# Disability Action Brighton leads renewed protest against harsh welfare cuts



Supporters of Disability Action Brighton rallied at the Clock Tower in Brighton recently, aiming to spotlight the far-reaching impacts of planned welfare cuts on disabled individuals. This demonstration was not simply a local event; it was part of a broader national movement calling for a reconsideration of government policy regarding disability support. As one protester, who identified only as 'Figgy', explained, “This is a completely galvanized community protest.”

The movement emphasises that the struggle faced by disabled individuals is not solely about physical disabilities but rather a societal failure to provide adequate support. “If you are struggling in a society that doesn't care about you at the moment, then you are disabled by definition,” Figgy further articulated. The protest sought not only to question the motives behind the government’s welfare cuts but also to challenge the prevailing perception of disabled individuals and their place in society.

This recent demonstration follows one held in March, coinciding with the announcement of the welfare reforms that have sparked widespread concern. Despite increasing pressure from within the Labour Party to moderate these cuts, Work and Pensions Secretary Liz Kendall has remained steadfast, asserting that the £5 billion plan for welfare reform is crucial to ensure the sustainability of the system. Her comments have drawn sharp criticism from various corners, including significant pushback from more than 100 Labour MPs who have signed a letter urging a reassessment of the cuts. Charities have echoed these concerns, warning that the changes, particularly to the eligibility criteria for the Personal Independence Payment (PIP), could adversely affect hundreds of thousands of people.

The implications of the reforms are severe, with the Institute for Fiscal Studies estimating that around 600,000 current recipients of the health element of universal credit could see their annual support plummet by at least £2,400 by 2028 if the proposed changes are enacted. As the demonstration took shape, the Clock Tower was electrified with placards urging the government to reconsider its approach. One protestor, who wished to remain anonymous, pointed out, “We need more people to realise that anyone is at risk of becoming disabled; it’s likely to happen in your lifetime, rather than being born with a disability.”

Green MP Sian Berry, who represents Brighton Pavilion, has been vocal about the welfare reforms, highlighting the struggles faced by her constituents. In a previous interview, she noted that 31% of her constituents are living with someone affected by a disability, questioning the government’s motives. “Why are they cracking down on the people who are already struggling so much?” Berry asked, adding that the push to increase economic productivity contradicted the government’s cuts to essential support for disabled individuals. Her assertions reflect a growing unease about the trajectory of welfare policy in the UK, which many fear prioritises fiscal austerity over the well-being of vulnerable populations.

The wider context of disability rights protests also paints a troubling picture; demonstrations have been a regular response to similar austerity measures over the years. Notably, protests in 2011, organised by groups like the Disability Benefits Consortium, drew attention to the severe cuts affecting local services for disabled individuals. And more recently, in March 2025, around 1,000 individuals marched in central London to oppose further cuts, emphasising the urgency of the situation.

As the national dialogue on welfare reform evolves, the solidarity demonstrated by groups like Disability Action Brighton reveals a community determined to fight for the rights and dignity of disabled individuals. The collective voice of those affected resonates, challenging a narrative they argue is steeped in systemic disregard and demanding urgent reform.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25223181.disabled-people-protest-brighton-welfare-reforms/?ref=rss), [[4]](https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/2019/03/28/disabled-people-protest-about-cuts-imposed-by-brighton-health-chiefs/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25223181.disabled-people-protest-brighton-welfare-reforms/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/oct/22/protests-benefit-cuts-disabled-people), [[5]](https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/people/hastings-trade-unions-protest-against-governments-welfare-cuts-5081831)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2025/03/27/mbwu-m27.html), [[6]](https://www.meetup.com/disability-rights-bournemouth/events/306834915/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25223181.disabled-people-protest-brighton-welfare-reforms/?ref=rss), [[5]](https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/people/hastings-trade-unions-protest-against-governments-welfare-cuts-5081831), [[7]](https://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/article/nationwide-protests-demand-welfare-not-warfare)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25223181.disabled-people-protest-brighton-welfare-reforms/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/oct/22/protests-benefit-cuts-disabled-people> - In October 2011, demonstrations were held across the UK to protest against benefit cuts affecting disabled individuals. Organised by the Disability Benefits Consortium and the UK Disabled People's Council, the 'Hardest Hit' marches aimed to highlight the severe impact of proposed cuts on local services for disabled people. Protests took place in cities including Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Leeds, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Norwich, Nottingham, Belfast, Cardiff, and Edinburgh, following claims that disabled people faced harsher cuts than initially anticipated.
3. <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2025/03/27/mbwu-m27.html> - On March 26, 2025, around 1,000 disabled people and their supporters marched in central London against the £5 billion welfare cuts announced by Chancellor Rachel Reeves. Organised by Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC), the demonstration was part of a national day of action, with protesters gathering outside Downing Street and marching to Parliament. The event highlighted the government's austerity measures and their impact on disabled individuals, with protesters chanting slogans like 'No More Deaths from Benefit Cuts'.
4. <https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/2019/03/28/disabled-people-protest-about-cuts-imposed-by-brighton-health-chiefs/> - In March 2019, disabled individuals and staff from the charity Possability People protested outside Brighton Town Hall against significant funding cuts imposed by the Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The cuts threatened the closure of the city's only specialist disability advice centre, which had been operating for 30 years. Local councillors expressed concern over the decision and called for the CCG to reconsider, recognising the vital support the centre provided to disabled residents.
5. <https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/people/hastings-trade-unions-protest-against-governments-welfare-cuts-5081831> - In April 2025, protesters gathered in Hastings Old Town to demonstrate against the government's proposed cuts to disability benefits. Organised by Hastings & District Trades Union Council, the demonstration coincided with a coffee morning held by Hastings and Rye MP, Helena Dollimore. The protest aimed to raise awareness and oppose the planned welfare cuts affecting disabled individuals.
6. <https://www.meetup.com/disability-rights-bournemouth/events/306834915/> - In March 2025, a demonstration was organised in London to campaign for disability rights and against cuts to welfare. The event, part of a national day of action, featured a rally and speakers outside Downing Street. Attendees were encouraged to participate in the protest and support the campaign against welfare cuts affecting disabled individuals.
7. <https://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/article/nationwide-protests-demand-welfare-not-warfare> - On March 26, 2025, nationwide protests took place across Britain, demanding 'Welfare not Warfare'. Organised by Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC), Stop the War, and others, the demonstrations coincided with Chancellor Rachel Reeves' Spring Statement. Protesters gathered outside Downing Street and in Glasgow, holding signs and chanting slogans to oppose the government's plan to cut disability welfare.