

**Friday 1 March 2024**

**Durham Town Hall, Market Place, Durham DH1 3NJ**

Hosted by Durham County Council Welfare Rights Service

## AGENDA

- 9.30      **Registration and refreshments**  
Tea & coffee served in the main hall
- 10.00      **Introductions**
- 10.05      **Civic welcome**  
Councillor Alan Shield: Durham County Council Portfolio Holder for Equality and Inclusion
- 10.15      **The Phill Hanns memorial lecture:** Julie Kirkby, Durham Welfare Rights  
*Phil Hanns: Still inspiring 10 years on*
- 11.00      **Break**
- 11.15      **Workshop session 1** (see 'workshop options' on following page)
- 12.15      **Lunch** (not provided at the venue)
- 1.30      **Workshop session 2** (see 'workshop options' on following page)
- 2.30      **Guest speakers:** Dan Manville, Greater Manchester Law Centre  
*The value of welfare rights to the local economy*  
As part of a project with Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Greater Manchester Welfare Rights Advisers Group (GMWRAG) has been developing a business case for welfare rights advice; in terms both of cash gains compared to inward investment and the benefits to the broader local economy. With input from Gareth Morgan (Ferret), Dan will present their findings and discuss the progress of the project.
- 3.00      **Break**
- 3.15      **AGM and NAWRA committee updates**
- 3.25      **Information exchange/workshop feedback/NAWRA updates**

## WORKSHOP OPTIONS:

Each workshop lasts an hour and runs twice (once at 11.15am and again at 1.30pm). When you sign in you will be asked choose **two** from the following four options.

If you would like to run a workshop at a future NAWRA meeting please contact [kelly@nawra.org.uk](mailto:kelly@nawra.org.uk)

### **A. UC take-up campaign: Disabled Child and Carers elements**

Val Barrass, Rachel O'Donnell, Marie Martin, Lisa Sinfield and Julia Waterhouse, Durham Welfare Rights

Welfare Rights Officers from Durham's 'Campaign Team' will outline a take-up campaign which used Council Tax Reduction data to identify over 100 households on Universal Credit with a disabled child who appeared to be missing out on either the Disabled Child Element or the Carers Element of UC. So far, 64 households have received advice to secure their full entitlement, and 52 households have increased their monthly UC or have received arrears. The campaign raises important policy issues about the administration of Universal Credit for households with disabled children.

*Workshop level: Intermediate/Practical*

### **B. Social care services in England**

Paul Treloar, Age UK and Keith Thompson Northumberland County Council

This workshop aims to help welfare rights advisers understand more about how eligibility for social care services is assessed and charged for in England. Many advisers will be dealing with clients with long-term health conditions or impairments that may mean, as well as helping them to establish entitlement to benefits like PIP, they should be flagging the possibility of securing care and support from their local authority. We will explain how needs are assessed, how the financial assessment is carried out and also explore the linkages between benefits and social care services.

*Workshop level: Introductory-Intermediate/Practical*

### **C. Finding the right balance of probability**

Duncan Wall, Durham Welfare Rights

This is a workshop designed to examine and explore the attitudes of the DWP and HMCTS to the evidence required to prove entitlement.

The workshop will be discussion led and cover the following topics:

- The burden of proof and its potential erosion
- Medical records
- Inferences and rebuttal
- Credibility and tactics
- Requirements for written submissions

*Workshop level: Advanced/Practical*

### **D. Managed migration – unpicking some of the trickier bits**

Jane Crawford, Housing Systems

In this workshop we will use case studies to discuss issues such as the timing of the UC claim, retrospective changes and how to ensure UC is maximised. For some claimants, identifying the 'best time' within their 3-month window to make their UC claim will make a difference to the amount of benefit they can receive. So we will also discuss the added complication of when the annual uprating of benefits falls within the 3-month window.

The workshop is aimed at those who already have a good understanding of the managed migration process and transitional protection.

*Workshop level: Advanced/Practical*

#### **NAWRA workshop levels:**

<b>Introductory</b>	Assumes little or no prior knowledge of the topic or a refresher session
<b>Intermediate</b>	Assumes a reasonable working knowledge of welfare benefits work or some knowledge of the specific topic under discussion
<b>Advanced</b>	Assumes a good working knowledge of welfare benefits work or detailed knowledge of the topic under discussion

<b>Practical</b>	Focusing on developing good practice or offering some 'hints and tips'
<b>Theoretical</b>	Focusing on policy debates or discussion of emerging theory
<b>Strategic</b>	Focusing on planning and put practical knowledge, and/or theory in to practice

## LOCATION AND TRANSPORT



The conference will take place in-person at [Durham Town Hall](#), Market Place, Durham DH1 3NJ.

### How to get here:

**Road:** Durham is easily accessible by road and the city centre is situated just 2 miles from junction 62 of the A1(M). If you are driving to the Town Hall you will need to head towards the city centre. The Town Hall does not have its own car park but parking is available in the city centre car parks. Your best option may be parking at one of the three [park and ride stations](#) that serve the city centre and are based on major routes.

**Rail:** Trains from many UK towns and cities travel direct to Durham. The station lies on the UK East Coast main line, one stop south of Newcastle. It is just over 3 hours by train from Birmingham, 2½ hours from Manchester, 2 hours from Edinburgh and just 45 minutes from York.

**Bus:** Many buses serve the city centre from all across the region. The only bus that travels into the market place is the [Cathedral bus](#). Otherwise, the buses stop at either Claypath or Milburngate Bridge and the Town Hall is a short walk away. The [Traveline website](#) is a good way to plan your journey to Durham.

**Cycle:** National Cycle Routes [14](#) and [70](#) go through Durham city.

## ON THE DAY

### Inside the Town Hall

The oldest section of the Town Hall is the Guildhall and it dates from 1356. It was originally a timber formed building which was rebuilt in stone in 1535. Today's conference will be held in the Main Hall with workshops being run in various rooms throughout the Town Hall.

### Refreshments

Tea and coffee will be available on arrival, and then during both the morning and afternoon breaks. These will be available in the Main Hall.

## Lunch

Lunch is not provided. Options include:

- Local pubs and restaurants
- There is a selection of cafés and sandwich shops around the market place and you could always bring your lunch back into the Lantern Room if you choose.

## ACCESSIBILITY

Unfortunately, some rooms in Durham Town Hall are not accessible to people with limited mobility. We will arrange the workshops so that the options chosen by delegates with limited mobility are in the accessible rooms.

If you have any accessibility requirements, please contact [kelly@nawra.org.uk](mailto:kelly@nawra.org.uk) so that we can make arrangements.

## ACCOMMODATION

The most central hotels are:

- Bridge Hotel (next to the railway station)
- Premier Inn Durham Walkergate or Broomside Park (the latter is not within walking distance of the city centre)
- Travelodge Durham, Station Lane
- Radisson Blu Hotel
- Durham Marriott Royal County Hotel

See [www.thisisdurham.com](http://www.thisisdurham.com) for more information on accommodation, attractions and planning your trip.

## SOCIAL EVENINGS

### **Eve of the conference – Thursday 29 February from 7pm**

We will meet in The Bridge Hotel, 40 North Road, Durham DH1 4SE. The Bridge serves a variety of food until 10pm. [www.bridgehoteldurham.com](http://www.bridgehoteldurham.com)

### **After the conference – Friday 1 March from 4pm**

In the usual spirit of NAWRA meetings we will be retiring to the pub for a post-meeting drink or two.

We look forward to seeing you either at the Bridge Hotel the night before or at the Town Hall on the day. We hope you enjoy your trip to Durham.

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The conference is free to attend but open to NAWRA members only.

[Find out more about joining](#)

The conference is kindly sponsored by [Advice Pro](#) case management software.



If you have any queries about the conference please contact

Kelly Smith, NAWRA secretary [kelly@nawra.org.uk](mailto:kelly@nawra.org.uk)

or

Julie Kirkby, Durham Welfare Rights Service [Julie.kirkby@durham.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.kirkby@durham.gov.uk)

[www.nawra.org.uk](http://www.nawra.org.uk)