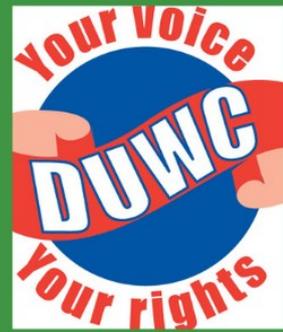




# WINTER 2025 EDITION

# SOLIDARITY



## 'Take up Campaigns' get underway in Killamarsh, Barrow Hill and Holmewood.

Earlier this year we applied to the North East Derbyshire UK Prosperity Fund. This was to create a series of events in the areas of Killamarsh and Holmewood. We have also secured funding from Chesterfield Community Grants to run some advice sessions in Barrow Hill. DUWC believe we should have a presence in these areas and can see from evidence that the community are lacking in advice outreaches here. We wanted to encourage local residents to come and get a benefit check. We aimed the first events at State Pensioners and the disabled and we were really pleased with how many people turned up for advice.



**We carried out lots of door-to-door leafleting and promotion via social media. Ali and Esther were the advisors at each event and were able to give people excellent advice about claiming benefits and maximising their income. We aim to do another set of events in 2026 aimed at young families and carers.**



## *A quick* **WIN....**

**We also managed to pick up a new volunteer scribe for our benefits advisor Tim. Louise from Barrow Hill came in for some advice, and enquired about volunteering at our Chesterfield office. Welcome Louise!**



# Freshers Week at Chesterfield College



Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre were invited to take part in Chesterfield College, Freshers Week in September. This was over 3 days and was an opportunity to talk to students about our charity and the great work we do. Whilst we recognise it's hard for young people to volunteer at such a young age, it was really good to see so many interested people



Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres are also excited to be taking part in the work experience placement from Sheffield Hallam University for a second year. From January to March we will have a new team member. Earlier this year we accepted Stephanie Nunes as a volunteer and she was a great asset to the centre!



# You say goodbye, and I say hello...



Bye

We say goodbye to Alexandra our volunteer from Shirebrook office. Although she wasn't with us long, she was a huge help and was a really quick learner. Alexandra has got a job and we wish her good luck.



We say hello to Andy King who is a member of a trustee board. Andy has started helping out at the Chesterfield office. His training is going well and we love having him around!

It's also a hello to Danni-Marie, who joined us in July. Danni-Marie is training to become a benefits advisor based in Chesterfield -she is enjoying the work and doing well, keep it up!



# BUDGET DAY BANNER DROP



**Activists from the Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Unite Community Branch will be marking budget day on Wednesday 26th November by displaying Banners from the bridge over Markham Road in Chesterfield. They will be highlighting the need to protect the most vulnerable as benefit sanctions have reached an all-time high. One in six people claiming Personal Independence Payment and 40% of Universal Credit claimants are in work but the suspension of benefits is causing untold difficulty to thousands of people on top of the cost of living crisis.**

**Andy King, secretary of the local branch said  
“This is not just about people who are out of work. Personal Independence Payment is a lifeline for our disabled citizens, helping them to maintain dignity and a degree of independence. To have it ripped away is unacceptable. Balancing the books should not be done on the backs of the vulnerable!”  
The Government has recently outlined its proposals for reform concerning health and disability benefits and employment support, asserting a vision, strategy, and specific proposals for change in this crucial area. The concern is that this will lead to a denial and suspension of benefits against a backdrop of a lack of suitable work for people with health conditions.**



# CUT SANCTIONS NOT BENEFITS!

Colin Hampton, from the Unite Community Branch said  
“On budget day the eyes of the nation are focussed on the winners as losers as the Chancellor sets out the financial priorities for the coming year. The Government is looking for savings and unfortunately tends to pick on easy targets. However there

are no long term savings from denying benefits to the sick and to the disabled. The cost to the NHS will be huge and many workers will not be able to sustain themselves in a job.”

Colin went on to say

“The mega rich and the powerful bully the government into leaving themselves to get richer at our expense. It is time to stand up to the bullies. Budget day should be a turning point that indicates that the most vulnerable will receive support not sanctions and the rich should pay their fair share. Our banners will remind the public that politics is about choices. We urge the government to make the right ones.”



# funding update



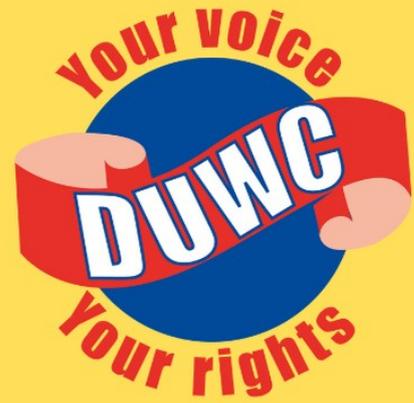
We have now had confirmation from the Lottery of the refunding of the 'Help is Here' project for another 3 years. The project funding began in October. The project now has an admin support worker, this will give extra support for Joanna and Marcin as the project itself moves to becoming a linked charity.

We have secured £7,499.25 for the UK prosperity fund from NEDDC, this is to start a take up campaign to see if our work and support is needed in the areas of Killamarsh and Holmewood. We also secured £2100 from the Chesterfield Borough Council Community Grants fund, this is to do a take up campaign for Barrow Hill and New Whittington. More information to follow.

We are exploring funding from the Henry Smith Foundation, this is under their 'safer futures' theme, and looks to support people after spending time in prison. We want to create a 'personal navigator' role within DUWC, who can work alongside probation and other services to offer ex offenders the most positive outcome for the future.



# 20,000 PEOPLE HELPED - DUWC HITS MILESTONE



By the end of July 2025 the 20,000 person was helped by Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres since our database went live in 2014. The Centres were set up in the early 1980s so the total figure will probably be nearly three times this number.

The Centres help people with problems claiming social security benefits and challenging decisions by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Over the years many people who have lost their jobs, been made redundant or have become too ill to work have visited our three Offices and 16 outreach venues. Older people have come with Attendance Allowance forms, enquiries concerning Pension Credit and Carers benefits.

DUWC covers Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire, Bolsover and Amber Valley as well as other areas of Derbyshire on certain projects. From support to families with children to senior citizens trying to make ends meet, Centre staff have been giving consistent help for over 40 years. The areas with the greatest take up of help are Shirebrook North with over 1500, Rother and Spire wards in Chesterfield with over 1000 unique individuals coming for help, often representing couples or families.



# MEETING WITH THE MP



Linsey Farnsworth, MP for Amber Valley, visited the Alfreton office of the DUWC in November. We told her of our 40 years' experience of the problems of people dealing with the benefit system and the consistent policy failures of all governments endeavouring to bring people closer to the labour market. We were clear that any future policy should not lead to the further impoverishment of people unable to work. For those that can work, there needs to be appropriate work and incentives for employers to give people a chance. Too often it is assumed that employers are going to be happy to employ people with long-term health conditions. Linsey listen to our case and was sympathetic to our point of view whilst telling us of the pressures on government to cut the welfare bill. For our part, we put forward that the welfare bill should not be looked at in isolation as cuts to benefits always lead to increased pressure on the NHS, mental health services, and prisons. Colin Hampton said "it is only a fool who saves £5 today when, by doing so, it will cost you £100 in a month's time."



Importantly, we agreed to improve the cross referrals between our offices. Our volunteer Colin Bennett will be liaising with Linsey's office to make sure all receive DUWC comes up against a bureaucratic brick wall.

All agreed it was a fruitful meeting and resolved to meet again in the future.

Keep going



The Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres would like to thank everyone who has supported us in 2025. Times are hard for everyone however we still have the support and kindness from so many people. Our donations continue to keep coming in, despite the cost of living crisis, and we are so grateful to members of the community who recognise our work and our strive to support everyone without discrimination.

Funding is always a worry, but lucky for us we have a fantastic volunteer funder, David Eccles. David has put hundreds of hours into writing funding bids, just so that we can keep our doors open and keep fighting for local people and their entitlements.

Thanks David!



We cover outreaches in.....



Alfreton  
Belper  
Bolsover  
Creswell  
Brimington  
Chesterfield  
Shirebrook  
Clowne  
Eckington  
Grassmoor  
Clay Cross  
Hasland  
Heanor  
North Wingfield  
Pinxton  
Somercotes  
Staveley  
New Houghton

For a full list of our  
opening times,  
please visit our website  
at:

[duwc.org.uk/nearest office](https://www.duwc.org.uk/nearest-office)

or call us on 01246  
231441

[https://www.duwc.org.  
uk/donate/](https://www.duwc.org.uk/donate/)

**WE ARE CLOSED FROM 24<sup>TH</sup>  
DECEMBER AND WILL REOPEN  
ON 2<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY 2026.**

