

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
Her Majesty's Treasury
1 Horse Guard's Road
London SW1A 2HQ

cc. Rt Hon Thérèse Coffey MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions

Contact: Tracey Herrington
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28 April 2020

Dear Chancellor

Raise Child Benefit to £50 per child per week

We wish to add our voices to calls to immediately increase Child Benefit to £50 per child per week.

As community and grassroots organisations we are seeing at first hand the extreme financial consequences Covid-19 is having across the country. We are also seeing at first hand how the Universal Credit system is struggling to cope, how emergency measures are still missing many people out, and how the complexity of the welfare system is creating unnecessary stress and anxiety. At the same time, children being at home is adding costs to already over-stretched family budgets.

An immediate increase in Child Benefit is a simple, efficient and cost-effective way to provide urgently-needed support to families. Crucially, it requires no changes to systems and will offer instant impact.

We are aware of research that shows Child Benefit now covers only around 20% of what it takes to bring up a child. A far higher rise in Child Benefit can certainly be justified. Increasing it to £50 per child per week would be entirely reasonable, while making a significant difference for families.

The impact of increasing Child Benefit to £50 per child per week would be enhanced even further if accompanied by a number of other steps including

- Abolishing the 2-child limit to Universal Credit and Tax Credits
- Removing the benefit cap

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- Ending the five week wait for Universal Credit.

With jobs and livelihoods being lost and businesses closing all of our grassroots organisations are seeing the very real and immediate impact coronavirus is having on family incomes. Increasing Child Benefit to £50 per child per week, plus our other proposals, are straightforward ways to support people facing immense financial strain. We urge you in the strongest possible terms to adopt these measures without delay.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Agboh-Davison (Joint Organiser, Yorkshire & North Lincolnshire Money Advice Group)

Tanis Belsham-Wray and Steven Cochrane (Chair and Secretary, Unite the Union, West Yorkshire & Humber Community, Youth Workers and Not-for-Profit branch NE/403/15)

Anya Bonner (North East Regional Manager, Just Fair)

Alisdair Cameron (Co-Director, ReCoCo)

Michael Carley (University of Bath UCU, UCU National Executive Committee - personal capacity)

Claire Cozler (Trustee, The Alhambra Theatre Trust CIC)

Claire Glasman (WinVisible)

Sabine Goodwin (Coordinator, Independent Food Aid Network)

Barbara Gordon and Justin Ibbett (Bristol & Glos. Area Unite Community)

Peter Gowland (Chairperson, Hartlepower CIO)

Ewan Gurr (Trustee, Dundee Bairns)

Colin Hampton (Coordinator, Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres)

Victoria Hart (Unite Community)

Tracey Herrington (Project Manager, Thrive Teesside)

Dr Daniella Holland-Hart (South Wales Equality Group)

Barbara Hungin (Chair, Justice First)

Steve Jamieson (Chief Executive Officer, The College of Podiatry)

Selma James (Global Women's Strike)

Sarah Lewis (Chief Executive Officer, Hart Gables)

Ken Loach (Director)

Lisa Longstaff (Women Against Rape)

Nina Lopez (Legal Action for Women)

Andy Mitchell (Chair, Unite Community South West)

Cari Mitchell (English Collective of Prostitutes)

Darren Murinas (Chief Executive, Expert Citizens CIC)

Gareth Murphy (Unite Community Camden)

Anne Neale (Support Not Separation)

The Rt Revd Joanna Penberthy (Church in Wales)

Nick Phillips (Coordinator, London Unemployed Strategies)

Zarria Phillips (Secretary, Bristol & Glos. Area Unite Community)

Phil Pope (Co-Chair, Bristol LCF)

Didi Rossi (Queer Strike)

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Charity Number 1125676

Nicholas Simon (Chalfont St Peter Football Club)
David Smith (Brighton Unemployed Centre Families Project)
Kim Sparrow (Single Mothers' Self-Defence)
Siobhan Strode (Chair, Unite Community Devon)
Ian Towson (Lambeth & Southwark Unite Community)

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