

To Update and Simplify the Benefits System

Since its inception in 1948 the benefits system has become outdated, as the world has changed to such a great extent since then.



The problems with the benefits system include:

- Filled with traps – the [benefits trap](#) is well documented with housing costs being one of the highest hurdles.
- Too complex – unless you have a professionally trained adviser to help you navigate and work the system, then it is likely you will not [claim all that you are entitled to](#) - in 2005-06 between £5.7 billion and £9.3 billion of benefits went unclaimed
- Changed too often – constant tinkering to changing the benefit rules has led to a very complex and contradictory system.
- Outdated – it doesn't respond to sessional, part time and temporary work, only a 35 hour week.
- Mean – why are so many benefits paid out below the poverty line?
- Administratively burdensome – for the individual and the staff. Application forms are unnecessarily long and complicated (Job Seekers Allowance is 44 pages).

The Community Allowance would enable the benefits system to be simplified:

- The participant's benefits status would be 'frozen' and protected for a year, enabling the participant to be stress free about a minimum level of income so they can concentrate on gaining skills, knowledge and experience through work to help them to progress off benefits
- Job Centre Plus would not have to deal with unnecessary paperwork while participants are on the Community Allowance, eradicating the work that currently exists for Job Centre Plus staff when a claimant declares part time, short term or sessional work
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit would also be protected for a year, eradicating the work that currently exists for Local Authority staff when a claimant declares part time, short term or sessional work