Thursday 5th December - Media release

Interviews available

**Community Work Placement charities to face protests**

As part of their “[**Week of Action**](http://http//www.boycottworkfare.org/?p=3060)” on Thursday 5th December 2013 Boycott Workfare will be focussing on the companies and charities that will be handing in their tenders to access unpaid claimant workers as part of the new Community Work Placements.

The [**Community-work-placements-scheme**](http://www.boycottworkfare.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/community-work-placements-info-pack.pdf), originally announced by George Osbourne as “Help to Work” on 30th September 2013, is a set of new measures that will be forced on claimants who have come through the two year Work Programme without securing employment. The scheme is described as an “intensive option” where the providers will “deliver mandatory work placements for claimants for 30 hours a week for up to 26 weeks, alongside supported jobsearch”. Or put another way, it’s a six month sentence to force claimants work for free or lose their benefits. [2]

Typically the 33 companies who have the option of tendering for this new scheme are the very companies who currently run the Work Programme: the companies who failed to assist the claimants back into work over two years are now being given an extra six months to make even more money off the back of the unemployed![3] These “Employment Related Supported Services Suppliers” include A4e Ltd, Atos, Ingeus and G4S. There are also three large “charitable” organisations taking part: [**The Shaw Trust**](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Shaw-Trust/221553131217597), [**The Conservation Volunteers**](https://www.facebook.com/TheConservationVolunteers) and [**Groundwork UK**](https://en-gb.facebook.com/groundworkuk).

As if recognising the illogical basis of this scheme Esther McVey, the Minister of State for Employment, is keen for these suppliers to spread around the monies sourced from both the UK taxpayer and the European Social fund to run this project, and is asking for “as many organisations as possible” to partner these main suppliers (and so spread the blame when, like the Work Programme, this scheme also fails.) [4] Yet despite McVey’s claims it seems like it is just the usual suspects lining up to become secondary providers – both the YMCA and the Salvation Army have already been spotted touting for business in a very unchristian manner.

Jim McLaughlin, a member of Boycott Workfare, commented: “This is a sign of desperation on the part of Osborne and his cronies. As yet another part of their much publicised austerity-driven welfare reform project is shown to be unfit for purpose, they find themselves reduced to re-animating the former Community Action Programme, a programme which it should be remembered was declared illegal under the Caitlin Reilly and Jamieson Wilson High Court decision.” [5]

A full listing of today’s planned actions can be found at: [**http://www.boycottworkfare.org/**](http://http//www.boycottworkfare.org/)

Notes to Editors

[1] Boycott Workfare is a UK-wide campaign network to end forced unpaid work for people who receive welfare. Workfare profits the rich by providing free labour, while threatening the poor by taking away welfare rights if people refuse to work without a living wage. We are a grassroots campaign, formed in 2010 by people with experience of workfare and those concerned about its impact. We expose and take action against companies and organisations profiting from workfare; encourage organisations to pledge to boycott it; and actively inform people of their rights. We are not affiliated to any political party and are open to all who share our aims. More info: **[http://www.boycottworkfare.org/](http://http//www.boycottworkfare.org/)**

[2] [**http://www.boycottworkfare.org/?page\_id=47**](http://http//www.boycottworkfare.org/?page_id=47)

[3] DWP studies into existing workfare schemes in the UK have found them to have zero effect on helping people find work. [**See a survey of the evidence here.**](http://http//falseeconomy.org.uk/blog/a-response-to-mark-hobans-lies-workfare-doesnt-work)

[4] Boycott Workfare maintains [**a list of organisations**](http://http//www.boycottworkfare.org/?page_id=16) where people have been sent to do workfare. There is evidence that even in the [**voluntary sector**](http://http//www.boycottworkfare.org/?p=2812), workfare is replacing paid work.

[5] The Community Action Programme, a six month workfare scheme designed for people leaving the Work Programme was piloted and found to have no effect on helping people find work. [**Read the outcomes of the pilot here.**](http://http//www.boycottworkfare.org/?p=1867)