

# ABC News Update

## Association of Pension & Benefits Claimants CIC

### Special points of interest:

- We get asked to appear on RT TV
- Tescos customers get us podcasting
- We reach the second round of the Lloyds Bank/SEE Business School awards
- We email the Chancellor with our clean road-signs idea

### The ABC Moves Base

The ABC has moved base to 42, Avignon Close. We thought it was time to give our friends and supporters an update.

Alas for us, Virgin Media failed to deal with a way-leave issue promptly—permission to dig a trench for a trunking line. We have had no broadband or phone-line installed currently.

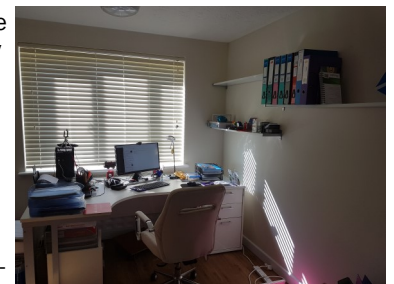
We are told by Virgin Media this is close to being resolved, however living without broadband, and the mod-cons of the modern age is a huge challenge.

Semaphore flags and carrier pigeons have their limitations. All that bird poo...! Double Yuk!

PLEASE Virgin, hurry up.

We must thank Anthony Cole MARLA and 3 Point Property Management Ltd and contractors Site.com for our fabulous new base.

Great things must surely come from working in such an inspiring working environment? We like to think so anyway.



### Inside this issue:

ABC Proposes Road-sign cleaning	1
Lloyds Bank/SEE Business School Competition	2
Universal Credit—Driving People to Desperation	3
The ABC gets a LoCASE Award & Grant	4
Can You Help Us Write a Book?	5
Tescos Customers Get Us Podcasting	6
A Mentor From Big Society Capital	7

### We Miss Our National TV Debut

In the loss of communications due to the above issue, we sadly missed the chance to appear on, RT TV .

RT producer Stephanie Stapleton, very kindly contacted us by email at short notice. We would have loved to have had the opportunity to talk on na-

tional TV about Universal Credit and pensioners. We do really enjoy watching RT TV and a lot more needs to be said about the governments punitive welfare policies. Alas, the communication gremlins got to work, but our time will come.

The ABC is getting noticed.



## ABC Proposes Road-sign Cleaning



The ABC are exploring a project idea of getting unemployed people or young offenders cleaning road signs.

With massive cuts to public spending in the UK - road signs, hazard signs, bollards and place, and street names have been left filthy dirty. The project idea will give young people something to put on their CV and provide an award certificate after four weeks of work and training.

We have approached Suffolk County Council and Essex Highways and our local MP Will

Quince who has recently been appointed a junior Department of Work and Pensions minister.

We sent information to the Chancellor, Philip Hammond, Justice minister David Gauke and the Department for Transport.

Cleaning road signs creates a huge psychological difference to the electorate and impresses tourists. It creates a sense of order and promotes a 'nudge' effect on society and promotes good environmental behaviour. There would be a large benefit to society without

a large cost to the public purse. If it helps get people into work who are a cost center currently, which is another benefit. The longer people are unemployed the harder it is to get them back into work.

Some hazard signs are so dirty that they are a threat to road safety and the local government could face the increasing risk of legal action. This initiative could benefit those taking part by demonstrating to potential employers our volunteer's willingness to work, take instruction and shine.

## Lloyds Bank/SEE Business School Competition

*'Do nothing that has no value' -*

*Myamoto Musashi,  
Samurai warrior,  
author and  
philosopher.*

We have gone through to the second round of the Lloyds Bank/SEE Business School social entrepreneurs' competition. Early June we must present a two - minute summary of our project Work TV followed by 25 mins in the form of an interview at the Suffolk University, Waterside, Ipswich. The opportunity consists of a free learning programme (14 learning days, spread over a year) a grant,

support network and mentoring. The course, say the organizers, is a transformational experience that will push, challenge and support you. It will give you the confidence and skills to create the impact you're aiming for.

You can always learn more and we look forward to taking part and making the cut to the final selection.



## Universal Credit—Driving People to Desperation



At the ABC we are finding that people have their Universal Credit stopped without explanation. DWP Freedom of Information requests can be evasive and fail to provide direct answers to clearly framed questions. Universal Credit (UC) claimants are routinely in the dark about how much they should receive, how their awards are calcu-

lated and if and how they can challenge DWP decisions. DWP administrative error likely to result in a claimant getting the wrong amount. Because UC rolls six different 'old' benefits into one, often claimants cannot tell what its components are - and so cannot know if it is right. And since information provided by the DWP about how their award has been worked out is

frequently inadequate, payments may be wrong, and go unchallenged. At the ABC we think this is wrong.

## The ABC gets a LoCASE Award & Grant

Last year, outgoing Labour MEP Alex Mayer came to assist us publicize the fact we have had a LoCASE Low-Carbon grant from the EU to purchase environmentally energy-saving lighting equipment.

Kit supplier Proav, kindly supplied the lighting and took some images of us with Alex. We must thank Abdul Razouk, founder of Knowledge Pathways International, who generously let us use his offices for filming. We obtained some great publicity including being featured on the Parliament magazine website.

We hope to have the capacity to produce film in the future - a steppingstone to our goal of fully launching Work TV.

We have also been awarded a Blue STEM Award which is the first rung to gaining full EU 'environmental' accreditation.

The fully funded courses are being run in conjunction with Thurrock Council at the Wat Tyler Country Park, Bittern Suite, Basildon, a delightful location. Taking part in this training certainly raises one's personal awareness about the need for energy conservation.

Feedback from all participants has been very positive say the organisers.

We had to miss the Silver course due to pressure of work, however, we hope to catch up and complete our training in the future.



## Can You Help Us Write a Book?

In 2018 ABC founder Simon Collyer met Chris Day, entrepreneur and publisher, at the Institute of Stress Management Association (ISMA) Annual Conference. This event was part of International Stress Awareness week which this year runs - 4th to 8th November 2019. Carole Spiers is the dynamic chair of ISMA and we would absolutely recommend that you attend the 2019

November conference. The ISMA theme is: 'RESILIENCE – the Power to Succeed!'

Chris runs Filament Publishing and in his words he seeks out talented authors who are passionate about their subject and who want to share that passion with a wider audience.

Chris also runs an authors networking organisation with events regularly held at the Institute of Directors. We have

several book ideas to help people survive on benefits and low-incomes, while navigating the gig economy. This year we plan to start looking for some sponsorship to help us achieve this goal.

If you would like to help the community and put you, or your organisations name in lights, we certainly have the ideas.

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*“A little oil helps grease the wheels”*

*- African proverb*

## Tescos Customers Get Us Podcasting

Tesco Stores in conjunction with Groundworks, run an excellent fund-raising scheme called 'Bags of Help'. Customers vote for organisations seeking funding using blue plastic counters. Tesco's Highwoods, Colchester customers were soon voting for an organisation, the ABC and our project Work TV.—a project that shoppers may never have heard of

previously. We did remarkably well when considering, the senior organisation in our group of three was Barnardo's who have been in existence for around 150 years. Thanks to broadcasting kit providers, Proav - who also supplied our lighting gear, we now have the latest in Podcasting kit. We must also thank Tesco's customers for their kindness and

generosity in putting their support towards a veritably newbie in the social space alongside a titan like Barnardo's.

Thank you once more Tesco's, you really have given us, 'Bags of Help'.





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### Founders of Work TV

The Association of Pension & Benefits CIC (the ABC) was founded when we saw a need for an organization to represent those on state pensions and welfare benefits. This large community of millions of people are linked by a common circumstance.

We have 16,000 contacts, around 3,000+ articles on-line and daily we receive around a thousand emails from the EU, governments, politicians, pressure groups and NGOs.

This is growing weekly and people and major organisations are now finding us. With prediction of 75 million people around the globe potential losing their jobs due to technology and the changing way we work; the ABC is here to help this community and present of positive image of those in the 99% having to meet life's challenges in a changing work environment.

Launching Work TV, in the 45.4 billion-euro employment market, is our main project. People are changing jobs on average twelve to fifteen times in a working lifetime. Many times, more than that in the lower end of the economy. Work TV is a news, information and training channel for those job changing or seeking new opportunities.

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[www.abcorg.net](http://www.abcorg.net)

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## A Mentor From Big Society Capital

As part of BSC's GET INFORMED programme, Investment manager and Cambridge economist, Hayley Hand from Big Society Capital has been appointed as a mentor.

Big Society Capital Limited is an independent social investment institution in the United Kingdom, which provides finance to organizations that support front-line social sector entities to help them grow.

Social investment is about lending or investing money to achieve a social, as well as, financial return.

Ken DICKSON BAcc (Hons) FCMA, Axiom - Finance Directors based in Cambridge has offered to assist the ABC finishing off our Work TV plan. Ken was a former finance di-

rector of Unilever.

Help, advice and support at this level is simply fantastic

Following our move we shall be 'turning up the wick' and pushing forward.

