

# Work is Neighbourhood Business

## How we should respond to the Fourth Industrial Revolution

A DISCUSSION PAPER FROM CITIZEN NETWORK RESEARCH

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## Preface

This discussion paper is based on our submission to the Work and Pensions Committee Inquiry on the Department of Work & Pension's (DWP) preparations for changes in the world of work. The submission was made in May 2020 on behalf of the Centre for Welfare Reform (now Citizen Network Research) and Citizen Network.

Both of us are advocates of Universal Basic Income (UBI) and are active in the UBI Lab Network. However we are also active in the disability community and in the movement for neighbourhood democracy. These experiences open up new avenues of enquiry which help us see new possibilities. They also make us very wary of the hubris of any claim to competence by the DWP.

In our view the whole apparatus and mindset of the DWP is misdirected. If we are to support each other to live full and productive lives, mindful of our diverse gifts, then we need an entirely different approach to supporting people in work and supporting people to develop their skills. We hope that this discussion paper might inspire more imaginative approaches in the future.

We have not made any substantive changes in this paper to the submission we made, except rewriting it so that was more accessible to a general reader. If you would like to develop these ideas further or make any other suggestions then Citizen Network Research would be very interested in hearing from you.

Simon Duffy and Caroline Richardson



# Summary

- 1.** The *Fourth Industrial Revolution* creates a series of opportunities for widespread social and economic improvement. However, as it stands, the DWP is unlikely to play a positive role in making the most of these opportunities. Worse, given its current structure and culture, it is likely to promote ongoing failure, injustice and increased social conflict.
- 2.** The DWP's current model is insensitive to the dynamic and two-sided nature of the labour market. It fails to support people to make best use of their skills (the supply-side). Instead it focuses all its efforts on pushing people into jobs in a way that assumes that such jobs are fixed (the demand-side). This long-standing systemic failure leaves too many people excluded from work or in jobs of poor value and low productivity. This problem will only worsen as the UK economy faces further shocks and as the technological revolution unfolds.
- 3.** There is an ongoing failure to disconnect our right to a secure income from our right to make a meaningful contribution to social wellbeing (through employment or through the many other forms of meaningful work available). This creates unnecessary stress for individuals, and it also means that UK is in a weak position to adapt to the changing world of work. A better approach would be to create a Basic Income Plus system, to help people meet their own needs, while supporting all citizens to be creatively engaged, primarily at a local level, in finding meaningful and productive work.
- 4.** The data shows that people are motivated to work and that the best support systems for work are personal and local. Our approach to work should be reorganised so as to empower citizens to create their own solutions and to support networks of people and neighbourhoods to share learn together. The current organisation of the DWP - with its centralised control and its culture of suspicion and negativity - is entirely unsuited to the task ahead.

5. Our education system needs to be opened up to support learning at all ages. There are significant educational resources already at our disposal: schools, universities, the internet, employers and the many skilled and well educated people in our communities, who enjoy sharing knowledge and mentoring. We need an educational revolution, rooted in local communities and the local economy. The DWP's current model of standardised learning and institutional control is entirely unhelpful.
6. The future of work is local and the emerging technological revolution should serve current priorities: reduce commuting and transport costs, reduce our carbon footprint, increase physical exercise, regenerate local trading, business and enterprise. The correct locus for future planning is primarily at the level of neighbourhoods and local government. The DWP is not equipped to have the right conversations and its current tendency to rely on large contracts with national suppliers has been damaging to local economies.
7. The challenge of the *Fourth Industrial Revolution* provides us with an opportunity to rethink the social contract and to recognise the many valuable things citizens do which are not defined by the employee-employer relationship. In fact that relationship looks increasingly out-of-date and we should be thinking more deeply and more broadly about work and how we secure each other's basic needs. We should modernise the welfare state in order to create a secure and universal platform for active citizenship, caring and creativity.

# Introduction

The primary question posed by the Chair of the Work and Pensions Committee, Rt Hon Stephen Timms MP was:

*"What are the main challenges that DWP faces as a result of the Fourth Industrial Revolution?"*

The Committee then asked a series of supplementary questions which seemed to assume that the DWP has the capacity to respond to this challenge. However we believe that the Committee should have taken seriously a very different assumption:

**The DWP is not, and cannot be, competent to face the challenge ahead.**

The DWP is a government department that is out of time - uniquely ill-fitted, structurally and culturally, to respond effectively to this critical challenge.

The *Fourth Industrial Revolution* presents many new challenges and opportunities; but the DWP has not even been able to respond effectively to old and long-standing challenges:

- 1.** Ending poverty and distributing resources fairly
- 2.** Enabling everyone to develop and make best use of their skills and capacities
- 3.** Increasing wellbeing in ways that are sustainable and in harmony with nature

Instead of meeting these challenges the UK has high levels of extreme poverty and it is failing in its international human rights obligations.<sup>1</sup> Our approach to education, skills and work is out of date and based on an industrial model of employment that pays insufficient attention to our most important resource - the individual abilities of our citizens. UK productivity remains shockingly low because, instead of promoting automation and making labour more efficient, we've encouraged employers to use cheap labour.<sup>2</sup>

Instead of equipping ourselves to take advantage of the Fourth Industrial Revolution the UK is on course to be a laggard. The price of this failure

will not only be economic; already current policies push people into low value work, a bullying system of sanctions and reliance on food banks. Government policy is driving a significant mental health crisis and loss of life.<sup>3</sup>

The failure of the DWP to properly support disabled people and families is symptomatic of this chronic crisis. Disabled people and family carers are both valuable groups of people who, instead of being supported to improve their lives and their contribution to community life, are currently marginalised by a one-eyed system that focuses on a dangerously narrow conception of social value. Instead of supporting people to make the best use of their skills the system applies harsh and simplistic assessment tools and provides support that is impersonal, bureaucratic, harmful and counter-productive.<sup>4</sup>

It is our view that, on top of the COVID-19 crisis, increased automation, climate change, continuing economic insecurity and indebtedness will continue to undermine the capacity of the UK to create well paid, productive work that is distributed fairly across society. Only if the UK Government makes radical changes to its approach to work, disability and income security can we break out of this failing model.

The key to universal reform of these systems is to build a system that is flexible and supportive enough to work for everyone. In particular, if the UK created a model that worked for disabled people then it would also create a better system faces all these emerging changes. However, if the UK continues with its current approach, it will not only further marginalise disabled people and families it will create deep social divisions from which the country may never recover.

# I. The next industrial revolution

If we analyse the nature of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in the light of the subsequent seven questions asked by the Chair of the Committee in his initial statement then we can identify the revolution's consequences as follows:

- 1.** The nature of work is changing and it will do so at an increasing rate. Unless we change our approach the UK economy will become increasingly inefficient and uncompetitive.
- 2.** Extreme poverty, income, food and housing insecurity is already endemic and all of this will worsen as more people lose their jobs and find themselves responding to a profoundly new and uncertain economic situation.
- 3.** The DWP's current system of 'work activation' is built on the wrong assumptions. It is inefficient, costly, and even worse, it causes direct harm to citizens: increasing suicides and mental ill health. These systems will become even more inappropriate in these fast changing times.
- 4.** The revolution will further empower people to find opportunities for development and economic activity in their own way. Personal and career development needs to be driven by citizens themselves and must be rooted in support that is based in local neighbourhoods.
- 5.** Education needs to be modernised and extended to all ages. The digital economy creates the opportunity for networked change where central control is ineffective and wasteful. It is unclear what positive role the DWP could play in these educational structures.
- 6.** Local communities and employers need to work together to meet local needs targeting local priorities and meeting our social and environmental responsibilities. We need to shift power and resources out of the DWP, out of Whitehall and enable leadership within local communities.
- 7.** We need a new foundation of rights for everyone. Employment will be increasingly seen as inappropriate model for modern work habits and instead other forms of paid and unpaid work will become increasingly important.

The *Fourth Industrial Revolution* is an opportunity. But it is an opportunity that we can fail to grasp or, even worse, it is an opportunity we can miss

entirely. If we fail to adapt we will increase social injustice and inequality. The UK government has an urgent responsibility to seize this opportunity, but to do it must abandon many of its current assumptions about work and income security.

## 2. The DWP is out of time

Emerging improvements in digital technology, IT, and robotics may bring about some tremendously positive changes in society:

- Global improvements in welfare and reductions in poverty
- Ending exploitative ‘sweat shop’ labour overseas and reducing transportation costs and harm to the environment
- More opportunities for meaningful work and contribution, citizenship, caring and creativity
- A bigger role for small and local business and neighbourhood development

As with the COVID-19 crisis, the Fourth Industrial Revolution is also likely to make us rethink the importance of different kinds of work:

- Human work (teaching and caring) and work with nature will remain vitally important and may begin to be increasingly valued.
- Managerial work will become increasingly redundant as networks, apps and smart learning systems reduce the need for many white-collar jobs and professions.
- Industrial and building work will increasingly be automated

Many of these changes threaten gender and power relationships and the social consequences of the changes will be as significant as the economic impacts. But even more significant, unless we find new ways to distribute resources, the revolution will wreck havoc upon families across the country:

- Reduced hours of work and a reduced workforce
- Wage stagnation for most people, but accelerating incomes for those controlling the new technologies
- Increased poverty, regional division, unemployment, insecurity and social conflict

In this context it is concerning that the DWP is even considered to be a helpful agent of change. The DWP’s current methodology and assumptions will be entirely counter-productive. The DWP is perceived negatively by those who use it, and by those who don’t. It is associated with negative policies, like Universal Credit and the creation of a hostile environment for those who need income security.<sup>5</sup>

More broadly DWP policies are based on confused and illiberal assumptions about what work is and how it should be defined. Jobs are treated as fixed roles, defined by external factors. It is assumed that the role of government is to fit people into those jobs with no regard to either:

- The capacities, desires and needs of individuals
- The goals and real needs of the community

All the emphasis is on meeting the ‘demand’ for labour, with no regard to the ‘supply-side’ (i.e. people themselves). The term ‘labour market’ is used but market-type dynamics are not considered. In the same way the term “economy” has become detached from its real meaning. Instead of referring to the actual combination of factors that create well-being the term has become narrowly defined in terms of activities involving financial exchange and measured by GDP (an entirely inadequate way of understanding the factors that secure our common good).

It is time for policy-makers to focus on our wellbeing and to think instead of how society balances and distributes five kinds of activities:

- 1.** Employment - paid work, where the employee is controlled by the employer
- 2.** Self-employment - work where the employee is not controlled by an employer
- 3.** Enterprise - people offering services or trade for money
- 4.** Unpaid work - this includes the essential roles of caring, volunteering and citizenship
- 5.** Rest and recreation - time off from all forms of work

A sane approach to the economy would not seek to maximise employment but would seek to balance all these different forms of economic activity. Reducing the working week, restricting days of trading, lowering salary ratios and improving income security would all lead to significant improvements in well-being. Moreover communities should be enabled to share out work more equally, ensure that some people do not have to do too much caring or paid work and that everyone can use their talents to the greatest effect.

Not only should jobs not be treated as simple and unmitigated goods they should also not be treated as fixed roles, defined by a particular business. Jobs are functions of relationships and they can be amended to fit individual

needs and capacities. If we want good jobs then we need to:

- Ensure people are free to turn down work that damages health, mental health or which does not contribute to human wellbeing<sup>6</sup>
- Ensure people get the support and resources they need so that they can work with employers or other citizens to use their skills to best effect
- Ensure people have the security to try out new roles, make new contributions and develop more helpful community structures

For instance the COVID-19 crisis has already demonstrated that old work models can be changed and that home working is more attractive and achievable than many realised. In fact data from the ONS shows that many people are enjoying new ways of working and that this can improve health and wellbeing.<sup>7</sup>

In a time of rapid change it is essential that people will be able to adapt in ways which lead to better outcomes for everyone:

- People who want to contribute and develop their own skills
- People who need the help and are prepared to pay for it
- People who want to contribute without requiring payment

The best model for the UK to adopt is one which makes it easier for people to contribute. The main obstacle to full and meaningful contribution is income insecurity - people cannot afford to turn a job down - even if it's a bad and unproductive job. This means the best way to improve the labour market is to provide income security for everyone - whether or not they are employed.

In our view Universal Basic Income (UBI) is the ideal system for improving the fairness, efficiency and productivity.

### 3. Basic Income Plus

As the COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated, providing security of income and the meeting of basic human needs is the first responsibility of government. As the Fourth Industrial Revolution gathers pace we will see income insecurity accelerate and growing demands on the state to guarantee a basic income.

These new insecurities will come on top of a system that is already failing and inadequate. Poverty and inequality are high and the UK now has 5,000 food banks - a situation which would have been unimaginable only a decade ago.<sup>8</sup> This is not the place to repeat the litany of depressing statistics about social injustice in the UK; however it is critical to note that this is not merely a question of party ideology or austerity. If we honestly examine the policies of the last 40 years in the context of our changing economy then four facts stand out:

- 1.** The top 15% have become increasingly wealthy
- 2.** Earned incomes in the middle have been dropping
- 3.** Middle incomes have been increasingly subsidised by the state
- 4.** The poorest have been hit hardest with reductions in income, benefits and security<sup>9</sup>

A system that redistributes resources away from those in greatest need is a failed system and this failure reflects a mixture of economic, administrative and political factors that have left the interests of the poorest and disabled people with no effective protection.<sup>10</sup> The economic and political changes that have created this systemic failure include:

- 1.** The shift from an industrial to a service economy
- 2.** Growing pressure on businesses to reduce liabilities in order to stay competitive
- 3.** Weakened trade unions
- 4.** Competitive tendering in the public sector
- 5.** Short-term profit-seeking focus by banks and other financial bodies
- 6.** Tax-benefit changes that subsidise middle incomes and landlords (e.g. tax credits)
- 7.** Inadequate constitutional and civil society protections for human rights
- 8.** A stigmatised and confusing system of benefits, set at low levels

These factors already make the basic economic structure of the UK very fragile. Low benefit levels and sanctions reinforce an unproductive economy where there are weak incentives for employers to move to more productive and less labour intensive methods. The UK economy's productivity failure is therefore a function of its inadequate income security system and far too many people are forced to work in low value, low paid work just to survive. Many policy-makers still seem to believe that increased inequality and lower levels of income actually help economic development; however this is a dangerous economic fallacy and one that has already caused long-term damage to both society and the economy.

Of course these factors are not wholly the responsibility of the DWP. However the DWP's existence is part of an administrative system which tends to obscure the real imperatives of our current situation and so contributes significantly to this policy failure. For example, the DWP and HMRC are essentially overlapping institutions, both of which carry out the function of redistributing income with the aim of reducing poverty.<sup>11</sup> This has led to a situation where - redistribution - an essential feature of any complex society - is badly managed, falling between two systems that each work to conflicting principles:

- The tax system is largely an individual-based system with taxes, allowances and other quasi-benefits focused on the individual's circumstances. It is a relatively high-trust and efficient system built on self-assessment, low levels of policing and with no stigma.
- The DWP creates benefits that are based on the assumption that households (not individuals) are the basic economic unit. It is a low-trust and inefficient system with privatised, inaccurate and harmful assessments, high levels of policing and stigma.

It is unjust to treat those on low incomes more harshly than those on high incomes and our society pays a considerable cost for perpetuating this division. It is noticeable also that the DWP is a much more expensive organisation than HMRC, despite the fact that it is focused on a much smaller fraction of the population. In fact it seems to cost about twice as much to not trust people as to trust them.<sup>12</sup>

The combination of these two self-contradicting system is particularly bad for family life and is associated with: domestic violence, financial abuse, locking families into poverty, and poor incentives for positive family formation.<sup>13</sup> It is a system which is both anti-family and pro-dependency. Husbands, wives, partners and children, including disabled people, are often

left with no independent economic resources and incentives to work for the whole family are often confused and perverse.

In the long-run the tax system should take precedence and income security, redistribution and contribution should all be organised with one coherent methodology based on individuals. It makes no sense to give and take resources away from people using two competing systems of accounting - individuals and households. In the future the whole system must move to an individual basis and where additional needs occur because of individual circumstances entitlements must be added on top of basic individual needs, not extracted by reducing incomes when people form families.

The most logical model to move towards is a system of Basic Income Plus:<sup>14,15</sup>

- 1.** Close down the DWP and give the responsibility of ensuring every individual has an income to HMRC
- 2.** Meet this responsibility with a regular cash payment, with no means-testing. Taxes would be paid on earned income above the basic income level.
- 3.** Additional elements to meet the extra costs caused by extra needs: primarily disability, caring responsibilities and housing. These additional payments would also be excluded from means-testing.
- 4.** End conditionality, sanctions and other systems of control.
- 5.** Build on the self-assessment system to enable self-assessment for disability and other extra need, with reasonable checks and balances.
- 6.** Such a system could be extended to include personal budgets in social care and health, plus systems like Access to Work, all of which are inherently complex and bureaucratic.

The potential social and economic benefits of Basic Income Plus are enormous and it would equip every citizen with the means to respond intelligently to the current economic crisis and the new crises that we can expect:

- Incentives to work improve and hours work increase, as recently reinforced by the research on the basic income experiment in Finland, published this year.<sup>16</sup>
- Wellbeing improves, educational attainment increases, skill development grows.
- Domestic violence, mental illness, crime and ill health all reduce.

- The system would also insulate the whole economy from major shocks and would be far more efficient and fair than the current COVID-19 responses (which are highly regressive and patchy).
- Expensive monitoring, assessment and work programmes can be abandoned and resources invested instead in individuals and communities.

For disabled people and family carers these benefits would be particularly strong. People would be able to choose how to find work which fitted their needs, interests and were properly adapted for their ability. They would be free from perverse poverty traps and undue family dependency.

## 4. Finding work

People are naturally inclined to seek their own good and the good of their families. The essential requirement of a system of social security is that it ensures people do not fall into need or fear falling into need. Basic income solves this problem in the most direct way possible and it acts as the best assurance that people can find the work that suits them best in the context of the changing demands of employers, customers and the evolving possibilities created by technology and the environment.

Contrary to these facts the DWP has eaten up resources providing poor quality assessments, expensive work programmes, policing the lives of citizens and exercising harsh penalties without recourse to the normal constraints of justice.<sup>17,18</sup> At the bottom of all its programmes and measures is a powerful and false assumption: central government is good at helping people find good work.

**Central government is not competent to provide the right support to help people find the right work.**

If the UK is going to learn to develop an approach to work that is appropriate to the 21st century then it will have to change its thinking:

- People will primarily find work through networks - both personal and digital<sup>19</sup>
- The best support is personal and based on trust and strong relationships
- Local communities and peers are the key to strengthening confidence and resilience
- Support to find work and support in work needs to be personalised and flexible

It was noticeable that during that as the reality of the COVID-19 crisis began to hit the DWP was forced to close down its programmes of conditionality and sanctioning. Too many people would be shocked to find themselves subject to such a system and the system itself would not have been able to cope with the numbers involved. As we move into the Fourth Industrial Revolution the UK must not waste resources by continuing to invest in what is in effect a low quality employment agency, associated with stigma, shame and a culture of bullying.<sup>20,21</sup>

## 5. Career development

If it is obvious that the DWP is not an appropriate organisation to help people into work then it should be even more obvious why it is entirely inappropriate as an organisation to support people to seek advice on career development.

It's not appropriate for the DWP to advise people who are in work how to progress in that workplace. Workplace progression is as individual in nature as each workplace is. It is mildly amusing to imagine how the DWP could, for instance, advise an amateur jockey how to get more potentially winning rides and become professional, or how a firefighter to shorten the time he or she has to wait until a higher position becomes available.

There is not the remotest chance that the DWP would either be trusted to provide such advice or be competent to deliver it, particularly as such advice assumes a knowledge which the DWP will not have. Instead we should be focusing our resources on creating neighbourhood and community structures of support that enable people to get advice and support they can trust.

One obvious policy solution for increasing progression in the workplace is to reduce the pension age, thus allowing people in higher positions to retire, and creating a vacuum. Similarly the effect of a lower pension age would free up more available hours. However this is currently contrary to the current policy, which assumes that we should be lengthening the time people must wait to receive their pension.

## 6. Skill development

There is a whole government department which already has the responsibility to help people to develop their skills - the Department for Education which “is responsible for children’s services and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.” There is no case for extending any of its responsibilities to the DWP.

Currently training by the DWP, both voluntary and compulsory, is very limited. However people find it difficult to re-train at educational establishments because this is not supported by benefit income and non-traditional modes of learning are even threatened by sanctions.

There is of course a case for strengthening people’s ability to develop their own skills, for example, we could create a training allowance, and allow unemployed people of all ages to train full time. This allowance could be greater than any available unemployment allowance, and take into account additional expenditure for clothing, transport and food.

Many young people have no idea what they would like to do for a job or career. They have no experience, and are often limited in what jobs are available in their area, and are only exposed to the jobs market that family and friends experience. There is no aptitude testing, and very little career guidance whilst young people are still in education. They often leave school with no idea what they want to do, what is available, or how they start that journey. This has to be remedied at school. Young people often don't know what they want to do, which gives them nothing to aim for.

Currently the education system takes a far too impersonal approach to work and life after school. Instead of supporting young people to think positively about all the opportunities that are ahead of them the system tend to focus on grades in exams which will rarely be relevant to what people actually do.

**Thinking about careers is limited. Caroline’s experiences remain typical:**

*“My own career advice consisted of selecting 3 sectors of interest, then being given addresses of organisations to write to, to ask them about how to enter that occupation. Additionally there were 2 careers books - Your Choice at 13+, and Your Choice at 15+, which outlined what qualifications you would need, and again giving contact details of organisations. There were no mentors, no role models, no visits to companies, no discussion*

*of careers. Girls were pushed towards service industries and nursing. At no point did anyone suggest being a photographer, a tree surgeon, a firefighter or an MP. At no point was my aptitude, attitude, personality, preference, capability or capacity taken into account.”*

Interestingly there are examples of special schools where a much more pro-community and pro-work approach has been taken and this has multiple benefits.<sup>22</sup> The UK education system could learn much from Finland where schools are more inclusive, supportive and more closely connected to their local community.

The DWP is not a training body. The DWP's forays into training have only produced the inefficient Work Programmes that are, in the main, aimed at low skill, low paid, minimum wage employment, and have had minimal success. Quality training that provides the skills needed in the future is the remit of trade bodies, educational establishments and employers working together with employees, trainees and unemployed people.

**The role of government is to ensure that employees, trainees and unemployed people are financially stable and have the income necessary to complete any training they are offered.**

## 7. Employer development

It is clear that the DWP is not able to work with employers, given the wide and diverse range of jobs, companies and employers. The DWP has neither the skills nor the capacity to engage in this activity and for it to be in any way meaningful regarding future employment outcomes. In fact it has a tendency, as a centralised government agency, to focus on a small number of relationships with large agencies and employers. Its influence will most likely distort future economic development unhelpfully.

Most employment is local. Each area within a county, borough or town has a different set of needs and we should seek to help communities find their own solutions as locally as possible. Moreover the Future Jobs Fund, closed down in 2010, has already demonstrated that a local approach to work and job development is much more effective and efficient than the DWP's centralised approach.<sup>23,24</sup>

**There is a role for investing in local government and neighbourhoods to help ensure that there are structures to support people who get stuck - employers and potential employees.**

Many of the best approaches are developed by local community organisations, focused on specific areas or specific people. For example, disabled people can develop systems of peer support to help people find work that are far more effective than systems developed by a centralised agency.<sup>25,26</sup>

There are also going to be a whole range of new skills required in the light of the growing environmental challenges. Skills training for a changing world needs to recognise the move towards energy provision and energy saving, water provision and water use, renewable energy supply, design and development. Again, all of these matters are best resolved at local and regional levels.

## 8. The meaning of work

In 1945 it was assumed that income security was a partnership between the state, the citizen and the employer. Industry was expected to provide paid work, occupational pensions and other rights to sickness benefits and holidays. Women and disabled people were not considered and the structure of industry was treated as largely fixed.

Today these old securities and systems have gone and the future changes are likely to be even more significant than the changes we've seen over the last 70 years:

- Businesses will not provide security beyond the a salary - the state (i.e. the citizenry) will be the provider of pensions, benefits and other securities
- Few people will have long-term stable careers with clear progression and multiple benefits
- Disabled people, women and carers will still seek to contribute and to be involved in all part of life
- Social justice and social security will be primarily achieved by political - not economic - mechanisms

In the end we will need to abandon our narrow and limited approach to work. We will need to think in universal terms about human development and we will need to invest in the communities and families which nurture human life. In practice we should be more focused on redistributing work roles and incomes more fairly and in a way that opens more opportunities to others:

- Basic Income Plus
- Limiting hours worked (e.g. a four day week)
- Reducing pension ages
- Reducing salary ratios within organisations
- Making it easier to start a business and trade locally

This will require a new conversation about the meaning of work. Our society has become fixated on valuing certain roles (e.g. management roles) many of which will become redundant. At the same time it ignores or devalues other essential roles upon which society has always depended, but which lack the same elevated status (e.g. parenting, caring, volunteering). It is these latter

roles which will remain in place. As the COVID-19 crisis reveals, people are capable of recognising the value of other roles - but we may have to also let go of old standards and assumptions if we are to make the transition to a new economy and a better society.

## Conclusion

Our hope was that the Committee would use its Inquiry to really think deeply about the challenges ahead. If we are not honest about our current failures - both social and economic - then we will repeat our old mistakes and reinforce existing inequalities. If we start to see income security as a distinct human right we will actually help ourselves to become a society which can naturally and quickly respond to the challenges ahead. However if we continue to believe that government can use bureaucratic systems to manage citizen behaviour then our society and our economy will continue to suffer.

There is an emerging opportunity to create a world where each citizen can develop their gifts and contribute to the world we need to create together: a world that is sustainable and just. Old patriarchal and industrial norms are failing and will fall. The challenge is to look to the future and to create a new architecture to support our individual and collective ambitions. Individuals need more security and fulfilment; communities need more vibrancy and inclusion. With the right approach work can be redesigned to help us achieve these goals.

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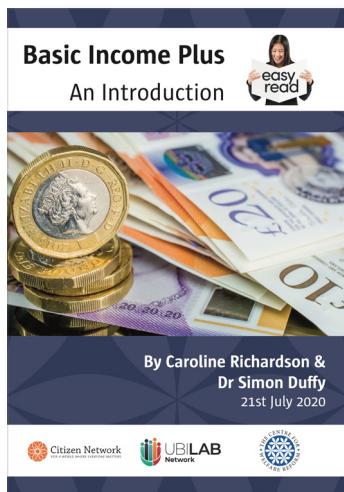
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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Simon Duffy** is a philosopher and social innovator who works to create a world where everyone matters. Simon is President of Citizen Network, which is a global non-profit cooperative, with members in 34 different countries. Simon is also Director of Citizen Network Research (formerly the Centre for Welfare Reform). His work focuses on the ideal of citizenship and how each of us can be fully equal and unique. Simon is a regular public speaker, writer and policy advisor.

**Caroline Richardson** is part of the Spartacus Network organisation, that has researched and reported on Government policies and legislation. She has authored many reports analysing government policies on ESA, PIP and other welfare reforms.

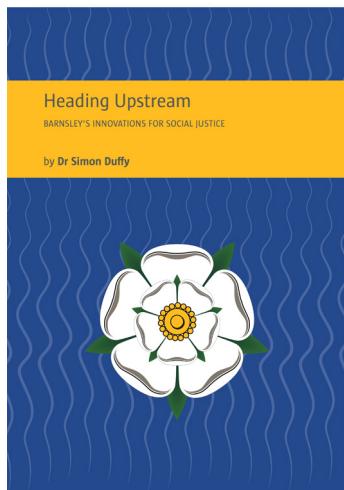
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#### An Introduction to Basic Income Plus

Basic Income is an exciting and positive reform of the social security and tax system. It would give everybody a secure income and ensure people were better able to participate in society as an equal citizen.

This paper and an easy read version is available to read at:  
[www.citizen-network.org](http://www.citizen-network.org)



#### Heading Upstream

Barnsley Council has been quietly pressing ahead with a series of interconnected reforms whose purpose has been to transform the relationship of local government with local people and to advance social justice, not through public services or privatisation, but by giving citizens, families and local communities more power and control over their own destinies.

The guide is available to read at:  
[www.citizen-network.org](http://www.citizen-network.org)



## CITIZEN NETWORK RESEARCH

The Centre for Welfare Reform was established in 2009 as an independent think tank, based in Sheffield, UK. In 2016 the Centre founded Citizen Network. Citizen Network is a movement to advance equality and justice around the world. We started Citizen Network because we need to celebrate human diversity and stand up for human equality. We need to work together and to behave like citizens, reject division and create more inclusive communities that welcome people with all their different gifts. In 2020 Citizen Network Osk was registered as a global non-profit cooperative registered in Helsinki Finland. At the beginning of 2022 the Centre changed its name to Citizen Network Research and integrated its work and website into the work of Citizen Network.

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## UBI LAB NETWORK

UBI Lab is a worldwide network of citizens, researchers and activists exploring the potential of Universal Basic Income (UBI). UBI is a regular and unconditional payment given to everyone regardless of their income, wealth or work. A UBI could provide financial security for all, building more resilient economies and giving everyone the resources they need to thrive. We believe the time has come to pilot this: #LetsTryUBI.

Find out more and join in at: [www.ubilabnetwork.org](http://www.ubilabnetwork.org)



## NEIGHBOURHOOD DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT

The NDM is a movement to create real democracy in every community and a real shift of power to local people. We believe everyone has a unique contribution to make to their community and that people must have more power to make decisions on the issues that affect them at every level. We need a deeper democracy, led from neighbourhoods. By coming together, sharing what works and what doesn't, we can support each other to flourish.

Find out more and join in at: [www.neighbourhooddemocracy.org](http://www.neighbourhooddemocracy.org)



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