

## Audio Transcript

### John Clarke - Imagining welfare futures

*Julia Waldman:* You use the term imagining welfare futures; can you tell me a bit more about what that means?

*John Clarke:* It for me the phrase does two different things, one is, I am quite excited by the idea of imagining things. Social policy often tends to look slightly stern and solid. We know what some things do and we can do analyses of the effects of policies. And I think there's something especially in the current period about getting our heads up and saying so what is welfare going to be for, and so imagining is opening up that sort of question about what sort of ways of living together can we imagine and how would welfare contribute to making them come true. The other thing that it does for me is that its futures because I'm deeply committed, deeply committed, to the idea that there is not just one way forward and that welfare in a sense, especially, questions what it means about solidarity with other people, questions about equality and respect and the conduct of social life are open to very different political projects that create a possibility of very different futures. And I guess I want to say in the end that it's the politics of choosing futures the looks to me like the most profound thing that social policy should contribute.