



Department
for Work &
Pensions

RT HON THERESE COFFEY MP
Secretary of State for Work & Pensions

The Rt Hon Stephen Timms MP
Chair, Work and Pensions Committee

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August 2021

Dear Stephen,

RESPONSE TO JOINT LETTER

I recently received your letter co-signed by the Chairs of the relevant committees in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Since the start of the pandemic, the Government's priority has been to protect lives and people's livelihoods.

That is why the Chancellor announced in the March Budget that the temporary £20 a week increase in Universal Credit was to be extended for a further six months, until October. This formed a part of a £400 billion package of measures put in place to support people through the pandemic well beyond the end of the roadmap out of national lockdown.

Now the economy has reopened it is right that the Government should focus on supporting people back into work and supporting those already employed to progress in their careers. Our ambition is to support two million people move into and progress in work through our comprehensive £33 billion Plan for Jobs.

This includes, £2 billion for our Kickstart programme, which provides 6-month work placements for Universal Credit claimants aged 16-24; £2.3 billion for an additional 13,500 Work Coaches to support people into work; and £2.9 billion for our Restart programme, which provides 12 months' intensive employment support to Universal Credit claimants who are unemployed for a year. Through this programme the Government will continue to support individuals and businesses.

Finally, at my appearance at the Work and Pensions Select Committee on 7 July, I was clear the department would communicate with claimants as the uplift came to an end. In his letter to you on 22 July and the Minister for Welfare delivery notified you of our first communication with claimants.

I am copying this response to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Neil Gray MSP, Paula Bradley MLA and Jenny Rathbone MS.

Yours sincerely,
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