

Written evidence submitted by Christine Saunderson

My name is Christine Saunderson and I am writing on behalf of myself, my husband, and my co-workers at Hurley Riverside Park: a campsite in Berkshire.

My colleagues and I are seasonal employees, working as campsite wardens between March and October. As such, we started work on the 1st March and worked for the full month before the campsite was put on lockdown and we were forced to return to our primary residences. Despite being employed and being paid in March, we have not been eligible for furlough because we missed both the 28th February cut-off date and the 19th March RTI submission date.

As campsite wardens, we only work for eight months of the year. Furthermore, the vast majority of people in the industry work as married couples both doing the same job, meaning that we currently have no income at all. We rely on the money that we earn through the summer season to support our households throughout the winter months. As it stands, we have only earned one month's money in the last eight months since we finished last October, meaning that we are all struggling to make ends meet. Even if we return to work as hoped in July, we will only have the opportunity to earn four month's money to sustain us for the next eight, so will continue to struggle long after any of these support schemes are currently set to end.

Despite assurances from Rishi Sunak that he "would do whatever it takes" to protect jobs and incomes, we feel like we've been forgotten about and left to fall through the cracks. Unfortunately, we are also sure that we will not be forgotten when the time to repay the cost of these schemes arrives. We have done nothing wrong and yet feel that we are being discriminated against and treated unjustly.

My husband and I are fortunate enough to have been able to save a limited retirement fund, which puts us above the threshold for universal credit payments. Despite working for our entire lives, we find ourselves completely abandoned by the government in our time of need and with no recourse to state support, we have been forced to steal from our future to put food on the table. We are relying on you to close the gap that we have fallen through and help us please.

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