

Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 - Progress Report 2023 to 2024

November 2024

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1. Foreword

Since establishing Social Security Scotland in 2018 we've established a radically different system built on dignity, fairness, and respect – co-designed with people who are receiving benefits. One of the many reasons our system is so different is that we have been clear from the outset that social security is a fundamental human right. It is an essential collective investment in Scotland's wellbeing, offering vital support - which any one of us could need at any time in our lives - and that is why we are so proud to have invested so strongly in it.

In 2023-24, the Scottish Government provided £5.2 billion in financial support through payments made by Social Security Scotland and under Agency Agreements with the DWP. This investment supported over 1.2 million people in Scotland and is approximately £800 million more than the UK Government gave to the Scottish Government for social security.

By the end of the 2023-24 reporting year, thanks to record Scottish Government investment, Social Security Scotland was delivering 14 different benefits, seven of which are available only in Scotland. We also uprated all devolved social security benefits by at least 6.7% in 2023-2024, in line with inflation, including those payments where annual up-rating is not currently a legal requirement. Equally importantly, we have at every stage designed our system to make it as easy as possible for people to access the Scottish Government benefits they are entitled to, aiming to maximise take-up and make sure money ends up in the pockets of all who are eligible.

This progress report therefore provides an update on implementation for the reporting year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, focusing on the policy aspects for which the Scottish Government has a particular role and duty to report. The report sits alongside Social Security Scotland's own comprehensive progress report covering operational delivery.

A key landmark in the reporting year was the introduction of the Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill on 31 October 2023, providing for a range of improvements to various devolved social security processes and policies based on the essential Social Security Principles enshrined in the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018. These improvements are focused on delivering value for money and improving client experience.

In November we introduced Carer Support Payment, which replaced Carer's Allowance in Scotland. The benefit launched in pilot areas and provides income for unpaid carers in recognition of their role and its impact on their lives and ability to take on paid work. Significantly, the benefit is available to many full-time students who are currently unable to get Carer's Allowance – removing barriers to education and widening access to 1,500 more carers once the benefit is available nationally.

Later this month, Carer Support Payment will be available nationally, following completion of the phased rollout across Scotland.

In February this year we widened eligibility for Best Start Foods by removing the income thresholds for all qualifying benefits, so that thousands more pregnant women and families with children under the age of three, could access support to buy milk and healthy food. This aligns eligibility for this important benefit more closely with Best Start Grant and Scottish Child Payment. The total value of our Five Family Payments benefits, which include the Best Start Grant and Scottish Child Payment, is now over £10,000 by the time a family's first child turns 6 and around £25,000 by the time an eligible child turns 16.

In March we announced Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance which will replace Disability Living Allowance for adults in Scotland. We expect to introduce this and begin case transfer from the Department for Work & Pensions in Spring 2025.

Meanwhile of course, we are continuing with our programme to introduce further benefits to provide additional and crucial support to people across Scotland

Just last month, we launched the Pension Age Disability Payment pilot, replacing Attendance Allowance in Scotland for people over the State Pension age. This payment will provide assistance to help mitigate additional care costs incurred by disabled people and will be reported on in detail in next year's edition of this progress report

The UK Government announced in July 2024 its decision to move away from a universal Winter Fuel Payment and to restrict entitlement to those in receipt of Pension Credit and other means-tested benefits from this winter. Following careful consideration of the options available for Scotland, the Scottish Government made the difficult decision to replicate this decision in Scotland. The timing of the UK Government announcement has meant it is not practicable for the Scottish Government to deliver Pension Age Winter Heating Payment, our replacement for the UK Government's Winter Fuel Payment, in winter 2024-25 through Social Security Scotland. It will be delivered in Scotland this winter by the Department for Work & Pensions on behalf of the Scottish Government. It will then be delivered by Social Security Scotland from winter 2025.

There is of course more delivery still to come, but the significant achievements made so far and the positive impacts which our investment decisions are having are clearly set out in this detailed annual progress report, which I warmly welcome.

2. Purpose of Report

This report is published under section 20 and section 87 of the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 (the 2018 Act) which require Scottish Ministers to report annually on the performance of the Scottish social security system.

It covers:

- what has been done in the past year to meet the expectations on Scottish Ministers set out in the Social Security Charter.
- an assessment of how the Scottish social security system has affected the circumstances of people whose finances are affected by a person in the household having a protected characteristic (as defined in section 4 of the Equality Act 2010).
- the number of people who had the right to appeal against a Scottish social security decision and the number of people who exercised that right to appeal.
- an update on delivery of duties in Part 1 of the Act, such as in relation to the Charter, the strategy to promote take up, and work of the Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCoSS).

The report should be read alongside the annual report published by Social Security Scotland.

3. Introduction

The 2018 Act creates the legal framework under which social security benefits can be delivered by Scottish Ministers. These are:

- Carer's assistance
- Cold-spell heating assistance
- Winter heating assistance
- Disability assistance
- Early years assistance
- Employment-injury assistance
- Funeral expense assistance
- Housing assistance
- Short-term assistance

The 2018 Act also provides Scottish Ministers with powers to establish schemes to 'top-up' social security assistance provided by the UK Government and to provide a Carer's Allowance Supplement. The Scottish Child Payment has been established under these top-up powers.

The 2018 Act also sets out the following key features of the Scottish social security system and a requirement to report annually to the Scottish Parliament on performance:

- A duty to promote the take-up of Scottish social security.
- A requirement for Scottish Ministers to ensure that suitable advocacy support is available for those who need help to navigate the Scottish social security system due to a disability.
- A Scottish Commission on Social Security which, amongst other things, scrutinises regulations and reports on the extent to which the expectations set out in the Charter are being fulfilled.
- The creation of the Scottish social security charter which sets out standards for the provision of social security in Scotland that are aligned with the Scottish social security principles.

The following sections provide a report on the performance of the system in respect of these key features.

4. Performance of the System and Delivery of the Charter

4.1 Duty to promote take-up

Ensuring people can access all of the social security benefits to which they are entitled is a moral imperative, legal duty, and fundamental priority of the Scottish Government. Under the provisions of the 2018 Act Scottish Ministers are required to prepare a Benefit Take-up Strategy to promote the take-up of Scottish benefits, and have so far published two such strategies – [the first](#) in October 2019, and [the second](#) in October 2021.

The next Benefit Take-up Strategy is due to be published by October 2026. In the meantime, Scottish Ministers have committed to publishing an action-plan setting out our approach to supporting seldom-heard groups to access their entitlements by the end of 2024 and will continue to publish the annual update on take-up rates for Scottish benefits.

The most recent Benefit Take-up Strategy sets out five guiding principles for making social security in Scotland accessible:

1. Prioritise Person-Centred Approaches;
2. Communicate and Engage Effectively;
3. Bring Services to People;
4. Encourage Cross-System Collaboration; and
5. Continuously Learn and Improve

These principles are applied through a number of take-up initiatives, including access to independent advocacy support, continued investment in accessible advice via Welfare Advice and Health Partnerships, and targeted marketing of devolved payments. Perhaps most importantly, the principles form the basis for social security policy development and delivery, ensuring we prioritise person-centred approaches.

To advance our understanding of how these principles might be best applied in supporting particular groups, the Scottish Government commissioned the Poverty Alliance to facilitate a Citizen's Panel exploring stigma surrounding accessing benefits. Their report was published in May 2024. Further to this, in November 2023, the Scottish Government commissioned the Scottish Centre for Social Research to undertake [research on seldom-heard groups](#). The findings from this have now also been published and both reports will inform the aforementioned action plan.

The Scottish Government has committed to investing over £4.6 million to support the delivery of welfare advice and income maximisation services in 2024-25. This includes more than £645,000 to continue to support the local delivery of Welfare Advice and Health Partnerships, which see Welfare Rights Advisors placed into over 160 GP practices across Scotland. Partnerships are targeted in the most deprived communities, as well as remote, rural and island settings, and this embedded model continues to highlight the value in bringing advice to people in non-stigmatising settings where they already go, with 89% of all users accessing welfare rights advice for the first time.

Finally, as highlighted in [the most recent estimates of Scottish benefit take-up rates](#), published in November 2023, overall estimated take-up rates are high and relatively stable across the Five Family Payments, including Scottish Child Payment. These rates suggest the vast majority of eligible low-income families in, or at risk of poverty, are taking-up these entitlements. However, we know more work is required to ensure this is replicated across all devolved payments, and we continue to work with the Scottish Government, wider stakeholders, and people with lived experience to identify, develop, and implement improvements.

4.2 Independent Advocacy

Section 10(2) of the 2018 Act requires Scottish Ministers to ensure that independent advocacy services are available to disabled people who require support to claim Scottish social security entitlements.

To meet this requirement, the Scottish Government launched the Social Security Independent Advocacy Service and committed to investing £20.4 million over the first four years of the provision.

Advocacy support is available to anyone who identifies as disabled and requires support to engage effectively with Social Security Scotland.

The service is independent of Scottish Government and is delivered by VoiceAbility, a charity with over 40 years' experience of delivering independent advocacy services.

The Social Security Independent Advocacy Service is free and builds on our human rights-based approach, making social security more accessible to disabled people in Scotland – and supporting them to be more involved in processes and decisions which affect them.

To date, the service has supported more than 5,000 people to access and apply for Social Security Scotland assistance.

4.3 Scottish Commission on Social Security

The Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCoSS), established in January 2019, is an independent advisory Non-Departmental Public Body with a primary purpose to undertake scrutiny of the Scottish social security system.

SCoSS produces its own [annual report and accounts](#), which can be found on the SCoSS website. In 2023-24 it produced nine scrutiny reports, on:

- The Disability Assistance (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 (including a further report on late Scottish Government amendments to reflect technical amendments to the short-term assistance)
- The Carer's Assistance (Carer Support Payment) (Scotland) Regulations 2023

- The Welfare Foods (Best Start Foods) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2024
- The Social Security (Residence and Presence Requirements) (Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and Lebanon) (Scotland) Regulations 2023
- The Social Security (Residence Requirements) (Sudan) (Scotland) Regulations 2023
- The Disability Assistance for Older People (Scotland) Regulations 2024
- The Social Security (Up-rating) (Miscellaneous Amendment) (Scotland) 2024 Regulations.
- The Carer's Assistance (Carer Support Payment) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2024
- The Disability Assistance (Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance) Regulations 2024

The minutes of all Board and Audit Sub-Committee meetings and all [scrutiny reports](#) were published on the SCoSS website in 2023-24.

4.4 Our Charter and the Charter Measurement Framework

The 2019 Social Security Charter set out clear commitments agreed upon, through co-design, with people who had experience of the UK benefits system. The purpose of the Charter Measurement Framework is to provide transparent accountability as to how these commitments are met, with the most recent available [results](#) published in November 2023.

Section 18 of the 2018 Act requires the Charter to be reviewed every five years and the first review, which continued the co-design approach seen in the creation of the Charter, concluded in late 2023. Clients, people from seldom heard groups, partner stakeholders, the Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCOSS) and staff from Social Security Scotland were all instrumental within the review process.

Unlike when the Charter was first created, this review was carried out against the backdrop of an operational social security system and involved people and organisations with experience of Social Security Scotland. Full details of the research methodology and findings, and the detailed background behind the changes made, are included in the [Charter review's research findings](#) report published in March 2024.

The Charter in its revised form, continues to uphold the eight Scottish social security principles set out in section 1 of the 2018 Act, re-enforcing the Scottish Government's strongly held view that social security is a human right. Research findings showed that the Charter continued to reflect values which align with the priorities of clients, Social Security Scotland colleagues and partner organisations.

The addition of some new commitments and the changes to the structure of the Charter have therefore largely been made to reflect a social security system that is now operational, and further improvements were made to support our commitment to the inclusive and consistent use of language.

Following conclusion of the review, Scottish Ministers laid a proposed revised Charter in Parliament which received Parliamentary approval on 26 June 2024.

5. Delivery of Social Security Benefits

The introduction, implementation and ongoing administration of Scottish social security is a priority of the Scottish Government. The following section will provide information about the introduction of new Scottish benefits within the reporting year as well as the ongoing delivery of existing Scottish benefits. Information about the decisions taken for the 2024-25 uprating of benefits is also included within this section.

5.1 Support for Carers

Carer Support Payment

Carer Support Payment is replacing Carer's Allowance in Scotland. Carer Support Payment provides income for unpaid carers in recognition of their role and its impact on their lives and ability to take on paid work. The benefit launched in the pilot areas of Dundee City, Perth and Kinross and Na h-Eileanan Siar (Western Isles) on 20 November 2023.

The process of transferring awards for carers already receiving Carer's Allowance from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to Carer Support Payment from Social Security Scotland began in February 2024. This is taking place across the country, not just the pilot areas, and is expected to complete in spring 2025. Awards are transferred automatically with no need for carers to apply.

[Statistics published on 14 May 2024](#) show that by 31 March 2024, 685 Carer Support Payment applications had been received and £291,635 had been paid to carers in the initial pilot areas.

[Draft Amendment Regulations](#) for Carer Support Payment were referred to the Scottish Commission on Social Security for formal scrutiny in February 2024 and the Commission published their [scrutiny report](#) on 22 March 2024. The regulations provide for the phased roll-out of Carer Support Payment to further local authorities across Scotland from June 2024, and for the benefit to be available nationally from November 2024. The regulations also include special 'backdating' rules to help ensure carers living in later phases of the roll out can access all of the support they are entitled to.

Carer Support Payment has been developed with carers and support organisations to work for the people that will use it. The benefit is available to many full-time students who are currently unable to get Carer's Allowance – removing barriers to education and widening access to 1,500 more carers once the benefit is available nationally. Carer Support Payment has also been designed to signpost carers to wider services to help them to access all of the support they are entitled to in social security and beyond.

Carer's Allowance is the most complex benefit that the Scottish Government have replaced to date in terms of the links that it has with wider support and benefits, including benefits provided by DWP. Our phased roll out approach for Carer Support Payment has been designed to ensure a safe and secure delivery that maintains these links with wider benefits and services so that carers can continue to get all of the support they are entitled to.

Once Carer Support Payment is available nationally and case transfer is complete, we will make further important changes, including providing new extra support for those caring for more than one person, and extended support for carers after the loss of the person they care for. We are continuing to engage with carers, support organisations and others to take feedback on experience of the benefit to inform continuous improvement.

Carer's Allowance Supplement

Carers make an immense contribution to our society. That is why improving support for carers was one of our first priorities with our new social security powers. Carer's Allowance Supplement was the first payment made by Social Security Scotland and increases Carer's Allowance – the lowest value of all working-age benefits – by over 13% for carers in Scotland.

Eligible carers have received a payment every six months since 2018, which was £288.60 in 2024. Carer's Allowance Supplement was updated by 6.7% this year from the 2023 rate of £270.50. Payments are made automatically to carers living in Scotland and receiving either Carer Support Payment from Social Security Scotland, or Carer's Allowance from the DWP on certain qualifying dates, with no need to apply. By the end of 2024, carers continuously in receipt of Carer's Allowance Supplement will have received over £3,800 above the value of Carer's Allowance since its introduction. From launch in 2018 to the 2023-24 eligibility dates, over one million Carer's Allowance Supplement payments totalling £280.5 million had been issued. Statistics published in August 2024 show that expenditure for the 2023-24 period was £47.8 million, compared to £42.8 million in 2022-23.

Following our consultation on Carer Support Payment, which included seeking views on the future of Carer's Allowance Supplement, we are now considering how to integrate the Supplement with more regular payments of Carer Support Payment once the process of transferring Carer's Allowance to Carer Support Payment is complete.

Young Carer Grant

The first of its kind in the UK, Young Carer Grant supports young carers in Scotland with a payment of £383.75 which can be applied for annually, to access life opportunities which are the norm for many of their non-caring peers. Young Carer Grant was updated by 6.7% from the 2023 payment of £359.65. Young Carer Grant is paid to 16 to 18 year olds who meet the eligibility criteria. It is not means-tested, and the young person does not need to be in education to qualify.

[Young Carer Grant official statistics](#) show that by the end of March 2024, Social Security Scotland had received 19,095 applications. 12,305 payments had been made with around £4 million invested since the launch of Young Carer Grant in 2019.

Between April 2023 and March 2024, 3,865 payments were issued, with a total value of £1.4 million. Our [Young Carer Grant Interim Evaluation](#) published in August 2021, showed that Young Carer Grant had made a positive impact on carers' mental wellbeing, mainly by reducing stress and increasing confidence. It was viewed as broadly positive by applicants, recipients and stakeholders. The issues highlighted in the evaluation have been considered when reviewing benefit promotion activity and the application process. More broadly, the findings are being considered in developing future Young Carer Grant policy and improvements to the Carer Support Payment, which will complement existing and planned interventions to support carers both through social security and at a wider government level.

More details about the Young Carer Grant can be found at [Young Carer Grant - mygov.scot](#).

5.2 Funeral Support Payment

Social Security Scotland began taking applications for the Funeral Support Payment in September 2019. This is a one-off payment for eligible people on a low income, to help towards the costs of a funeral. The payment is made up of three parts comprising: burial or cremation costs (including some document and medical costs); a flat rate payment for other expenses; and some transport costs.

The Scottish Government substantially widened eligibility for Funeral Support Payment compared to the UK Government's funeral payment when it launched.

This year Social Security Scotland paid out almost £13.3m, supporting 6,670 individual clients. The average Funeral Support Payment award issued in 2023-24 was £1,974.

Social Security Scotland continuously promote Funeral Support Payment across a range of channels and work with funeral directors and stakeholders to increase their awareness of the payment so they can support people who might need help to pay for funeral costs. The payment, and the dedicated Bereavement Service, were promoted during Grief Awareness Week and Baby Loss Awareness Week.

During the winter months Social Security Scotland issued a media release and ran an accompanying digital campaign to help further increase awareness of the payment. Alongside this activity, they also shared refreshed Funeral Support Payment stakeholder resources, including factsheets - which are available in a different community language languages, British Sign Language and Easy Read - posters, leaflets and social media posts with relevant stakeholders as part the campaign to promote take-up.

5.3 Winter Heating Benefits

Winter Heating Payment

In February 2023 we introduced our new Winter Heating Payment, delivering on the Programme for Government commitment (2021-22) to replace the UK Government's Cold Weather Payment in Scotland. Winter Heating Payment provides a stable, reliable payment to those in receipt of certain low income benefits each winter, and by removing the reliance on weather conditions, we can ensure that every person identified as requiring additional support receives it.

Our new benefit targets those households who also have additional need for heat, including those with young children, disabled people, and older people, providing stable, reliable support every winter.

Following feedback from the consultation on Winter Heating Payment (previously known as Low Income Winter Heating Assistance) and user research, we brought forward the payment date from February. Payments started in mid-December 2023, reflecting our commitment to improve payment timing post-launch.

In winter 2023/24 Winter Heating Payment provided almost 418,000 payments to low income households with a value of £55.05, a total investment of £23 million. In recognition of the pressure on household budgets, Winter Heating Payment was uprated by 10.1% from £50 to £55.05 for winter 2023/24, and by a further 6.7% for winter 2024/25 to £58.75.

Forecasts indicate we will invest £24.4 million this coming winter (2024-25) for Winter Heating Payment, nearly tripling the £8.5 million provided on average by the DWP in each of the last seven years prior to its introduction. For the vast majority of people our payment provides more support than they have received on average previously through the DWP benefit.

Child Winter Heating Payment

Child Winter Heating Payment, formerly named Child Winter Heating Assistance, is paid automatically to families with children and young people up to the age of 19 in receipt of a relevant qualifying benefit to help mitigate the additional heating costs that the households of the most severely disabled children and young people face in the winter months.

The qualifying benefits are the highest rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance for children, the highest rate of the care component of Child Disability Payment, the enhanced daily living component of Adult Disability Payment or the enhanced daily living component of Personal Independence Payment.

To be eligible, the young person or child must be entitled to a qualifying benefit on any single day during the qualifying week. In 2023, the qualifying week was Monday 18 September to Sunday 24 September.

As of 31 March 2024, 30,400 Child Winter Heating Payments had been made for eligible children or young people in receipt of a qualifying benefit in the qualifying week for winter 2022-23, totalling £7.2 million.

Child Winter Heating Payment is updated annually and in 2023-24 this was updated by 10.1% to £235.70. For winter 2024-25 it will be updated by a further 6.7% to £251.50. Further information on updating and how we set rates is included within the updating section of this report.

[The Child Winter Heating Assistance: Evaluation Report](#) published in August 2022 will continue to inform future policy developments.

Pension Age Winter Heating Payment

Pension Age Winter Heating Payment was due to be introduced and delivered by Social Security Scotland in winter 2024/2025, replacing the UK Government's Winter Fuel Payment.

The UK Government announced in July 2024 its decision to move away from a universal Winter Fuel Payment and to restrict entitlement to those in receipt of Pension Credit and other means-tested benefits from this winter. The UK Government's approach reduces the Block-Grant Adjustment associated with devolution of the UK's Winter Fuel Payment by an estimated £150 million in 2024-25, over 80% of the cost of the Scottish Government's new replacement benefit, Pension Age Winter Heating Payment. Following careful consideration of the options available for Scotland, the Scottish Government had to make the difficult decision to replicate this decision in Scotland.

The timing of the UK Government announcement has meant it is not practicable for the Scottish Government to deliver Pension Age Winter Heating Payment in winter 2024/25 through Social Security Scotland. The Department for Work and Pensions will therefore make Pension Age Winter Heating Payments this winter to eligible pensioners in Scotland.

5.4 Five Family Payments

Our five family payments are making a difference for low-income families, both in and out of work, with support of more than £829 million provided by the end of March 2024. The five family payments are Scottish Child Payment, Best Start Foods and the three Best Start Grants.

The policy evaluations [published](#) of each of the payments have shown they are having a positive impact on child poverty, preventing respondents from going into debt or having to cut down on other essential household spending, such as for food and bills. The evaluations report that Best Start Grant is easing financial strain on low-income families at key transitional stages for children and that the Scottish Child Payment provides much needed money, including for essentials like food, family day trips, and medical items for families with disabled children.

The evaluation of Best Start Foods showed it helps guarantee that people can afford essential foods even when money is tight and has freed up money for other costs such as household bills.

The Scottish Government is currently undertaking a further evaluation of the other five family payments, which will be published in Summer 2025. We continue to promote each of the five family payments across a range of online and offline channels, including working in partnership with stakeholders and local communities. All activity is based on robust insight and evaluated appropriately, including feedback from stakeholders and clients, to make sure key messages and the channels utilised reach and resonate with families, encouraging them to check eligibility and apply. This includes television digital and print advertising.

Looking ahead, we intend to use new Childhood Assistance powers, subject to Parliamentary approval, to modify the legislative footing on which Scottish Child Payment is based. This will allow the Scottish Government to make regulations for Scottish Child Payment as a standalone payment, in line with other forms of assistance delivered by Social Security Scotland. Whilst we envisage Scottish Child Payment eligibility maintaining a close link to reserved benefits, this new approach will allow us additional flexibility. This flexibility will offer scope to improve the alignment of the five family payments.

Scottish Child Payment

Scottish Child Payment is central to the Scottish Government's mission to eradicate child poverty as set out in our tackling child poverty delivery plans, and has been hailed as a "game-changer" by anti-poverty stakeholders. Introduced as part of the first child poverty delivery plan, the payment was the first form of assistance to be introduced as a top up to an existing reserved benefit.

Scottish Child Payment was updated from £25 to £26.70 per week from April 2024, in line with inflation. The payment could keep 60,000 children out of relative poverty in 2024-25, reducing child poverty levels by six percentage points, according to the most recent Scottish Government modelling published in February 2024.

Around 5 million individual payments have been made since the launch of Scottish Child Payment with a total value of £678 million by 31 March 2024. Around 329,000 children were receiving Scottish Child Payment as of the end of March 2024, with £429 million issued to clients between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024. In 2023-24 the [Scottish Fiscal Commission](#) assumed a take-up rate of 92% for under 6s and 80% for children 6 and over.

Best Start Grant

We continue to deliver Best Start Grant, providing financial support to eligible parents and carers at three key transition points in their children's early years:

- The Pregnancy and Baby Payment helps with expenses associated with pregnancy or with having a new child.
- The Early Learning Payment helps with the costs of early learning around the time a child might start nursery.
- The School Age Payment helps with the costs of preparing for school.

Between launching on 10 December 2018 and 31 March 2024, Best Start Grant has provided over £98 million to those families who need it most. As reported in the [Best Start Grant and Foods statistics](#) for 2023-24 there were 64,000 Best Start Grant payments made in Scotland. This provided £22.5 million of support to families in Scotland.

To make it easier for people to access the support they are entitled to, we now award Best Start Grant Early Learning Payment and School Age Payment automatically to eligible families who receive Scottish Child Payment, without the need to apply. As a result, over 51,000 payments were made to families between 28 November 2022 and 31 March 2024 without the need for them to apply. The latest estimates of take-up rates of Scottish benefits indicate the significant impact of automation with take-up of School Age Payment having risen from 77% in 2021-22 to 97% in 2022-23.

Best Start Foods

While Best Start Foods is not under the 2018 Act, it is delivered by Social Security Scotland alongside the other five family payments.

Best Start Foods aims to tackle the impacts of child poverty by improving access to healthy foods and milk for eligible families on a low income. Between launching on 12 August 2019 and 31 March 2024, more than 174,000 applications had been authorised for Best Start Foods. In total, over £53 million has been provided to eligible families.

As reported in the [Best Start Grant and Foods statistics](#), in the 2023-24 financial year over 43,000 people were paid Best Start Foods. In total, £12.6 million in vital support was paid out.

We have widened eligibility for Best Start Foods by removing the income thresholds for all qualifying benefits from February 2024, supporting thousands more pregnant people and children. This aligns eligibility more closely with Best Start Grant and Scottish Child Payment, meaning more people will be eligible for all of our five family payments.

5.5 Disability Benefits

Child Disability Payment

Child Disability Payment, a payment designed to help mitigate the additional costs of caring for a disabled or terminally ill child or young person, was fully rolled out across Scotland in November 2021.

Child Disability Payment replaced Disability Living Allowance for children in Scotland which was previously delivered by the DWP. We have now completed transferring all Disability Living Allowance for Children awards of children and young people in Scotland to Child Disability Payment.

From the date Child Disability Payment was launched until 31 March 2024, the total value of payments issued was over £621 million. As of 31 March 2024, 80,915 children and young people were receiving Child Disability Payment.

Legislation was passed in 2023 to further improve the journey from Child Disability Payment to Adult Disability Payment. The main change, was to enable payment cycles to be maintained, meaning that young people will receive their Adult Disability Payment on the same day that their Child Disability Payment was previously paid. This reduces the risk of gaps in payment or overpayments. Such payment protections are not available for people moving between Child Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payment, the UK Government equivalent benefits.

These changes more closely aligned age criteria rules for all Child Disability Payment recipients. Following the successful transfer of the Disability Living Allowance awards of over 47,000 children and young people to Child Disability Payment, those nearing 19 have had the time they needed to apply for Adult Disability Payment.

As described in the [Evaluation Strategy for devolved disability benefits \(2021\)](#), a series of evaluations, drawing on the experiences of individuals, staff and stakeholders, are planned to help us identify next steps. We have undertaken work to evaluate the [Child Disability Payment to Adult Disability Payment journey](#), and this was published last month.

Adult Disability Payment

Social Security Scotland began taking applications for Adult Disability Payment in 2022.

Adult Disability Payment is a payment made to those aged 16 to state pension age to help with the additional costs of being disabled or having a long-term health condition. Eligibility is based on the impact that an individual's symptoms have on their daily life, rather than relating to any particular disability or health condition. We ensure that accessing Adult Disability Payment is as straightforward as possible and we always start from a position of trust.

In 2023-24, the total value of Adult Disability Payments issued was £879 million. Of this, £486 million was to new applicants and £393 million was to people who had their award transferred from the DWP.

Edel Harris OBE has been appointed by Scottish Ministers to Chair the Independent Review of Adult Disability Payment, and is being informed by an advisory group that she has appointed. The Review will report in July 2025.

We have taken a compassionate and human rights based approach to all disability assistance. We are helping to provide long-term financial security through the introduction of indefinite awards for severely disabled clients whose needs are highly unlikely to change. Our fast-track process for people with a terminal illness relies on the judgement of clinicians rather than a fixed period of life expectancy.

We updated guidance for applicants and clients, as well as application forms, to ensure people know what documents (supporting information) to provide with their application, and to provide this information early on in their application process.

We have progressed work to improve the understanding of clients and professionals regarding supporting information for disability assistance. We seek one piece of supporting information from a professional, if possible. Requesting relevant supporting information from professionals on an applicant's behalf, may extend the time it takes us to process applications. We have therefore encouraged applicants to provide relevant supporting information if they have it, avoiding the need for us to contact professionals and helping speed up processing. We have done this through a number of channels including media, social media, engagement with third sector organisations supporting applicants, and face to face advice.

We have also taken steps to make it faster and easier for GPs and other professionals to provide supporting information. This includes:

- working with NHS boards to develop and highlight more efficient processes for their staff to use when providing supporting information.
- using a range of channels including media, social media and GP newsletters to reach GPs and other professionals to ensure they are aware of the importance of providing supporting information as well as the easiest way to do so.

Our work with GPs has improved how quickly they respond to our requests, contributing to lower processing times overall.

People are able to apply for disability assistance in the way that best suits them: either online, by post, over the phone or face-to-face. Of applications received in 2023-24, 67% were made online, 21% were made via phone and 12% were made through a paper form.

Pension Age Disability Payment

Pension Age Disability Payment is a payment designed to provide assistance to help mitigate additional care costs incurred by disabled people over State Pension age. It is awarded to help with extra costs if a person has a disability severe enough that they need someone to help look after them.

Pension Age Disability Payment will replace Attendance Allowance for people over the state pension age in Scotland, and we will make a number of changes that will provide disabled people with a different experience when accessing the support they are entitled to.

Social Security Scotland will offer a multi-channel approach including online, telephone, paper-based and face-to-face applications.

Individuals will be able to request a third party representative with ease to support them early on in their engagement with Social Security Scotland.

Taking a human rights-based approach, Social Security Scotland's person-centred decision making process ensures everyone is treated with dignity, fairness and respect.

Supporting information from a professional may be sought where it is needed to support the decision-making process. We will continue to support clients by gathering supporting information, where it is required, if an individual does not have this to hand.

Legislation to introduce Pension Age Disability Payment was passed in June 2024, and the pilot is due to start in October 2024.

Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance

We announced Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance in March 2024. This new benefit will replace Disability Living Allowance for adults in Scotland and will only be available to adults with a Disability Living Allowance award that transfers to Social Security Scotland from the Department for Work and Pensions. This includes two groups:

- People who were born on or before 8 April 1948 and received a commitment from the DWP on the introduction of Personal Independence Payment in 2013, that they could continue to receive Disability Living Allowance for as long as they were eligible to do so.
- People who were born after 8 April 1948 who have not yet had their Disability Living Allowance award transitioned to Personal Independence Payment or Adult Disability Payment.

Once in receipt of Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance, people born after 8 April 1948 will be able to apply for Adult Disability Payment if they wish but will not be required to do so. We believe people should be able to make an informed choice as to whether Adult Disability Payment is best for them.

To facilitate a safe and secure transfer, Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance eligibility criteria will largely mirror that of Disability Living Allowance for adults, except where there are clear differences in the Scottish system, for example our more generous terminal illness rules.

We expect to introduce Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance and begin case transfer in Spring 2025.

Case Transfer

As of 30 April 2024, we have safely and securely transferred the disability benefit awards of more than 207,000 people from the Department for Work and Pensions to Social Security Scotland, amounting to over £870 million in payments since October 2021. Our priority is to ensure the safe and secure transfer of disability and carer benefit awards for more than 700,000 people living in Scotland.

The case transfer process from Disability Living Allowance for Children to Child Disability Payment for eligible children and young people in Scotland has been completed, with over 47,000 awards transferred in total. Disability Living Allowance for adults and Personal Independence Payment case transfer to Adult Disability Payment began 29 August 2022 and has so far been completed for over 159,000 eligible adults in Scotland.

As of the 31 March 2024, over £390 million was paid to those who had transferred to Child Disability Payment. Since Adult Disability Payment launched in March 2022 until 30 April 2024, £482.7 million was paid to people who had their award transferred from the Department for Work and Pensions.

We remain on track to complete case transfer for all relevant disability and carer benefits by the end of 2025.

5.6 Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill

The [Social Security \(Amendment\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#), introduced to Parliament on 31 October 2023, will make the Scottish social security system more efficient and effective, contributing to our mission to tackle poverty and protect people from harm. The Bill will enhance the Scottish system of social security in line with the social security principles, set out on the face of the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 and voted for unanimously by the Scottish Parliament.

The principles particularly relevant to the Bill are:

- ‘opportunities are to be sought to continuously improve the Scottish social security system in ways which put the needs of those who require assistance first’, and
- ‘the Scottish social security system is to be efficient and deliver value for money’.

The Bill will improve the experience of people using Scotland’s social security system and ensure that it continues to deliver value for money. In particular, it will introduce new rights for people, save money by increasing efficiency, improve the scrutiny of social security and take powers to improve existing benefits. It will also enable the Scottish Government to: deliver a payment for people with care experience, as part of keeping ‘The Promise’ and; recover relevant forms of Scottish assistance from awards of compensation in situations where people have received payments as a result of third party negligence.

The Bill represents an essential collective investment in a system from which we may all need help, expected in time to generate savings of around £3.5 million each year.

The Bill passed Stage 1 following Parliament’s unanimous agreement to the general principles of the Bill and the associated financial resolution. Contributors to the Stage 1 debate emphasised the importance of working together to make improvements to the social security system. The two new forms of assistance created by the Bill – Childhood Assistance and Care Experience Assistance – were welcomed by all parties.

5.7 Up-rating of social security benefits

Scottish Ministers are legally required, under the terms of sections 86A and 86B of the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018, to consider the impact of inflation when deciding the level at which certain forms of Scottish assistance are to be up-rated at the start of each financial year.

The Scottish Government's current policy position is to use the annual rate of September Consumer Prices Index (CPI) as the measure of inflation to up-rate devolved social security assistance, but can use a different rate when appropriate. In January 2024, the Scottish Government [published a multi-criteria decision analysis](#) considering various approaches to measure inflation, concluding that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) remains the most accurate measure of inflation available for up-rating.

In April 2023, in recognition of the challenging economic conditions that the people in Scotland continued to face, Scottish Ministers decided to up-rate all devolved social security assistance by 10.1%, including those payments where annual up-rating is not a legal requirement.

Similarly, following publication of a [report on the impact of inflation](#) in fulfilment of section 86A, outlining the Scottish Government's approach to up-rating for 2024-25, fourteen devolved benefits were increased by 6.7% - the September 2023 CPI - at a cost of around £370 million in April 2024.

5.8 Information Sharing Regulations to Safeguard Vulnerable Clients

The primary focus of Social Security Scotland is to ensure people receive the assistance they are entitled to. In carrying out that role, Social Security Scotland engage with some of the most vulnerable people in Scotland which may lead to instances where it becomes apparent that a person may be at risk of harm.

The [Social Security Information-sharing \(Scotland\) Amendment Regulations 2024](#) came into force on 16 January 2024 following a public consultation which concluded in June 2022 which provided almost unanimous support for Social Security Scotland to introduce measures to protect vulnerable clients by enabling Social Security Scotland to make suspected risk of harm referrals to local authorities and the Office of the Public Guardian. This is in addition to any cases where an immediate threat or endangerment to life is identified, which are treated differently and are reported immediately to Police Scotland.

These regulations created a specific legal gateway to allow Social Security Scotland to make referrals to the relevant local authority, in respect of suspected risks of physical, mental, emotional harm or concerns of financial abuse. Local authority health and social care services have the powers to assess risks and co-ordinate multi agency approaches which involve NHS services, police, schools and Scottish courts to ensure people are properly supported. The regulations additionally allowed concerns of financial or property abuse, where a person has a Power of Attorney,

Legal Guardian or appropriate order, to be referred to the Office of the Public Guardian in order that the matter can be investigated.

5.9 Appointees

The Social Security Administration and Tribunal Membership (Scotland) Act 2020 made amendments to the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018, setting out circumstances in which Scottish Ministers may appoint a person to act on behalf of children; adults regarded as lacking capacity to manage their own benefits; and the deceased. These appointments apply to all forms of assistance and top-ups paid under the 2018 Act.

Work continues towards the commencement of the remaining appointee provisions in the 2020 Act, which are being implemented as a prioritised programme of change. The Scottish Government is managing these changes collectively, and in consultation with Social Security Scotland, the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service, and external stakeholders.

5.10 Fraud and Error

As Social Security Scotland continues to evolve and is delivering more benefits than ever before, we remain focused on developing our ability to actively manage the risks we face. As some of the benefits we have delivered involve the transfer of data from the Department for Work and Pensions, we continue to build a picture of inherited fraud and error risk. We are also focused on further development of our debt management strategy and fraud and error controls of existing benefits.

6. Equality Assessment and Data

1. Equality Assessment and Data

This section of the report considers how the Scottish social security system has affected the circumstances of people living in households whose income is adversely affected, or whose expenditure is increased, because a member of the household has one or more protected characteristics, as outlined in section 4 of the Equality Act (2010).

The 2018 Act also requires this annual report to include a description of the data used in assessing equality of opportunity. Social Security Scotland collect and publish statistics on applicant diversity and equalities. Unless a protected characteristic forms part of the eligibility criteria for a benefit, information on these characteristics is collected and stored separately from application data. Whilst this information can help us understand who is applying and receiving social security benefits, some of the ways in which having a protected characteristic impacts on finances are indirect (e.g. discrimination affecting access to employment), and it is more difficult to assess the role benefits may play in counteracting these indirect impacts.

- **Social Security Scotland Official Statistics** are published for benefits delivered by Social Security Scotland. These statistics cover the number of applications, value of payments made and award outcomes. This data can help us understand the reach of the benefit and this is particularly important where the benefit is targeted towards those with a protected characteristic.
- **Social Security Scotland Client and Applicant Diversity and Equalities statistics.** The [latest statistics](#) cover the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and represent approximately 70% of people applying during this period. When people submit an application for a Social Security Scotland benefit, they are also asked to complete an equalities monitoring form. This form includes questions regarding a number of protected characteristics. This information relates to the person who makes the application, which is usually the person who would receive the benefit but could alternatively be another person acting on their behalf.
- Equalities data is stored separately from application information and is later linked for statistical analysis. Social Security Scotland uses this information to understand who is using their services and how their processes work for different groups of people. The statistics do not include applicants applying for Carer's Allowance Supplement, Child Winter Heating Payment, Carer Support Payment or Winter Heating Payment.
- **The Social Security Scotland Client Survey** was sent to all clients who had received a decision or payment between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024. The survey asks clients about their experience of applying for a benefit, interacting with Social Security and receiving payments. This data helps us to understand the experience and impact of benefits by equality group. The overall response rate to the client survey this year was around 12%.

Scottish Government policy evaluations cover the implementation and impact of benefits. This year, we have published an evaluation covering [Supporting Information](#). Evaluations draw on evidence from a variety of sources including the data sources above and qualitative research with individuals who have applied for these benefits. Qualitative research is not designed to be statistically representative, and it is not possible to state the extent to which these findings generalise to all applicants in receipt of these benefits.

We can consider applications and awards for benefits that are directly focused on helping those with a protected characteristic. The **Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment** is made to households where there is someone who is, or has recently been, pregnant. Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, 16,625 applications were authorised, with £8.6 million added to family budgets. Of the applications authorised for Pregnancy and Baby Payment, 44% were estimated to be for a first birth and 56% for a subsequent birth as reported in the [Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods high level statistics to March 2024](#).

Best Start Foods launched in Scotland in August 2019 to replace the UK Healthy Start voucher scheme. It provides pregnant women and families with children under the age of three, who are in receipt of certain benefits, payments to purchase healthy foods using a payment card. Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, 25,255 applications had been authorised for Best Start Foods.

Some of our benefits are directly designed to help people with extra costs associated with being disabled or having a long term health condition. **Child Disability Payment** provides money to help with extra care and mobility costs that a disabled child or young person might have. It replaces Disability Living Allowance for Children and was the first application-based disability benefits to be introduced by the Scottish Government. The year 2022-23 was the first full year of Child Disability Payment being open to new applicants. In May 2024 high level statistics for [Child Disability Payment](#) were published. These showed that between April 2023 and March 2024, 20,475 applications had been authorised for payment with a total value of just over £164.3 million issued. Including payments made to those who had case transferred by March 2024, the total value of Child Disability Payments issued between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024 was just over £416 million. As of 31 March 2024, it is estimated that 80,590 children and young people were in receipt of Child Disability Payment.

Child Winter Heating Payment is an automatic payment for disabled children and young people under 19 who also receive a qualifying benefit. [Statistics](#) published in April 2024 showed that in Winter 2023-24 30,400 payments had been made for children or young people with a total value of £7.2 million. At least 27,460 different recipients received payments in 2023-24 and 8% of recipients received more than one payment (i.e. for more than one child or young person). The [evaluation of Child Winter Heating Payment](#) found that the payment had helped mitigate the experience of financial difficulty or insecurity and allowed families to better meet the healthcare needs of their disabled child or young person.

2. Ethnicity

Approval rates vary according to benefit type and reported ethnicity. Across all benefits, 87% of applicants who completed the equalities monitoring form were White and 6% were another ethnicity including Asian, African, Caribbean or Black, Mixed or multiple ethnic groups. The remaining 7% of applicants chose 'prefer not to say'. Overall, there was a five percent point difference between the highest and lowest approval rates for applicants who told us their ethnicity – 66% for mixed or multiple ethnic group and White applicants compared to 61% for Asian applicants.

The client survey asks recipients about the impact that benefit payments from Social Security Scotland have had. Respondents were asked to rate, on a scale of 0-10 ('not at all' to 'a lot'), how much their benefit payment helped them to pay for what they needed, control their finances and how much the payment had made a difference to their life. Respondents who were White were more likely than Minority Ethnic respondents to give a high rating across all three measures.

3. Age

Some of our Social Security Payments are targeted at families with children and this is reflected in the age profile. The majority of Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods applicants (98%) were under 45 years of age, and 81% of Scottish Child Payment applicants were under 45 years of age.

Other benefits are targeted towards young people. This is our third full year of delivering Young Carer Grant. [Statistics](#) published in June 2024 show that for the period April 2023 to March 2024, 37% of applications were made by 16 year olds, 35% by 17 year olds and 25% by 18 year olds. A total of 3,920 applications had been authorised in 2023-24. The percentage of applications authorised was broadly similar across age groups – 67% for those aged 16 and 17, and 68% for those aged 18.

Job Start Payment is also targeted towards young people. Of applications made between April 2023 and March 2024, 2% were from those aged 16 to 17, 47% for those aged 18 to 21 and 48% for those aged 22 to 24. Approval rates for age bands with available data show 30% of applications were authorised for those aged 18-21 and 37% for those aged 22-24 as shown in the [high level statistics](#) published in June 2024.

4. Transgender

Across all benefits, around 1% of applicants who completed the equalities monitoring form were transgender. Overall, the approval rate for these applicants was 63% compared to 66% for applicants who were not transgender. The small number of transgender applicants makes comparisons by individual benefits difficult, as percentages are more prone to variation. The proportion of transgender applicants varied across benefits from 0 to 2%.

5. Religion or belief

Across all benefits, 59% of applicants who completed the equalities monitoring form said they had no religion, followed by 11% as Roman Catholic, 10% as Church of Scotland, 11% as Prefer not to say, 5% as Other Christian, 4% as Muslim and 2% were another religion. At an individual benefit level, the percentage of applicants reporting no religion was lowest for Funeral Support Payment at 37% and highest for Job Start Payment at 76%. This was likely due in part to differences in the age profiles across benefits.

6. Gender

Of those who completed the equalities monitoring form, women made up 68% of applicants and 25% of applicants were men. Roughly 1% of applicants described their gender as 'in another way' and the remaining 7% chose 'prefer not to say'. Overall approval rates for women were 69% which compared to 57% for men and 66% for 'in another way'. For most benefits, applicants who chose 'prefer not to say' or 'in another way' had the highest approval rates while men had the lowest. Job Start Payment was the only benefit where approval rates were higher for women than those who chose 'prefer not to say'. Young Carer Grant was the only benefit where approval rates were higher for men compared to women at 76% and 74% respectively.

Of those who responded to the client survey about the impact of benefit payments, women were more likely than men to give a high rating (8-10) for statements relating to whether the payment helped them to pay for what they needed, control their finances and how much the payment had made a difference to their life.

7. Sexual orientation

Overall, of the applications who completed the equalities monitoring form, 84% were Heterosexual, 3% were Bisexual, 2% were Gay and Lesbian, 1% chose 'in another way' and 11% of applicants chose 'prefer not to say'. At the benefit level, Best Start Grant and Foods, Scottish Child Payment, and Child Disability Payment had the lowest proportion of applicants who were Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian, or 'in another way'. Job Start Payment had the highest proportion of applicants who were Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian, or 'in another way'.

8. Physical or mental health condition or illness

Around 50% of applicants who completed the equalities monitoring form had a physical or mental health condition or illness expected to last 12 months or more. This compared to 39% who did not have a condition or illness and 11% who chose 'prefer not to say'. Approval rates were higher for those who did not have a condition or illness compared to those who did, at 70% and 62% respectively.

As expected, Adult Disability Payment had the highest proportion of applicants with a condition or illness at 89%. This benefit also showed the largest difference in approval rates between those with and without a condition or illness at 57% and 43% respectively. It is important to note that these statistics relate to applicants' self-report answers given through equalities monitoring forms and differ from the client's

primary disabling condition which is captured as part of the application process for Adult Disability Payment and Child Disability Payment.

Carer's Allowance Supplement is an extra payment for people in Scotland who get Carer's Allowance on a particular date. Whilst it is not possible to know the exact figures, it is reasonable to assume that some recipients of this benefit will be providing care to someone in their household who is in receipt of a specified disability payment. [Statistics](#) published in August 2024 show that 88,615 Carer's Allowance Supplement payments had been made to carers who were eligible by April 2024.

7. Right to appeal

Section 87 of the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 requires Scottish Ministers to report on the number of people who obtained the right to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal under section 46 of the same Act, and the number of people who exercised this right.

A person can ask Social Security Scotland to make a new decision if, for example, the person's application for assistance is denied, or if the person thinks the amount they are going to be paid is wrong. This is called a re-determination. A person also has the right to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal against a re-determination of their entitlement to assistance if they disagree with the result of their re-determination. There may be cases where a re-determination is not completed by Social Security Scotland within the timescales set out in regulations. In such cases, a person has the right to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal without waiting for the re-determination to be made.

Job Start Payment and Best Start Foods do not have a re-determination or appeals process. Instead, there is an internal review process, which means that clients can request that their decision be looked at again.

In total, 24,535 re-determination requests were received between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024 across all benefits. The table below shows the number of re-determination requests received in this time period. The number of Carer Support Payment re-determination requests is not published to prevent disclosure of small cohorts.

Benefit	2023-24
Adult Disability Payment	18,805
Child Disability Payment	2510
Scottish Child Payment ¹	2010
Best Start Grant	645
Funeral Support Payment	315
Young Carer Grant	205
Winter Heating Payment	45
Carer Support Payment	<5
Total	24,535

All figures in the table are rounded to the nearest five and may not sum to total.

¹ Whilst Scottish Child Payment is not under sections 43 of the 2018 Act, the number of re-determinations received by Social Security Scotland is included as part of this progress report for completeness.

In total, 2840 appeals to the First-tier Tribunal were received between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024. The below table shows the number of appeals received in this time period.

Benefit	2023-24
Adult Disability Payment	2475
Child Disability Payment	200
Scottish Child Payment ²	105
Best Start Grant	30
Funeral Support Payment	30
Young Carer Grant	5
Winter Heating Payment	N/A
Total	2845

All figures in the table are rounded to the nearest five and may not sum to total.

In reporting on the number of re-determinations and appeals, section 87 of the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 also requires Scottish Ministers to indicate whether it is appropriate to amend the process for determining entitlement. Re-determinations and appeals data have not identified issues relating to the application and determination process within the reporting period. Therefore, Scottish Ministers do not consider that changes are required at this time.

Re-determination and appeals data will be kept under review and as required, Scottish Ministers will continue to report annually on whether the process for determining entitlement needs to be amended.

² Whilst Scottish Child Payment is not under sections 46 of the 2018 Act, the number of appeals received by Social Security Scotland is included as part of this progress report for completeness.



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

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