

# THE UNEVEN IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORM ON BRITAIN'S OLDER INDUSTRIAL REGIONS

DEPARTMENT OF LAND ECONOMY

Environment, Law, and Economics

{WHERE} Mill Lane Lecture Room 4

{WHEN} Wednesday 23 November 4-5pm

## {SPEAKER}

Professor Christina Beatty  
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Sheffield Hallam University

Welfare reform has been a defining feature of UK Government policy and its deficit reduction plan since 2010. The intention is to create a welfare system which is fit for the 21st century: fairer, simpler, providing a transitional support system in times of need, incentivising work, protecting the most vulnerable and affordable to the taxpayer. In reality, a major overhaul of the system has been instigated and successive Budgets have reduced entitlement and restricted eligibility across a range of working age benefits. Collectively, these reforms are set to deliver the largest reduction in the income of the UK's poorest families in modern times.

## {ABOUT THE SPEAKER}

Christina is a Professor at the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University. She leads the Centre's Data Analysis and Policy Team and has over 20 years' experience undertaking applied policy and evidence based research for a range of funders including central and local government, social housing providers, charities and ESRC. She is interested in the, often unintended, spatial impact of policy decisions on different types of places. In recent years her work with Professor Steve Fothergill has shed light on the uneven impacts of welfare reform to both places and people, raising questions about whether in reality we are 'all in this together'.

Government policy documents have paid scant attention to the cumulative impact of the reforms as a whole or the spatial distribution of the financial losses incurred. Britain's economic geography is, however, key to understanding the uneven impact of welfare reform. Christina will present evidence on the extent to which areas facing the brunt of welfare reform now are the same places that have experienced the destruction of industrial jobs since the 1980s. The legacy of the past, therefore, continues to impact on communities in older industrial Britain today.

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