Social Security Scotland
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Measuring Our Charter 2019/20

How Social Security Scotland and the Scottish Government are delivering on Our Charter commitments.

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Social Security Scotland 'Our Charter' Measurement Framework User Guide

What is the Charter Measurement Framework?

This framework is a co-designed list of measures relating to the commitments set out in Our Charter. Over the next few years we will collect information or data for the measures, put it into the framework and then publish the results; this will do two things. Firstly, it will show how Social Security Scotland and the Scottish Government are getting on with delivering the commitments. Secondly, it will help Social Security Scotland and the Scottish Government to constantly improve what they are doing.

Please note, the Charter Measurement Framework is not the only measurement being done for the social security system in Scotland; please see, for example, the statistical publications page of the website.

This user guide sets out:
- Who developed the framework
- What the framework will measure and when
- How the measures line up to the commitments
- Where we get the information (or data) from to fill in the framework
- How to read the framework.

Who developed the framework?

The Charter Measurement Framework (the framework) was co-designed in 2019 by the Scottish Government, Social Security Scotland and a diverse group of people with lived experience of the social security system (known as 'Core Group 2'). Groups who represent people with lived experience (stakeholders), and the Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCoSS) have given valuable advice and input to the framework.

Scottish Government staff collected information from seven workshops with Core Group 2, two stakeholder meetings, two meetings with SCoSS and from Social Security Scotland staff over a period of five months. Social researchers then analysed the information and used it to produce the framework.

What does the framework measure?

The framework has four sections that match up with Our Charter. The first three sections are about how Social Security Scotland operates and delivers benefits, so the measures are designed to tell us how the agency treats clients, if staff are well supported, how the systems are working and how clients are experiencing the systems. The final section is mostly about Scottish Government commitments which relate to policy making about benefits and what the system should do as a whole, so the measures in that section are designed to tell us what is being achieved over the longer term.

When will the framework be filled in and published?

Some of the measures will not be relevant until all the benefits being devolved to Scotland are rolled out.

We will publish the framework with all those that are relevant every year starting with this report. This edition of the framework therefore contains a mixture of available data, and information on how we will report on measures in the future when they are relevant and available.

The information needed to fill in the framework (data) comes from a variety of different research and statistics sources. The main ones are:
- A yearly Client Satisfaction Survey
- Client Panels research with a group of clients who have agreed to take part in research while completing the Client Satisfaction Survey
- Statistics and management information, this is data that is collected all the time to see how well systems are working; for example, call response times
- People Survey and additional staff research
- Research to look at whether or not a benefit is meeting its aims – evaluation
- Other information like interviews with stakeholders and reports put together by the Scottish Government to show its activity to support the Charter commitments.

Due to COVID-19, some data and information have been delayed or are not available this year. This includes the Client Satisfaction Survey, Client Panels research, and research with stakeholder organisations.

For more information on the data sources for the measures in this framework, see Annex A.

Please note, wherever possible we will analyse the data we collect for the framework by protected characteristics (and other demographic characteristics). This is essential in order that we can assess whether Our Charter is being delivered comprehensively to all groups.

Such breakdowns have only been available for staff diversity in this year's report. This is because most measures where a breakdown by characteristics will be possible will come from the Client Satisfaction Survey. Other statistics in the report are either not linkable to characteristics, or numbers are not yet high enough to do so. This is likely to change by next year's report.

Reading the framework

The next page gives an 'at a glance' overview of how Social Security Scotland is performing in each section, presented with a few important pieces of data and information.

Each coloured section of the framework represents a section of Our Charter. Each page is divided into four rows which are read from the top downwards.

Row 1:	Title of Our Charter Section
Row 2:	Question
Row 3:	Ideal situation
Row 4:	Data and information

- **Row 1** is the title row which sets out the name of the section of Our Charter, for example, A people's service

- **Row 2** is made up of questions that will be answered about that section, for example, 'Are clients experiencing a service that reflects the human rights values as set out in Our Charter when interacting with Social Security Scotland?'

- **Row 3** sets out what is the ideal situation we want to achieve, for example, 'Clients receive good service'

- **Row 4** contains data and information that addresses the questions in Row 2 and demonstrates whether, or not, the ideals are being achieved. The letters in brackets identify the source of the data as given in the table in Annex A.

Where data is not yet available, interim proxy measures are used and future measures are listed. Interim proxy measures are marked * in the tables. Where figures are rounded to the nearest 5 they are marked **.

A People's Service
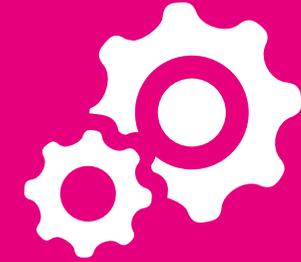
Social Security Scotland's Service is Person-Centred

- 74% of staff said they get the information they need to do their job well.

Processes That Work

Social Security Scotland involves clients in designing services that are supportive, accessible, simple, quick and flexible

82-98% of clients who rated the service said it was Very good or Good

66%

Of clients who left a rating following telephone contact† rated the service positively overall.

Call waiting times were on average 12 Seconds.

Is Social Security Scotland delivering what the Charter promised?

A Learning System

Social Security Scotland's service evolves in response to the needs and preferences of its clients

Social Security Scotland services and processes have been designed with people with lived experience, including Experience Panels.

All aspects of the design, development and delivery of the new social security system are to adhere to the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 principles.

A Better Future

The Scottish Government will develop and maintain social security policy so that it is as fair as possible

A people's service

Are clients experiencing a service that reflects the human rights values as set out in Our Charter when interacting with Social Security Scotland?

Staff attitudes reflect an understanding of and values dignity and respect as set out in Our Charter	Clients do NOT experience discrimination	Clients experience good service

2019/20 Findings*

58% of clients who left a rating following telephone contact† felt they got everything they needed from their call. (Source: a)

66% of clients who left a rating following telephone contact† rated the service positively overall. (Source: a)

Future measures

The following Client Satisfaction Survey questions will be included in next year's report:

- I was treated with kindness
- I felt trusted
- Staff listened to me
- Staff made me feel comfortable.

The following will be drawn from Client Satisfaction Survey responses and/or Client Panels research:

Examples of treatment that made clients feel comfortable, kindness, trust, listening AND examples of treatment that was less so AND Social Security action taken.

2019/20 Findings*

185 total complaints, with 10 (4%) relating to treatment or attitude of a member of staff.** (Source: g)

Future measures

The following Client Satisfaction Survey questions will be included in next year's report:

- Did you feel discriminated against at any point during your experience with Social Security Scotland?
- What or who did you feel discriminated by?
- It was clear how to challenge [the discrimination]
- I felt I could challenge [the discrimination]
- Did you tell Social Security Scotland about the discrimination?

The following will be drawn from Client Satisfaction Survey responses and/or Client Panels research:

Examples of good practice AND examples of discrimination (if any) AND Social Security Scotland action taken.

2019/20 Findings*

185 total complaints, with 5 (3%) relating to disagreement with a decision.** (Source: g)

Future measures

The following Client Satisfaction Survey questions will be included in next year's report:

- I got enough updates on the progress of my application
- Did you agree with the decision made on your application(s) for a Social Security Scotland benefit?
- Did you get your benefit payment(s) when Social Security Scotland said you would?
- "Did you get…
  - The right amount the first time?
  - The right amount every time?"

A people's service

How well are Social Security Scotland staff delivering the charter commitments?

Clients find staff knowledgeable and approachable

2019/20 Findings*

58% of clients who left a rating following telephone contact† felt they got everything they needed from the call. (Source: a)

66% of clients who left a rating following telephone contact† rated the service positively overall. (Source: a)

1.0% of decisions made on applications were subject to redetermination or appeal. (Source: k)

Future measures

The following questions in the Client Satisfaction Survey will be included in next year's report:

- Staff were knowledgeable about Social Security Scotland benefits
- [The decision] was explained clearly
- I understood the decision
- I knew how to challenge [the decision]
- I felt I could challenge [the decision].

The following will be drawn from Client Satisfaction Survey responses and/or Client Panels research:

Examples of when staff were knowledgeable, of how they explained decisions well, of clients feeling able to challenge AND examples of not understanding decisions, examples of why clients felt unable to challenge AND Social Security Scotland action taken.

Staff are well trained

October 2019 Findings†††

74% of staff said they get the information they need to do their job well. (Source: b)

94% of staff said they understand customers' / service users' needs. (Source: b)

Future measures

The following will be drawn from future staff research:

- Percentage of staff who said they knew about a range of advice and advocacy services that were convenient for clients
- Percentage of staff who said they knew how to refer people to advice and advocacy services
- Percentage of staff who said they knew enough about the appeals process to explain it clearly to clients
- Percentage of staff who said they were confident that they could deliver a service without discrimination
- Examples of knowledge (including knowledge of how not to discriminate) and training AND examples of more support needed by staff AND Social Security Scotland action taken.

Other measures of interest

94% of staff said they have a clear understanding of Social Security Scotland's objectives. (Source: b)

93% of staff said they have the skills they need to do their job effectively. (Source: b)

A people's service

How well are Social Security Scotland staff delivering the charter commitments?

Staff are well supported

October 2019 Findings†††

'My manager' theme score 81% positive. (see Source: b for full details)

77% of staff said they have the tools they need to do their job effectively. (Source: b)

*78% of staff said they think it is safe to challenge the way things are done in Social Security Scotland. (Source: b)

*87% of staff said that in Social Security Scotland, people are encouraged to speak up when they identify a serious policy or delivery risk. (Source: b)

*81% of staff feel able to challenge inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. (Source: b)

86% of staff said their manager creates a positive atmosphere at work which supports their health and wellbeing. (Source: b)

74% of staff said they feel supported when faced by unacceptable actions from customers / service users. (Source: b)

Future measures

The following will be drawn from future staff research:
- Percentage of staff who say they feel confident to deliver a service that reflects the values of a human rights based system as set out in our Charter
- Examples of good support for staff and staff confidence AND examples of any additional staff needs; and why those who lack confidence, do so AND Social Security Scotland action taken.

The proxy measures above take the place of 'percentage of staff who said they would speak up if they saw issues in the Agency'. We will consider supplementing these with a more bespoke question in future staff research.

Processes that work

Do processes work?

Processes work well

2019/20 Findings
Call waiting times were on average 12 seconds. (Source: a)

Redeterminations
1% of decisions resulted in a client requesting a redetermination. (Source: g)

0.9% of Best Start Grant decisions resulted in a client requesting a redetermination. 55% of these redeterminations were disallowed. A disallowed redetermination request is one that is accepted as valid, however payment has been rejected as the criteria for a payment has not been met. (Source: c)

4% of Funeral Support Payment decisions resulted in a client requesting a redetermination. 49% of these redeterminations were disallowed. (Source: d)

0.8% of Young Carer Grant decisions resulted in a client requesting a redetermination. 5 (total) of these redeterminations were disallowed. (Source: e)

Applications processed within 10 working days:
Please note that these processing times include time spent waiting to receive evidence requested from clients, but does not include additional time to make payments.
57% of Best Start Grant/Best Start Food applications (Source: c)

61% of Funeral Support Payment applications (Source: d)

30% of Young Carer Grant applications (Source: e; see link against Source: e for more information)

Redeterminations processed within 16 working days:
97% of Best Start Grant redeterminations (Source: c)

95% of Funeral Support Payment redeterminations (Source: d)

100% of Young Carer Grant redeterminations (Source: e)

Appeal hearings
There have been 60 appeal hearings for Best Start Grant. Of these, 100% were not upheld. (Source: c)

There have been 5 appeals requested for Funeral Support Payment but no Tribunal decisions were made in 2019/20. (Source: d)

A small number of appeals were received for Young Carer Grant. This number has not been published to prevent the disclosure of small cohorts. (Source: e)

Future measures
Percentage of clients paid the correct amount from the first time is not yet available. We are developing options for measurement from next year.

Examples of reasons for redetermination and why or why not decision was changed, and examples of redetermination process from client and staff points of view, will be drawn from Client Satisfaction Survey responses and/or Client Panels and staff research. We will begin research on appeals when volumes have increased to a high enough level.

Research with organisations who work with client groups will begin this year and will cover: Positive AND negative (if any) feedback on how they think the service is working AND Social Security Scotland action taken.

Processes that work

How accessible are services and places?

Services are accessible

2019/20 Findings*

82% of paper, 95% of online and 98% of telephony Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods applicants†† who rated the service said it was Very good or Good. (Source: a)

88% of paper, 90% of online and 98% of telephony Funeral Support Payment applicants†† who rated the service said it was Very good or Good. (Source: a)

95% of online Young Carer Grant applicants†† who rated the service said it was Very good or Good. (Source: a)

68% of clients who left a rating following telephony contact† felt their call had been answered quickly. (Source: a)

100% of Social Security Scotland documents are available on request in accessible formats (braille, Easy Read, large print, non-English languages including BSL and audio recordings) and marketing and communication materials and the Charter are produced in nine languages. (Source: Social Security Scotland communications)

Future measures

The following questions in the Client Satisfaction Survey will be included in next year's report.

- The application process was clear
- The application asked only relevant questions
- My application was handled within a reasonable time frame
- Social Security Scotland did not waste my time
- Did staff tell you about other benefits you might be entitled to?
- Did staff tell you about other sources of additional help? (For example, Citizens Advice Scotland, etc.)
- Thinking about the barriers you faced, did you feel that…
    - Social Security Scotland understood them
    - Social Security Scotland supported you in overcoming them
- Thinking about when you looked up or made contact with Social Security Scotland, how much do you agree or disagree with the following?
    - I got the support (information or advice) I needed
    - I got support (information or advice) in the way I wanted
    - I had enough choice about how I communicated with Social Security Scotland
    - I had enough choice about how Social Security Scotland communicated with me.

Examples of positive AND negative (if any) experiences of accessibility (how clients were enabled) AND Social Security Scotland action taken will be drawn from Client Satisfaction Survey responses and/or Client Panels research.

The measure on "percentage of clients that challenge a decision who already have payments continue to receive their payments" is not measurable until disability benefits have been launched.

Processes that work

How accessible are services and places?

Places are accessible and convenient

Future measures

These indicators will become relevant when Local Delivery services have been launched. Due to COVID-19 we do not yet know when this will be:

- Percentage of social security offices that pass the accessibility checklist (Checklist to be agreed by disabled people with lived experience)
- Percentage of clients who said it was convenient to get access to social security places and services.

How is the consultation process for benefits for disabled people (and people with health conditions) working for clients?

The consultation process for benefits for disabled people (and people with health conditions) minimises stress for clients

Future measures

What was the face to face assessment process for disability benefits for PIP under the DWP will be abolished when Social Security Scotland begin delivering Disability Assistance for Working Age People. In the new process, Case Managers will make decisions about DAWAP using existing sources of information. Where possible, help will be given to clients to gather necessary supporting information. If there is no other way to obtain the information required to make a decision, a client may be invited to a consultation with a Practitioner. Consultations will take place over the phone or video call, removing the need for clients to travel to unfamiliar assessment centres in most cases. We have therefore changed references to 'face to face assessments' in this document to 'consultations' For more information see: https://www.gov.scot/publications/decision-made-disability-benefit-application/

These indicators will become relevant when Disability Assistance for Working Age People has been launched:

- Percentage of people who needed a consultation for benefits for disabled people (and people with long term health conditions) who said they felt the consultation was necessary because the information needed to find out if they were eligible was not otherwise accessible to Social Security Scotland
- Percentage of people who had a consultation for disabled people's benefits who said the consultation was carried out by appropriately qualified staff
- Case studies on all aspects of the consultation process and results of the process; including in-depth assessment of how client wellbeing was protected and prioritised.

A learning system

To what extent is Social Security Scotland a learning organisation?

| Social Security Scotland uses feedback to improve performance | Clients and organisations that work with them see Social Security Scotland as a trustworthy organisation | Social Security Scotland works well with other organisations |

March 2020 Findings

The diversity characteristics of the Social Security Scotland workforce (directly employed only) were (Source: f):

Gender – Female (60.7%), Male (39.3%)

Age – 16-19 (2.7%), 20-29 (20.0%), 30-39 (29.0%), 40-49 (25.5%), 50-59 (20.7%). 60-64 and 65 and over categories suppressed due to small cohorts.

Disability – Disabled (10.8%), Not disabled (59.3%), Prefer not to say (1.5%), Unknown (28.4%)

Ethnicity – Ethnic minority (2.7%), White (82.9%), Unknown (14.4%)

Religion or Belief – None (51.8%), Church of Scotland (9.9%), Roman Catholic (14.9%), Other Christian (4.2%), Other religion or belief (2.9%), Prefer not to say (1.7%), Unknown (14.7%)

Sexual Orientation – Lesbian, gay, bisexual, other (6.2%), Hetero-sexual/straight (76.9%), Prefer not to say (2.1%), Unknown (14.9%)

Marital/civil partnership status – Married/civil partnership (19.5%), Single (5.4%), Other (5.3%), Prefer not to say (0.2%), Unknown (69.7%)

Future measures

We will develop further staff research in the next year. Qualitative evidence on the following will be drawn from Client Satisfaction Survey responses, staff research and Client Panels research:

- Any additional support Social Security Scotland can put in place for clients
- Examples of You said: We did
- Examples of acknowledgment of mistakes
- Qualitative evidence on client experience of the feedback process
- Qualitative evidence on client experience of the complaints process.

Future measures

The following questions in the Client Satisfaction Survey will be included from next year's report:

- Social Security Scotland is an open organisation
- Social Security Scotland is an honest organisation.

Qualitative evidence on the following will be drawn from Client Satisfaction Survey responses and/or Client Panels and stakeholder organisation research:

- Organisations that support clients evidence on openness and honesty of Social Security Scotland
- Examples of openness and honesty or otherwise (if applicable).

Future measures

Research for these indicators is scheduled to begin in 2021:

- Number of service level agreements in place with external partners
- Qualitative evidence from organisations that work with clients on partnership working.

A learning system

How is Social Security Scotland involving clients?

Clients are involved in all areas of Social Security Scotland

Findings to date

Experience Panels research has informed the design of Social Security Scotland processes and services. For qualitative evidence on the involvement of people with lived experience in testing processes and measuring effectiveness:

- https://www.gov.scot/collections/social-security-experience-panels-publications/
- Client Satisfaction Survey was cognitively tested with Experience Panel members, and will be regularly refreshed
- See next section for information on evaluations of the benefits.

Future measures

- "Percentage of learning packages delivered to staff which are informed by clients." This measure requires further defining and development. Ahead of that work, some relevant information is outlined below.
- Client Panels will launch in 2020/21.

Other evidence of interest

87% of staff said their Area/Directorate/Division sets goals that are appropriately aligned to customer / service user requirements

87% of staff said that in Social Security Scotland, ideas and innovation are increasingly driven by customer / service user experience

We have had direct input from organisations representing clients in our delivery of training on;

- Carers Allowance Supplement – Carers Trust, MECOPP & Alzheimer Scotland
- Best Start Grant – One Parent Families Scotland
- Funeral Support Payment – Held in Our Hearts (formerly SANDS Lothians).

For future needs, our design of training materials to support the devolution of disability benefits is built around a scenario based approach which references the voice of lived experience though case studies that run through the heart of these materials. We are being supported in the design of these materials by Health and Social Care Alliance and continue to reach out to other sources of support as we progress.

A better future

Did we have effective processes of policy making?

Policy making shows the Social security principles at work

All aspects of the design, development and delivery of the new social security system are to adhere to the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 principles. Scottish Government have shown this in a number of ways as demonstrated elsewhere in this report, but some key highlights are:

- Undertaking a consultation on Disability Assistance setting out the Scottish Government's current policy proposals for three disability benefits. This consultation sought the views of all people, including those with living experience or a working knowledge of social security. Feedback from the consultation is being used to inform the drafting of regulations for each form of Disability Assistance and the implementation and delivery of these benefits

- Similarly, consulting on the key eligibility criteria and format of the Job Start Payment, a new benefit which is being delivered by Social Security Scotland to support young people moving back into employment. The purpose of the consultation was to seek views on the key eligibility criteria and our proposal for the format of the payment for the Job Start Payment and to identify any unintended consequences of the proposals. The responses to the consultation were analysed and considered before the final policy decisions were made

- Detailed user research has been at the heart of the policy development of the upcoming Scottish Child Payment, engaging directly with people who may receive it to determine how they feel advice and support can best be tailored to their circumstances

- The Scottish Government also launched a **Benefit Take Up Strategy** in October 2019, to progress the ultimate goal of increasing awareness of and supporting access to Scottish benefits. This has initiated a number of new activities including awarding £600,000 to 26 third sector organisations to support work to promote take-up.

- The Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCoSS) was established in January 2019 as per section 21 of the 2018 Act. SCoSS has a key role for in providing independent scrutiny on legislative proposals and advice to Scottish Ministers to support them in achieving a social security service which is human rights based, respects the dignity of individuals and contributes to reducing poverty in Scotland

- The Scottish Government introduced emergency legislation within the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 to ensure that Social Security Scotland clients are not disadvantaged by the Coronavirus crisis and are able to claim assistance to which they are entitled and which they may otherwise have missed out on if late applications were not allowed.

The sections that follow show the specific impact of policymaking work to deliver the Social Security Principles, such as social security as an investment in people, and social policy to be designed to have an impact on fairness.

A better future

Did we have effective processes of policy making?

Social Security fits well with other policies

Social Security is designed to promote the National Performance Framework objectives, in particular the outcome "We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally". We have designed social security policies that address the greatest need, whether this is for carers, families, or households facing unexpected cost. The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan published in 2018 is a key policy framework, and social security benefits are key to improving the income of families in poverty. Best Start Grant, Best Start Foods, and Funeral Support Payment all play in a role in supporting households at key stages of life where extra help will ensure finances are better able to meet challenges.

In addition our Carer benefits (Carer's Allowance Supplement and Young Carer Grant) are designed to help a group which is more likely to experience poverty, and are designed to align with wider policies to support Carers.

Policy making takes account of user experience

The Scottish Government will continue to take on more responsibility for delivering for some of the benefits currently delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions. As part of the work to prepare for this change, the Scottish Government set up the Social Security Experience Panels. People from across Scotland who have recent experience of at least one of the benefits coming to Scotland were eligible to join. Over 2,400 people registered as Experience Panel members when it was launched in 2017. The Scottish Government is working with Experience Panel members to design a new social security system that works for the people of Scotland, based on the principles of dignity, fairness and respect.

Scottish Government researchers conduct research with Experience Panel members to inform the key decisions across the design of social security in Scotland. A large programme of research with panel members is underway, covering work on specific benefits and on the detail of how Social Security Scotland works. In 2019, 15 surveys were run with over 4,000 responses, over 148 group and one to one sessions with over 560 participations, and 7 co-design sessions with a group of 20 people.

Panel member's experiences, needs and views help to shape and continually improve Social Security Scotland's services. Experience Panels have been used to inform many of Social Security Scotland's decisions including:

- The design of each benefit application process
- Social Security Scotland's opening hours
- how Social Security Scotland should communicate with clients
- views on challenging a decision about an application, and on providing feedback or making a complaint.

A better future

Did we have effective processes of policy making?

Policy making promotes all groups in society

To date, Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken to consider the potential effects of the **Funeral Support Payment**, **Best Start Grant** and Young Carer's Grant.

Equality legislation covers the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation, and the Scottish Government conducts Equality Impact Assessments on all new benefit proposals and major policy and legislative changes.

The Funeral Expense Assistance (Scotland) Regulations 2019 provide detailed rules relating to this impact assessment.

The evidence and data gathered for the Young Carer's Grant Equality Impact Assessment indicated that overall the policy will have a positive impact for young carers and equality groups.

Island Communities Impact Assessments have also been undertaken for **Funeral Support Payment**, the **Young Carer's Grant** and **Best Start Grant**.

The 2018 Act also requires Scottish Ministers to make advocacy support available to disabled people who require it to help them claim Scottish social security entitlements.

The Scottish Government **consulted** on a set of draft service standards for a Social Security Advocacy service between 11 July and 7 October 2019. Following that consultation, formal Service Standards were **published** on 31 January 2010. Regulations were then brought forward, coming into force on 27th March 2020, which committed the Scottish Government to providing this service from 30 June 2020.

Government money is spent fairly

The Scottish Government are committed to ensuring government money is spent fairly. Each year we publish our **Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement**. This highlights the consistent commitment of the Scottish Government to examine the impact of the Scottish Budget on the diversity of Scotland's population. This approach supports our ambition for a fairer Scotland.

The statement provides an overview of equality budgeting, an overview of the Fairer Scotland assessment of the budget and an overview of the impact of the budget on child poverty targets.

The budget for Social Security is focused on the overarching aim of creating a fairer Scotland. We have continued to prioritise funding to support our devolved social security powers; accelerating the support we give to low income families to ensure that every child has the best start in life and increasing payments, eligibility and accessibility for this financial support; and mitigating the worst impacts of the UK Government's welfare cuts. Our number one priority is the safe and secure transfer of powers, thus ensuring that the 1.4 million people who rely on this support will continue to receive their payments on time and at the right amount.

A better future

Social Security is promoted as a human right

Scotland's new, devolved social security system is founded on human rights principles and the implementation of international human rights commitments.

All aspects of the design, development and delivery of this new system are defined by adherence to the key principles set out in section 1 of the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018. These recognise the central importance of human rights in general, and the right to social security in particular.

The Scottish Government is committed to implementing these principles in full. Social security is not a just a human right in itself. An effective social security system that delivers for people across the whole of society is essential to ensuring that human rights more generally are respected, protected and fulfilled. Our approach recognises that social security provision is an investment in the people of Scotland.

We are therefore working to ensure dignity, fairness, and respect are at the heart of everything we do. At Social Security Scotland everyone is welcomed and everyone is entitled to be treated equally and in a way the ensures their rights are promoted and protected. Our new system is as accessible as possible – removing barriers for people, not putting them in their way. That is because people come first - the system exists to implement human rights, not obstruct them.

An important feature of our new system is that it reverses the stigma traditionally associated with accessing assistance. We therefore support and encourage people to exercise their rights to the fullest possible extent.

The Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 established the first social security system in the UK which reflects the United Nations principle that social security systems should 'be established under national law and ensure the right of individuals and organisations to seek, receive and impart information on all social security entitlements in a clear and transparent manner.'

A rights based approach is at the heart of everything we do as Scotland's national government; from policy development and service design, to the day-to-day delivery of benefits and advice. The way that agency staff are recruited and trained, and the interaction between staff and the people who use the new service reflect that same ethos. Over 2,400 people with direct experience of the current system were recruited to co-produce a new and better social security model for Scotland.

A better future

Did the Government promote social security positively?

Myth and stigma about Social Security is challenged

The Benefit Take Up Strategy identified social barriers such as myths and perceived stigma about social security as a key barrier to the take-up of benefits. In order to remove these barriers we have worked closely with people who have experience of social security in the development of Social Security Scotland benefits, including a range of people with protected characteristics.

Social Security Scotland and the Scottish Government are committed to reducing the stigma associated with receiving benefits in Scottish society. We are doing this in a number of ways, including:

- the new Best Start Foods payment launched on 12 August 2019, and replaced the UK Government's Healthy Start paper vouchers with a new payment card that works in a similar way to a normal bank card. This change in the form of payment was driven by user research findings, with the direct aim of reducing the stigma associated with the previous vouchers and therefore increase take-up of Best Start Foods
- throughout the policy development of the upcoming Scottish Child Payment, we have been undertaking detailed user research, engaging directly with people who may receive it to determine how they feel advice and support can best be tailored to their circumstances, and how we can reduce or remove any feelings of stigma. The policy decision not to impose any cap on the number of eligible children that a family can receive the payment for was taken to ensure the payment has the widest possible impact, but also to challenge the UK Government's stigmatising two child limit for Universal Credit and Tax Credits.

Scottish Government talks positively about Social Security and those who use it

Our Charter is what citizens can expect from the Scottish Government and Social Security Scotland. It was designed with people with lived experience of social security who jointly decided on the wording and phrases used.

The Income Supplement (which has now become the Scottish Child Payment) Ministerial Statement made from Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government Aileen Campbell to the Scottish Parliament demonstrates Scottish Governments commitment to promoting Social Security positively.

The COVID-19 update on devolved benefits speech made by Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People Shirley-Anne Somerville to the Scottish Parliament highlights the consistent commitments of Scottish Government talking positively about Social Security Scotland and those who use it. The words used during this speech were important: 'client consultation', rather than 'assessment', 'practitioner', not 'assessor'.

A better future

Did benefits make a difference?

Our benefits counteract poverty and improve participation in society

The Scottish Government are evaluating the impact of the devolved benefits, and we published our **Evaluation Strategy** for the first wave of benefits in November 2019. The strategy sets out a range of actions to identify effects of the new social security payments. These include analysis of statistical information collected during the operation of Social Security Scotland, measuring high-level impacts (such as poverty in employment) through population surveys, and bespoke commissioned research to gather qualitative insight from benefit recipient.

For the benefits that have been introduced before the end of March 2020, we carry out research roughly a year into the operation of the benefit, firstly in order to generate sufficient caseload for analysis, and secondly for impacts to have settled down for individuals. During 2019-20 we commissioned qualitative research for Carer's Allowance Supplement and the interim evaluation of Best Start Grant. In April we also appointed a research contractor for a Universal Credit Scottish choices evaluation. We intend to publish all three evaluations by the end of 2020. During 2020-21 we intend to commission evaluations for Funeral Support Payment, and Young Carer Grant. We are developing plans for evaluating the new suite of disability and carer benefits and Scottish Child Payment.

Benefit levels reviewed and uprated in line with inflation

Our Charter states that the Scottish Government will review the payment levels of Scottish assistance every year and increase the value of disability, employment-injury, carers and funeral expense assistance every year in line with inflation.

These commitments are delivered through section 77 and 78 of the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 which were commenced on 30 October 2019. This places a duty on Scottish Ministers, under section 77 of the Act, to consider the effects of inflation on all devolved assistance that are being delivered and to report to the Scottish Parliament on what the Scottish Ministers intend to do as a result of the changes to inflation. Under section 78 of the Act there was also a duty to uprate by inflation Funeral Support Payment and Young Carer Grant for the 2020/21 financial year.

The section 77 report was published on 7 February 2020. Funeral Support Payment, Young Carer Grant, Carer's Allowance and Carer's Allowance Supplement were uprated through September 2019 CPI of 1.7% on April 2020. In addition to the uprate by price inflation to the standard rate of the other expenses element of the Funeral Support Payment, the rate was further increased to £1,000 from 1 April 2020.

A better future

Did benefits make a difference?

Fairer rules are designed and new benefits created

We are making social security fairer where we can. For example, on disability benefits, we are working to introduce longer-term awards where people have a long-term condition. We are also significantly reducing the number of face to face assessments and will only ask someone to undertake a face-to-face assessment when it is the only practicable way to make a decision.

The Scottish Government have introduced the Carer's Allowance Supplement, this increases Carer's Allowance by 13% for carers in Scotland. Together, these exceed the level of Jobseeker's Allowance. We also paid an extra supplement to carers in receipt of Carer's Allowance in response to COVID-19. This meant those who qualified for the Carer's Allowance Supplement in April received double the extra support and that eligible carers in Scotland will get up to £690 more this year than those in the rest of the UK.

We have also introduced the Young Carer Grant, the first of its kind in the UK, which supports young carers with a payment of £305.10. This can be applied for annually to help young carers access life opportunities which are the norm for many other young people. We have relaxed the rules about the timing of applications where COVID-19 affects the young carers ability to make an application on time. For example if someone applies for a Young Carer Grant after their 19th birthday, their application will be treated as though it was made on time.

Prior to the launch of Young Carer Grant the Scottish Government committed to an early review of Young Carer Grant after 1 year to assess the impact of the new benefit, barriers to access and areas to improve. Work is underway to produce this interim evaluation with full report to be published in Summer 2021.

The public commitment to deliver Scottish Child Payment was first announced by the Scottish Government on 26 June 2019. At that time a commitment was made to deliver the payment for under 6s by the end of this parliamentary term, ahead of the full roll out of the benefit to under 16s by the end of 2022. We are prioritising this age group because we know from evidence that almost 60% of children in poverty live in a family with a child of six and under. Since then significant work has been undertaken to develop the policy, legislation and delivery mechanisms to support the introduction of this brand new benefit. This involved extensive consultation with the Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCoSS) on the regulations, including ensuring their alignment with human rights principles. Extensive stakeholder engagement and user research has taken place to ensure the Scottish Child Payment will effectively tackle child poverty and reach the families who need it most. Best Start Grant, Best Start Foods and the new Scottish Child Payment will be available through a single application – making it more straightforward for people to access the money they are entitled to.

A better future

Did benefits make a difference?

Take-up improved

In our take-up strategy, published in October 2019, we discussed at length the limitations for estimating take-up, especially for the disability and carer benefits and provided evidence from existing research on how these limitations can be improved. We are committed to undertaking more research in this area to help us address the inherent limitations of estimating accurately eligible population for these benefits.

Analytical work is underway to explore methods to improve the measurement of eligible population, including examining the feasibility of enhancing existing population surveys. This approach will allow for a wider set of socio-economic characteristics and disability indicators (such as limitations to day-to-day activities for example) to be used to identify people eligible for disability benefits.

For income-related benefits it is easier to measure the eligible population, as eligibility is linked to more rigid criteria, such as income. As a result we have already produced take-up estimates for the Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment, published in the first Take-up Strategy. The next Take-up strategy will include estimates of take-up for the benefits delivered by Social Security Scotland at the time of the report's publication and it will set out the progress made to improve measures of eligible population for the disability and carer benefits.

The next Benefit Take-up Strategy will be published by October 2021, as set out in legislation.

Annex A: Data Sources

Reference Letter	Data Source	Description	Current/Future	Publications	Frequency
a	Point of contact client surveys	These are short surveys that take place when clients or applicants interact with Social Security Scotland. Questions about application experiences occur at the end of application forms across all channels. Questions about general experiences on the phone occur automatically after the completion of calls. † These measures are about calls only as this is the only direct contact clients had with staff in 19/20. After any phone call with a client advisor, clients can stay on the line and answer a series of three questions about their experience with Social Security Scotland. More than 700 clients left a rating during the financial year 19/20. †† Following paper, online and telephony applications for Social Security Scotland benefits, a questionnaire offers applicants the opportunity to leave ratings on how the experience has been for them. These figures are for the financial year 19/20 and are the percentage from those applicants who left a rating. There were not enough ratings for paper and phone Young Carer Grant applications to provide an equivalent breakdown.	Current	For financial year 19/20 figures, please refer to Annual report 2019/20. For cumulative figures since the establishment of Social Security Scotland, refer to: **https://www.gov.scot/publications/social-security-scotland-insights-research-findings-march-2020/** This publication covers the period September 2018 to March 2020.	Annual Quarterly
b	People Survey	Social Security Scotland take part in the Civil Service People Survey which is a standardised annual survey of all staff members across Civil Service departments in the UK. ††† Social Security Scotland took part in the Civil Service People Survey for the first time in October 2019. Social Security Scotland received 430 returns; a response rate of 85%.	Current	The 'Social Security Scotland People Survey 2019' report can be downloaded from here: **https://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/publications** The wider Scottish Government results are available here: **https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-people-survey-2019-results/**	Annual

Reference Letter	Data Source	Description	Current/Future	Publications	Frequency
c	Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods Official Statistics	This publication series provides information on applications and payments for Best Start Grant from 10 December 2018 and on applications and payments for Best Start Foods from 12 August 2019. The full publication includes further information on the numbers of applications, decisions, payments and redeterminations, and on processing times. Breakdowns include applicant age, application channel, local authority and first or subsequent births.	Current	Latest publication covers the period ending May 2020: https://www.gov.scot/publications/best-start-grant-and-best-start-foods-high-level-statistics-to-31-may-2020/	Quarterly
d	Funeral Support Payment Official Statistics	This publication series provides information on Funeral Support Payments, including statistics on the number of applications received, processed and authorised, as well as the value of payments made from 16 September 2019. The full publication includes further information on the numbers of applications, decisions, payments and redeterminations, and on processing times. Breakdowns include application channel, local authority, age of deceased and payment recipients.	Current	Latest publication covers the period to June 2020: https://www.gov.scot/publications/funeral-support-payment-high-level-statistics-to-30-june-2020/	Quarterly
e	Young Carer Grant Official Statistics	This publication series provides information on Young Carer Grant, including statistics on the number of applications received, processed, and authorised, as well as the value of payments made up to 30 April 2020. The full publication includes further information regarding applications, outcomes, payments, processing times, and redeterminations. Breakdowns include application channel, local authority, age of applicant, and number of cared for people.	Current	Latest publication covers the period to April 2020: https://www.gov.scot/publications/young-carer-grant-high-level-statistics-to-30-april-2020/	Quarterly

Reference Letter	Data Source	Description	Current/Future	Publications	Frequency
f	Social Security Scotland Workforce Information Official Statistics	This publication series provides a quarterly snapshot of the workforce, taken at the end of each of quarter, based on information recorded in the HR system. The statistics show: • numbers of directly employed staff by category • numbers of non-directly employed workers by category • staff sickness absence • staff diversity information • location information.	Current	Latest publication provides information on the workforce as at the end of June 2020: https://www.gov.scot/publications/social-security-scotland-workforce-information-june-2020/	Quarterly
g	Feedback statistics	These figures refer to the occasion where clients give formal feedback (complaints, compliments and suggestions) to Social Security Scotland, and cover the financial year 2019/20.	Current	For financial year 19/20 figures, please refer to Annual report 2019/20. For cumulative figures since the establishment of Social Security Scotland, refer to: https://www.gov.scot/publications/social-security-scotland-feedback-statistics-to-31-march-2020/ This publication covers the period September 2018 to March 2020.	Annual Quarterly
h	Client Satisfaction Survey	This is a survey of everyone who has applied for (and reached decision stage) or received a Social Security Scotland benefit. First data from this will be available in Winter 2020/21. It asks about overall experiences with Social Security Scotland and specifically addresses many of the measures in this framework	Future	n/a	Annual
i	Client Panels	The Client Panels will mirror the Experience Panels approach. They will involve a programme of research with clients who have agreed to take part in further research. Client Panels research will begin in Winter 2020/21	Future	n/a	Ad hoc

Reference Letter	Data Source	Description	Current/Future	Publications	Frequency
j	People Panel	The People Panel is an initiative to gather feedback from people in Social Security Scotland about a range of aspects of their experiences at work. It will consist of a representative sample of staff. This is being developed in the next year. Where staff perceptions are not picked up in People Survey questions we will develop further staff research using our People Panel. The focus of staff research in 2020 has been COVID-19 recovery.	Future	n/a	Ad hoc
k	Management information	Social Security Scotland uses management information on redeterminations as part of internal reporting. This includes figures on the overall proportion of decisions that have resulted in a redetermination.	Current	Overall figure is reported in the Annual Report	Annual

Social Security Scotland
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Contact us

📞 0800 182 2222

🌐 mygov.scot

🐦 @SocSecScot

f Social Security Scotland

Text Relay Service: 18001+ 0300 244 4000 (service for the hard of hearing).

If you are a British Sign Language (BSL) user, you can contact us via our national BSL video relay service Contact Scotland-BSL. Visit: contactscotland-bsl.org/device-direct/

This document can be provided in audio, Braille, easy read, large print or alternative languages by calling 0800 182 2222.

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba