

SPRING 2023
EDITION

Solidarity

The One Fund For All Newsletter



DUWC'S SPRING
BUDGET
CAMPAIGN SENDS
A MESSAGE

ISSUE 1

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SPRING BUDGET CAMPAIGN: DUWC SEND A MESSAGE TO DOWNING STREET

Ahead of the Chancellor's Spring Budget on March 15th, DUWC ran an campaign lobbying the government on three demands - demands that resulted from gathering feedback from the clients we see day in, day out, on the most critical challenges that they are facing due to the current economic crisis. Inspired by the recent passing of Terry Hall, DUWC adapted the lyrics of The Specials' 'A Message To You, Rudy', calling for firstly, a restoration of the £20 uplift to Universal Credit, as well uplifting all welfare benefits rather than simply uprating them in line with inflation; secondly, introducing rent controls and banning evictions during the current crisis (as Scotland has done) and thirdly; renationalising utilities to prevent the corporate greed we have seen over the past Winter.



The campaign made effective use of social media to get our message across. We shared three short videos outlining our three demands, which have so far been viewed over 8000 times on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We also launched an online petition which attracted over 200 signatures. For a small, regional charity, we are pleased with the amount of people we were able to reach with our campaign. It demonstrates the power of social media to reach people from all over the country. Unfortunately, as we cover on the next page, the Spring Budget did little to address the concerns of our clients, and DUWC were forced into an angry response.

"A Message to You, Rishi"

Stop your messing around.

People across the country are in a state of economic crisis. This is nothing new – in fact, thanks to 13 years of Tory cuts to benefits, wages, and public services, the UK's poorest and most vulnerable have been battling their own cost-of-living crises for over a decade.

Better think of our future.

We are better than this. No one in the UK deserves to be abandoned by the political system. Benefit rates are so low that people out of work cannot afford a dignified existence.

Time you straighten right out, creating problems for all.

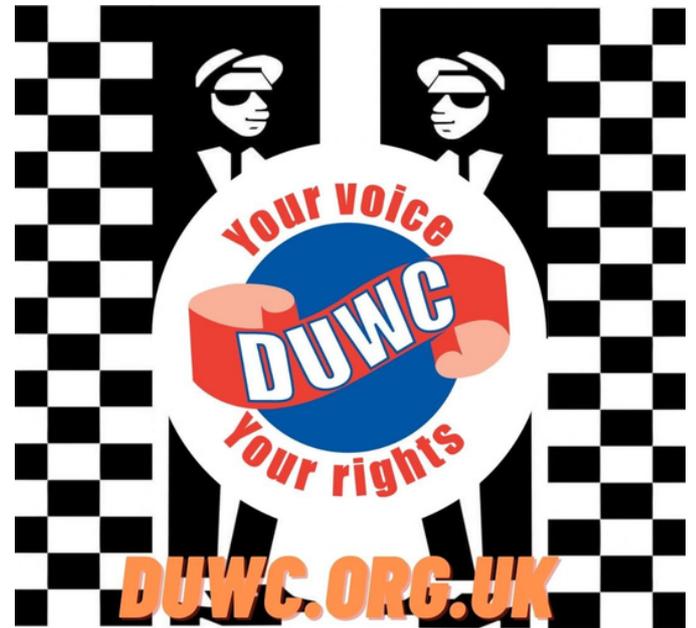
Even after benefits are uprated, their real value will be lower than pre-pandemic levels – meaning that those on benefits risk losing their homes, homes that they cannot afford to heat due to the greed of private utility companies.

DUWC'S RESPONSE TO THE SPRING BUDGET: ALL THE WRONG MESSAGES TO BENEFIT CLAIMANTS

Jeremy Hunt's mission statement was clear from the get-go: the Government believes that there are thousands of people who are not working that should be, and just as many who are working, but should be working more hours. In order to change this, the Government is reforming the welfare system in two fundamental ways.

First, they are scrapping the Work Capability Assessment (WCA), replacing it with the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment in an effort to bring more disabled people into the workforce. The WCA has caused incredible distress to so many of our clients over the years, so this move is, at least superficially, welcome. However, it seems clear that this is an overly simplistic approach to tackling a complex issue of helping people with long and short-term conditions back into work. If PIP becomes the key way of determining whether people can work or not, there will be millions who miss out.

At the same time, the Government are ramping up their use of sanctions and conditionality. Claimants of Universal Credit will have sanctions applied 'more rigorously' and will have to undertake more work-related activities in order to get their full entitlement.



This is an abridged version of DUWC's response. For the full article, please visit duwc.org.uk/blog

COORDINATOR COLIN HAMPTON: 'IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT SANCTIONS HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED BY BOTH TORY AND LABOUR GOVERNMENTS AND HAVE NEVER DONE WHAT THEY HAVE INTENDED AS STATED. ALL RESEARCH, INCLUDING THE DWP'S OWN RESEARCH, HAS FOUND THE SAME CONCLUSIONS. THEY DO NOT WORK. SO WE ARE EITHER GOVERNED BY FOOLS OR SANCTIONS EXIST TO FRIGHTEN PEOPLE IN LOW PAID EMPLOYMENT INTO NOT ASKING FOR BETTER PAY, TERMS AND CONDITIONS, FEARING THE SACK AND BEING SUBJECTED TO SANCTIONS AND POSSIBLE DESTITUTION.'

2023 SEES DUWC OPEN OUTREACHES ACROSS DERBYSHIRE OLD AND NEW

DUWC are delighted to announce that from April 6th, we will once again have an outreach in Eckington, after the parish council agreed to reinstate funding to the Centres to allow us to return to the town. We have been absent from Eckington since 2019, when the parish council decided to stop supporting us.

Our thanks go to Councillor Kathy Clegg, pictured below with Assistant Coordinator Matt Hunt, who invited DUWC to present at the parish council, and has been instrumental in facilitating our return to Eckington.

We will be operating from the Eckington Business Centre on Market Street on Thursday afternoons between 1pm and 3.30pm.



We have also begun providing benefits advice and support to clients of the South Normanton food bank, based at St Michael's Church in South Normanton. This has already proved a very productive partnership, as we are able to establish contact with clients who are in significant financial hardship. Our advisor Jon Jarvis has been working tirelessly to complete benefit checks and support clients with new applications, and we are already seeing tangible positive outcomes. We are present in the South Normanton foodbank twice a week, and in the Alfreton food bank once a week.

NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE OUTREACHES GOING STRONG

AS REPORTED IN OUR LAST EDITION OF SOLIDARITY, WE HAVE RE-OPENED THREE OUTREACHES IN NE DERBYSHIRE IN CLAY CROSS, GRASSMOOR AND NORTH WINGFIELD. ALL THREE HAVE BEEN VERY BUSY SINCE WE RE-OPENED, DEMONSTRATING THE CLEAR NEED FOR OUR SERVICES IN THE AREA. THANKS AGAIN TO THE LOCAL PARISH COUNCILS, AND THE HENRY SMITH FOUNDATION FOR ALLOWING US TO RETURN TO THESE LOCATIONS.

DUWC AND DAST STAFFING UPDATE



DUWC are delighted to announce that we have recruited a new, full-time welfare rights advisor, Benjamin Glover (pictured above). Ben has been volunteering with the Centre since Autumn 2022, and has impressed everyone with his enthusiasm, commitment, and keen interest in the welfare benefits system. Ben starts his role with DUWC on April 3rd, and will be a valuable addition to the team.

Ben's post is being funded by CISWO, through the North Derbyshire Miner's Welfare Trust, who have funded DUWC for 12 months to provide support to former mineworkers and their families across the region. Our thanks go once again to CISWO for their support.



All Change at DAST

After spending nearly 25 years with the organisation, Joanne Gordon is retiring. We are pleased to announce that Jerry Hague (pictured below with Joanne) has been appointed as Joanne's replacement. Jerry has worked in the health and safety environment for over thirty years campaigning and providing legal support for workers suffering from industrial diseases and running an Asbestos Support Group for those affected by asbestos related illness.



Dave Trigg (pictured below, left) has stepped down as Chair of DAST after fifteen year's service. Dave has been a superb lead and spokesperson for the organization bringing passion, experience, and a wealth of knowledge to the role. Dave is to continue as a trustee.

Sarah Walters has left the DAST fundraising post for a new challenge in an environmental campaigning organization. We wish her well in her new adventure and thank her for her sterling work for DUWC and DAST over the last 20 years. Maggie Braley is stepping up to that role and we are confident she will bring new ideas and further development to our work.



COLIN HAMPTON: 'I HAVE KNOWN JERRY FOR OVER 25 YEARS. HIS WORK FOR GRAYSONS ALONGSIDE TRUST MINERS VOLUNTEERS AND THE NUM GAVE DERBYSHIRE MINERS AND WIDOWS AN EXCELLENT AND COMPREHENSIVE DEAL IN RELATION TO COMPENSATION FOR INDUSTRIAL DISEASE.'



HELP IS HERE: A CONTINUING SUCCESS STORY

The Help is Here project is now halfway through its lifespan of five years, and continues to provide incredible support to migrants across Derbyshire and North Nottinghamshire. The project, led by our amazing advisors Joanna Zon and Marcin Proc, is dedicated to helping migrant communities in North Derbyshire and North Notts, supporting those for whom English is not first language and who do not know local regulations, or who have found themselves in crisis. Currently, we offer help in Polish, Romanian, Czech, Slovak, Russian and Ukrainian languages. We work closely with the Derbyshire Law Centre, which provides legal assistance in matters such as: conflict with employers, discrimination, unpaid benefits, conflict with landlords (including eviction), problems with settlement and assistance with debt problems.

You can find Joanna and Marcin in our Shirebrook office, or via 01623 748161, Monday - Friday, 9am - 4pm .



BESIDES HELP IN OBTAINING BENEFITS AND CREDITS, HELP IS HERE CAN:

**CONDUCT SETTLED STATUS SESSIONS
HELP WITH TRANSLATING LETTERS
HELP FILL OUT APPLICATION FORMS
PROVIDE ADVICE**

REFER YOU TO OTHER AID INSTITUTIONS IF YOU NEED MORE HELP.

<p>Alfreton</p> <p>Alfreton House, High Street</p>	<p>Belper</p> <p>Strutt Centre, Derby Road</p>	<p>Bolsover</p> <p>Bolsover Library, Church Street</p>
<p>Brimington</p> <p>Community Centre, High Street</p>	<p>Clay Cross</p> <p>Social Centre, Market Street</p>	<p>Clowne</p> <p>Community Centre, Recreation Close</p>
<p>Cresswell</p> <p>Limestone House, Elmton Road</p>	<p>Eckington,</p> <p>Business Centre, Market Street</p>	<p>Grassmoor</p> <p>Community Centre, New Street</p>
<p>Hasland</p> <p>Working Men's Club</p>	<p>Heanor</p> <p>Buxton Rooms, Town Hall</p>	<p>New Houghton</p> <p>Community Hub, Rotherham Road</p>
<p>North Wingfield</p> <p>Community Centre</p>	<p>Pinxton</p> <p>Chruch Hall, Kirkstead Road</p>	<p>Shirebrook</p> <p>54 Patchwork Row</p>
<p>Somercotes</p> <p>Parish Hall, Nottingham Road</p>	<p>South Normanton</p> <p>Food Bank, St Michael's Church</p>	<p>Staveley</p> <p>Library, Hall Lane</p>

**For a full list of
our opening
times, please
visit our
website at:
duwc.org.uk/ne
arest-office or
call us on
01246 231441**



CHESTERFIELD
1 Rose Hill East
Mon–Fri
9.30am–1.00pm

Call
01246 231441
Mon-Fri
8.00 am–4.00pm

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