



Blood is the Price of Coal: Coal Communities, Health & Welfare in Britain & Beyond from the 19th Century to the Present

When and where:

University of Warwick, Coventry, on 18 June 2026.

Conference summary:

This free one day conference aims to bring together researchers from higher education, community and campaign groups to explore the history of health and welfare in Britain's coal mining industry.

Held jointly by the University of Warwick's Centre for the History of Medicine, Science and Technology, and Modern Records Centre, the event will run alongside an exhibition which will explore some of the themes covered by the speakers through the National Union of Mineworkers' archives.

We welcome contributions from new and established researchers, working inside and outside higher education.

Confirmed participants include:

- [Jörg Arnold](#) (University of Augsburg / Institute for Contemporary History Munich - Berlin), author of *The British Miner in the Age of DeIndustrialization*
- [Keith Gildart](#) (University of Wolverhampton), Principal Investigator on research project *On Behalf of the People: Work, Community and Class in the British Coal Industry 1947-1994* and former miner
- [Quentin Outram](#) (University of Leeds), Secretary of the Society for the Study of Labour History and co-editor of *Coal in Victorian Britain*

Conference themes:

Subjects that could be addressed include but are not limited to:

The human cost of coal, including:

- Mining disasters, their contemporary impacts and later memorialisation.

- Industrial accidents, industrial diseases and workers' compensation.
- Mine safety and the improvement of conditions.
- Mining and mental health.

Industrial health and welfare, including:

- Pre-nationalisation provision in and beyond the colliery.
- National Coal Board provision, including the NCB Medical Service, housing and the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation.
- Trade union campaigns and benefit schemes.
- Sport and social provision as mining welfare.

Coal and community, including:

- Environmental impact.
- Mining families and the intergenerational effects of the mining industry.
- Impacts of the industry with particular reference to gender, race and ethnicity.
- Coalfield communities after coal: the effects of deindustrialisation.

Submission guidelines

We wish to make space for dialogue between academic and community-based researchers, and welcome involvement from mining heritage and local history groups / researchers from former coalfield communities. We welcome and encourage alternative presentational styles. Possible formats for contributions could include:

- 15-20 minute papers.
- 5 minute lightning papers (for example showcasing a particular object or archival source, or highlighting a particular place, event, individual or experience).
- Round table discussions.
- Posters or displays.

To offer a contribution or express interest in attending, please visit: warwick.ac.uk/PriceOfCoal

Submission deadline: 25 January 2026.

Limited funding for travel support will be available, with priority given to early career researchers or participants who cannot draw upon institutional funding.

For additional enquiries, please contact the conference organisers at archives@warwick.ac.uk



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