

INFORMATION & ADVICE

WHO'S WHO AT THE CENTRES?

54, SALTERGATE, CHESTERFIELD S40 1JR

Tel: (01246) 231441 Fax: (01246) 551529

Co-ordinator : Colin Hampton

WELFARE RIGHTS: Gordon Smith (Chesterfield), Derrick Skinner (N.E. Derbyshire), Melvin Kitchener (Amber Valley), Sarah Roy (Bolsover District)

ONE FUND FOR ALL: Rod Marshall.

TUSC: John Knight, 70 Saltergate, (01246) 231441

SINGLE PARENT NETWORK: 70 Saltergate, (01246) 231441

ADMIN WORKER: Fran Street.

WHERE TO GET ADVICE

CHESTERFIELD 54, Saltergate Monday to Thursday 9.00 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. Friday 9.00 a.m. to 12 noon	CLAY CROSS Room 8, Youth Suite Adult Education Centre Mondays 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.	HOLMEWOOD Community Centre Wednesdays 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon
KILLAMARSH Youth Centre Mondays 3.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.	ECKINGTON Civic Centre Mondays 2.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m.	ALFRETON Alfreton House, Hight St. (01773) 832237 Mondays & Thursdays 9.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m.
HEANOR "Salcare", Fletcher St Wednesdays 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.	BELPER The Cottage Project 16, Chapel St. Tuesdays 10.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m.	SHIREBROOK 44, Patchwork Row (01623) 748161 Mondays to Wednesdays 9.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. Fridays 9.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.
PINXTON Community Centre Tuesdays 1.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.	BOLSOVER Elder Citizens Centre Wednesdays 1.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.	CRESWELL Regeneration Office Elmton Rd. Thursdays 1.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.

The TRADE UNION/UNEMPLOYED LIAISON COMMITTEE meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m. in the Chesterfield Centre to plan and develop campaigning activities. We would be very pleased to see you there.

ALL ARE VERY WELCOME.

Trade Union/Unemployed Liaison Committee Secretary. Richard Easson

SOLIDARITY

Bi-Monthly Bulletin of Derbyshire
Unemployed Workers' Centres

ONE FUND FOR ALL.

Vol 2 No 12

August/September 1997

NEW DEAL - SAME OLD HAND?

IS ANYONE LISTENING TO THE UNEMPLOYED?

The Labour Government's approach to unemployment called the "New Deal" has now been unveiled (see centre pages). It has to be said at the outset that in general much of what is proposed is an improvement on what has been on offer for the last few years, but there remain serious concerns. There is, for instance, the question of coercion. The history of the last 20 years is littered with failed schemes based on various forms of coercion, some subtle, others not. If jobless people are coerced into work they may not walk away (their money will depend on it) but they will be reluctant and disaffected employees who neither employers nor voluntary agencies will want. Added to this the regime of "two weeks loss of money first time and four weeks for subsequent offence" is strongly reminiscent of the worst features of former Government schemes. We wonder if, in devising the "New Deal" anybody has spoken to unemployed people to find out what they want. The willing co-operation of unemployed people themselves is vital to the success of any Government approach to unemployment, coercion is wrong in itself and likely to be counterproductive. The "New Deal" is still based on the idea that unemployment is the fault of the unemployed and it is this basis which must be challenged.

CENTRES CRITICAL OF "NEW DEAL"

At a special meeting of the Trade Union/Unemployed Liaison Committee held on 7th August the Government's "New Deal" was the subject of discussion. Two important decisions were made:

1. The Centres reaffirmed their commitment to the TUCs Five Points on Training i.e.

- Participation to be voluntary.
- Rate for Job to be paid.
- Proper Employment rights.
- Quality training leading to recognised qualification.
- Full trade union recognition

2. An urgent meeting to be sought with the three local M.P.s and with the M.P. for Amber Valley.



You've heard of the New Deal?

Well, here's your cards.

FORCED LABOUR SCHEME TO GO AHEAD

The Government has decided that Project Work, the Tory's forced labour scheme, will go ahead. Despite their pre-election opposition to the scheme, the new Government has decided that the pilots will continue until the end of the financial year as the Government plans to move to the "New Deal" as soon as possible. The plan is to alter the pilots to include intensive help with basic skills for those who need it. These will cover such things as literacy, numeracy and help with English as a second language. Under the increased Workstart subsidy, employers who take on people who have been unemployed for more than two years will receive £60 per week for 18-24 year olds and £75 for those between 25 and 50. These new rates will offer increases of between £10 and £75 per month on the old rates under the Conservative Government. They will bring the subsidy in line with the "New Deal". This is all very disappointing and no amount of window dressing will alter the fact that unemployed people will be forced into working for peanuts, provide free labour for employers and force down the wages and threaten the jobs of those already in work. *The Centres can do no other than continue to campaign against Project Work no matter where it comes from.*

**"PROJECT WORK" WAS, IS AND
ALWAYS WILL BE
FORCED LABOUR**

J.S.A. COALITION

The JSA Coalition is a unique combination of welfare agencies that have been brought together to look at joint initiatives for campaigning around the Job Seeker's Allowance. The initial idea came from the Unemployment Unit and this is now being developed in conjunction with the Unemployed Centres Combine. It is planned that together to conduct a national enquiry into the effects of JSA.

*Just clean the cage,
Duffkins - we don't want
our benefit stopped, dowe?*



The Labour Government have promised a review of JSA in 1998 and the enquiry will seek to provide evidence to circulate to ministers prior to the review. The enquiry will be titled: "Job Seeker's Allowance - National Enquiry- Creating a Fair and Active Benefits System" (or FABS for short) Look out for more information soon.

O.F.F.A. NEWS

OFFA WORKER TO LEAVE

Rod Marshall, the Derbyshire OFFA Worker is to leave at the end of October after nearly 8 years in the job. Rod is leaving to take up a post as Vicar of Athersley in Barnsley, a return to his previous profession! We wish Rod well in his new work and thank him for his effort in building up OFFA over the last few years. We would hope to appoint a new OFFA Worker to continue the development of the Fund which is so vital to the future of the Centres. More next month.

O.F.F.A. AT THE TUC

The OFFA Schemes throughout the country will again be represented at the TUC Congress in Brighton in September. There will be a joint stall with the Unemployed Centres and the TUC President, Tony Dubbins of the GPMU, will make a short endorsement of OFFA to the delegates prior to the debate on full employment. As usual there will be discussions with various unions on how best to support and promote OFFA amongst their members.



Monday 8th September
Trades Council Open Meeting
7.15 p.m.
N.E. Derbyshire District Council
Council Chamber

Wednesday, 24th September
Liaison Committee
7.00 p.m.
Chesterfield Centre

Monday, 13th October
Trades Council Meeting
7.15 p.m.
N.E. Derbyshire District Council
Council Chamber

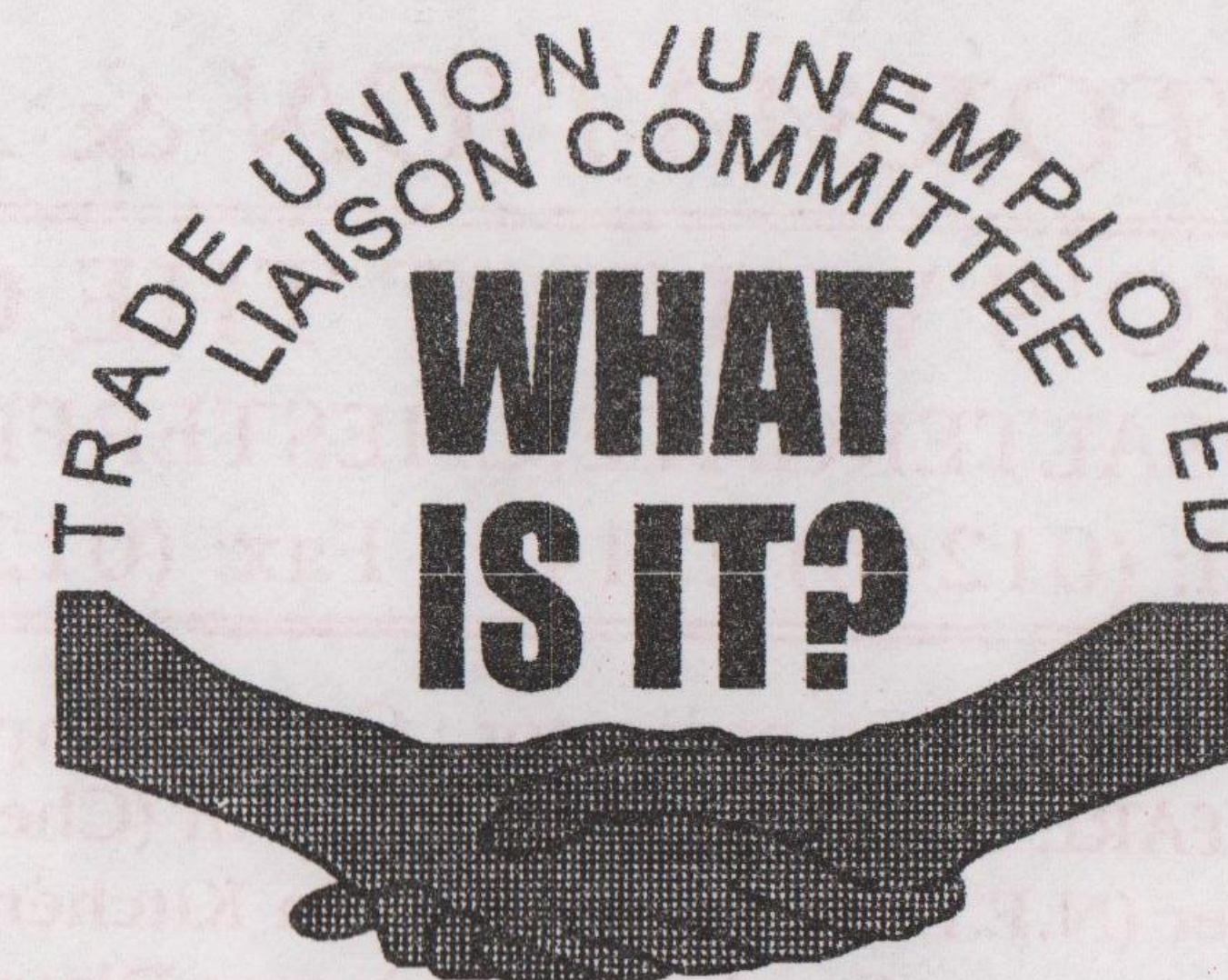
CHESTERFIELD & DISTRICT TRADES UNION COUNCIL

ANNUAL OPEN POLITICAL MEETING

Monday, 8th Sept.
7.15 p.m.
North-East Derbyshire
District Council
Chamber, Saltergate

Speakers:
Tony Benn M.P.
Harry Barnes M.P.
Dennis Skinner M.P.
Ken Coates M.E.P.

ALL WELCOME



The Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres are campaigning Centres. It is part of our basic philosophy that employed and unemployed people have a common enemy - unemployment. In the case of those out of work unemployment brings poverty, deprivation and ill-health. For those in work it brings lower wages, worse working conditions and weaker trade union organisation. We believe that it is vital that the unemployed and employed, along with their organisations should campaign together around issues of common concern. This is why we set up the *Trade Union/Unemployed Liaison Committee* a number of years ago. This is the main campaigning body of the Centres. It brings together those in work and those out of work, unemployed people and trade unions to organise and pursue campaigns, both national and locally around issues such as full employment, quality training, poverty, low pay, trade union legislation etc. Many of the issues dealt with in *Solidarity* are the subject of discussion and action at the Liaison Committee. We would like to see many more unemployed people and trade unionists involved. The meetings are open to anyone who wants to come along. Why not give it a try? We meet on the last Wednesday of each month.

TALES FROM THE DOLE QUEUE

BRONCHITIS & EMPHYSEMA

The Unemployed Workers Centres at all its venues is running a very successful take up campaign for the newly prescribed industrial disease bronchitis and emphysema. To date we have helped with over 400 claims and many have been successful with awards up to £101.10 per week.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT YOUR
NEAREST CENTRE OR PHONE (01246) 231441**