

## WORK: 'I'll get victory in pension fight'

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About 400 workers at Triplex Components Machining, in Windsor Avenue, Walton, Peterborough, may lose their pensions after the firm's former parent company, Triplex, sold off all its businesses and assets to separate buyers.

Mrs Clark and former shop steward at the firm, councillor John Bleakney led a delegation of workers to visit Pensions Minister Malcolm Wicks, in February.

In response to a letter she received from Mr Wicks, Mrs Clark said: "He was full of sympathy and warm words, but no promise of specific action.

"I'm not about to give up. I have amazing respect for the workers and I will get victory for them if it's the last thing I do."

Mrs Clark said she plans to put forward questions in Parliament and will continue to lobby Ministers.

A forthcoming Pensions Bill will not help Triplex Components Machining staff as it currently stands, because it will only cover the pension schemes of firms which have gone bankrupt.

Mrs Clark wants a specific clause to be added to the bill, to cover situations where, like in the Peterborough firm's case, a company has been sold off to separate buyers, but is not bankrupt.

In the biggest backbench rebellion the Government has faced so far, 291 MPs have signed a Commons motion tabled by MP Kevin Brennan, calling on the Government to amend the Pensions Bill to apply retrospectively.

Ministers are reluctant to give way to the amendment because of fears about the [financial](#) implications.

Mrs Clark said that the overwhelming support for the motion indicates the extreme concern of MPs about the issue of wound-up pensions.

On Tuesday, union representatives Malcolm Hall and Pat Bergin met fellow union representatives from other former Triplex Group companies in the East Midlands to discuss the pension crisis.

Mr Hall, a manufacturing engineer at Triplex Components Machining, believes that the main hope for workers is an amendment to the Pensions Bill.

He said: "The only real game is to get the Government to change their minds about this bill."

"Everyone recognises that people losing their pensions is an injustice.

"But finding an acceptable political and [financial](#) solution to the problem is not easy."

Staff will be taking part in a national demonstration in London, on Saturday, June 19, which has been organised by trade union Amicus to campaign for better pension rights.

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