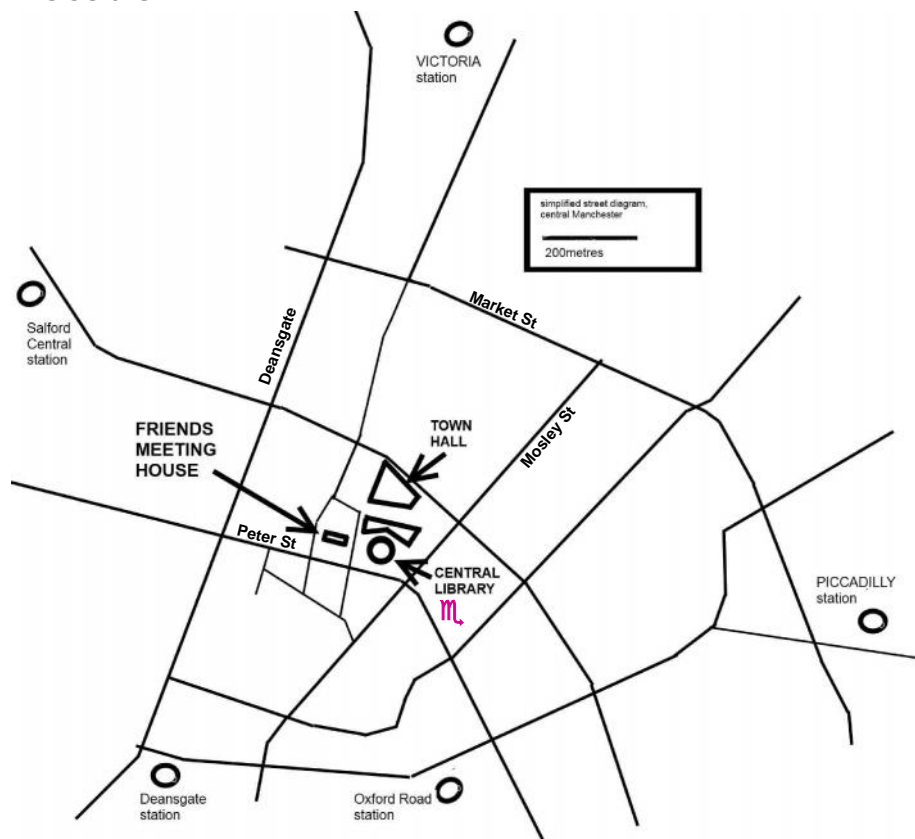


Location



Directions

Free bus service Metroshuttle 3 from Piccadilly Station to Radisson Edwardian Hotel on Peter Street.

Metrolink trams run from Piccadilly and Victoria stations, the nearest tram stop is St Peter's Square, marked **m** on the map

There is no car park at Friends Meeting House.

Access to Advice can be contacted by email:

accesstoadvic2013@gmail.com

Further information is available on the website pages of Greater Manchester Welfare Rights Advisers Group:

<http://gmwrag.wordpress.com/access-2-advice/>

Conference: Free Legal Advice in Crisis

9th February, 2013 at 10:00am—4:00pm

Friends Meeting House, Mount St, Manchester. M2 5NS

A forum on the continuing changes in provision of legal advice on: housing, employment, debt, benefits, immigration, domestic violence and more

- receive up to date information on the free legal advice situation
- continue or pick up on discussions about meeting need for social welfare legal advice up to and after April 2013
- join with others to continue to campaign for government funding to reinstate essential free legal advice in social welfare law
- be aware of developments for dealing with reduced advice services
- look at future developments and alternatives for meeting advice needs

Access to Advice believe in:

- the need for significant and stable funding for social welfare law legal advice provision;
- the provision of this advice through a plurality of sources, reflecting local needs as well as national priorities;
- the provision of advice should not be exploitative of people needing these services.

email: **accesstoadvic2013@gmail.com**

access to advice

Sponsored by:

Cheetham Hill Advice Centre • Derbyshire Green Party • Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit • Greater Manchester Welfare Rights Advisers Group • Green Left • Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers • Law Centres Network • Kenworthy's Chambers • Manchester Green Party • North West Housing Law Practitioners Association • Salford Citizens Advice Bureaux • Unison • Unite the Union •

Programme

9.30-10am Registration. Tea / Coffee

Morning Session

10-10:15 Introduction

10:15-11:15 **The Big Picture** - a national overview of changes to social welfare law advice services
Steve Hynes, Director of the Legal Action Group
Questions and discussion

11:15-11:25 Morning break

11:25-12:30 Morning workshops

12:30-1:30 **Lunch break**

Afternoon Session

1:30- 1:50 **Campaigning and Tactics**
Julie Bishop, Director of the Law Centres Network

1:50-2:45 Afternoon workshops

2:45-2:55 Afternoon break. Tea / Coffee

2:55-3:15 **Principles and Arguments**
Social welfare law, free accessible legal advice in a civil society
Lord Bach, leads the opposition to legal aid cuts in the House of Lords

3:15-3:50 **Look to the Future**
Question and discussion with panel of the main speakers plus Yvonne Fovargue MP, Chair of the All Party Group on Legal Aid

3:50 Summary and what next

Share information, ideas, experience to argue and campaign for future publicly funded legal advice.

Your questions, contributions and suggestions will be welcome throughout the day

Morning Workshops

The morning sessions are about collecting information on the key issues and difficulties facing our communities:

***disability and sickness
housing, employment and unemployment
migrants and BME communities
family and debt***

Themes:

- reduction in legal aid & other funding pressures;
 - advice needs now & in the future;
 - impact of advice cuts;
 - what is happening / likely to happen on the ground?
-

Afternoon Workshops

The afternoon sessions will concentrate on how we can respond to the crisis in legal advice services.

Campaigning / Awareness raising

- how to keep the issue of cuts in advice services a public crisis
- what form could / should campaigning take, to be effective

Monitoring advice needs

- how do we collect information on advice services cuts, the increasing difficulties that people have in obtaining advice and the impact on them and the community

Alternative models and Technology

- looking at different funding models to support local and regional advice services: commercial, voluntary, DIY, pro bono, self help websites..... advantages / disadvantages
- short-term survival / long-term strategy?

Collaborations / networking / competition

- can collaborations work on local and regional basis for
a) campaigning b) provision of advice services
- is competition between providers for limited funds the best model for advice service funding?