

9.30 - 10.00 *Registration & Coffee* (Ashley Centre, 2nd Floor, LT116)

10.00 *Welcome to the University* (Ashley, Ground Floor, Lecture Theatre LT002) *Prof Susan Foreman*

AM SESSION: Welfare Reforms

Introductory Overview & 'Key Issues' *Fiona Weir* Chief Executive, Gingerbread

Universal Credit: *Alan Markey* Head of Benefits, Citizens Advice

Benefits 'Localisation' and Council Tax Support *Helen Robson* Staffordshire University and *Tina Mendolia* Citizens Advice

The Impact of the Changes on Carers *Jean French* Head of Advice, Carers UK

Disability Benefits, DLA and Personal Independence Payment *Mark Perlic* Wolverhampton City Council

Better Off/Worse Off Advice after the Changes *Gareth Morgan*, Managing Director, Ferret Information Systems

Speakers' Panel: Questions and Discussion

11.40 *Coffee/Refreshments*

WORKSHOP 1 - Changes to Benefits & Tax Credits (Workshop Rooms*, Ashley)

1.00-1.30 LUNCH

PM SESSION: Welfare and Work (Ashley, Lecture Theatre, LT002)

The 'Work' Side: Changes to Employment Rights *Ian Moss* Solicitor, Head of Equalities and Employment Rights, Citizens Advice

Incapacity Benefits/ESA and Work Capability *Grainne McKeever* School of Law, University of Ulster & Executive Director, Law Centre (NI)

Carers Support & Employment Rights *Jean French* Head of Advice, Carers UK

Wages & In-Work Support: Will Work 'Pay'? *Keith Puttick* Staffordshire University

Speakers' Panel: Questions and Discussion.

WORKSHOP 2 - Welfare & Work (Workshop Rooms). Concluding Discussions (LT002) (4.00 Close)

*NB Workshop groups, leaders, and rooms will be advised on registration

Fiona Weir is Chief Executive of Gingerbread. Gingerbread provides expert advice and support for single parents and families, and campaigns on benefits and other issues including, most recently, cuts to in-work and out-of-work benefits and tax credits, Universal Credit implementation, and flexible working proposals (describing these as a 'missed opportunity'). Gingerbread commissioned a report from the Centre for Research in Social Policy 'Struggling to Make Ends Meet', and has argued that UC changes in their present form will fail to provide all claimants with a 'route out of poverty' and could act as a disincentive to take up longer working hours.

Alan Markey is Head of Benefits at Citizens Advice Specialist Support and editor of *The Adviser*. He has been closely involved in CA's work on Universal Credit since the publication of '21st Century Welfare' and consultations by the Social Security Advisory Committee on UC's implementation, leading the organisation's responses, including 'Universal Credit and Related Regulations', and commenting on the impact of the changes for groups like disabled workers, EU migrant workers, and those affected by changes to earnings disregards and requiring support with childcare costs. He has worked with other organisations producing responses to the changes, including 'Disability and Universal Credit' (CA, Children's Society and Disability Rights UK) about the impact of UC on support for disabled people.

Jean French is Head of Advice and Information at Carers UK. She has been working in Social Security Law for more than 20 years, and has extensive experience of benefits and tax credit appeals work. She has created and managed many new projects including the first welfare benefits service at the Landmark (an HIV organisation in London), the LSC-funded Lasa Specialist Support Welfare Benefits Service (which provided a second tier helpline for solicitors and advice workers), Carers Kensington & Chelsea, and Islington Carers Hub. She has worked as an editor of the RightsNet website, was responsible for the creation of 900 pages of the Carers Direct website, and has extensive experience of designing and delivering welfare benefits training. She is a guest expert on carers' issues for the Radio 4 programme Money Box. She lectured in Social Security Law and tribunal representation at London Metropolitan University for nine years and is on the editorial board of *The Adviser*.

Grainne McKeever is a Senior Lecturer in Law in the School of Law, University of Ulster. She is Executive Director of the Law Centre (NI), a not for profit agency working to advance social welfare rights in Northern Ireland that gives specialist legal support to advice giving organisations in areas like social security law, employment rights, community care law, immigration law, and mental health. Grainne's areas of specialisation include incapacity benefits and assessment, social security appeals, and social security fraud, with articles in leading journals like the *Journal of Social Security Law* and the *Industrial Law Journal*.

Tina Mendolia teaches on the BA (Hons) Advice Studies course at Staffordshire University and is a Training Officer at Stoke-on-Trent CAB delivering courses on welfare benefits and welfare reform. She has worked in the advice work field for more than 25 years in a variety of roles including Money Adviser at Cambridge CAB and as Manager at Newcastle and Kidsgrove CAB. She is currently researching the impact of Welfare Reforms being introduced from April 2013 and in particular the effects that localisation of Council Tax Support, Crisis Loans will have on benefit claimants.

Gareth Morgan is Managing Director of Ferret Information Systems, which has been providing support systems for welfare advisers and advice organisations since 1987. Gareth has a background in advice work, and his particular area of expertise is the holistic assessment of financial circumstances relating to welfare benefits and tax credits entitlements, and the development of support systems to support advisers and advice work. He has spoken at previous conferences and workshops in the "Welfare & Work" series since 1999, including "Empowerment, Welfare & Work: In Work, Better Off?" (2007).

Ian Moss is a Solicitor and Head of Equalities and Employment Rights at Citizens Advice. Ian and his colleagues are closely involved in supporting day-to-day employment advice, and have been involved in formulating CA's responses to consultations on changes made by the Coalition in key areas like remedies under the Equality Act 2010 and charging fees to start Employment Tribunal cases. He has also been close to other changes, including the requirement to complete two years service before an Unfair Dismissal claim can be made, and 'deregulation' initiatives affecting employment rights and welfare-at-work issues. Ian has been a speaker at previous 'Welfare & Work' events including 'Empowerment, Welfare & Work: In Work, Better Off?' (2007).

Mark Perlic has been a welfare rights practitioner since 1984 during which time he has worked as a caseworker, trainer and manager. He works as part of the management team for Wolverhampton City Council's Welfare Rights Service, with responsibility for the Take-up Team. This undertakes benefit maximisation work among vulnerable people in Wolverhampton. He has line management responsibility for the work of the Welfare Rights Officers in both the Council's Children & Family Support and Carer Support teams. In addition to his work with Wolverhampton City Council, Mark writes and produces the 'DLA and AA Case Law Pack' (now in its 2013, 10th edition).

Keith Puttick is a Senior Lecturer at Staffordshire University where he teaches Social Welfare Law and Employment Law. He writes for *The Adviser*, the *Industrial Law Journal*, and other publications on welfare and employment topics, most recently two commissioned articles '21st Century Welfare and the Wage-Work-Welfare Bargain' and '21st Century Welfare and Universal Credit: Reconstructing the Wage-Work-Welfare Bargain' (*Industrial Law Journal March*, July 2012), and 'Social Security and Community Care' in *Civil Appeals* (ed. Sir Michael Burton) Sweet & Maxwell 2nd ed 2013. He is currently writing a monograph *21st Century Welfare, Wages and Work: Reforming Welfare to Make Work Pay*.

Helen Robson is a Senior Lecturer in Advice Studies at Staffordshire University, teaching on face-to-face and distance learning awards in Advice Work and Social Work. Her subjects include Welfare Benefits, Debt Advice, Housing Advice, and Immigration and Asylum. Previously, she worked at Stoke-on-Trent Citizens Advice Bureau as a case worker in welfare benefits and debt advice, trainer, and as supervisor of volunteers, and was a member of the management team. She is currently on their Trustee Board