights Advisor

Brigit Long

- Welfare Rights Advisor

Justine Bark

- Welfare Rights Advisor

John Power

- Welfare Rights Advisor

Paul Marklew

- Welfare Rights Advisor

Karen Seymour

- Welfare Rights Advisor

Maria Kazimirska

- Bilingual Buddies 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.

