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*Support for Housing Costs in the Reformed Welfare System - HC 720 - Great Britain:*  
Parliament: House of Commons: Work and Pensions Committee 2014-04-02  
Reforms to the support provided for housing costs - including the Social Sector Size Criteria (SSSC) (also known as the "Bedroom Tax" and the "Spare Room Subsidy") and the household Benefit Cap are causing financial hardship to vulnerable people who were not the intended targets of the reforms and are unlikely to be able to change their circumstances in response. The SSSC is having a particular impact on people with disabilities who have adapted homes or need a room to hold medical equipment or to accommodate a carer. Anybody living in a home that has been significantly adapted for them should be exempt from the SSSC and all recipients of

Carers Allowance where the carer lives with the disabled person should be exempt from the Benefit Cap. The Report further urges the Government to exempt all households that contain a person in receipt of higher level disability benefits (DLA or PIP) from the SSSC. Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are only temporary, and whether or not a claimant is awarded DHP is heavily dependent on where they live because different local authorities apply different eligibility rules. Local authorities often have no option other than to place homeless households in expensive temporary accommodation and claimants can then fall within the scope of the Benefit Cap. Local authorities then often have to pay the shortfall for those affected by the Cap so there is no overall saving to public funds. All households in

temporary accommodation should therefore also be exempt from the Benefit Cap. *Department for Communities and Local Government - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Committee of Public Accounts 2013-06-07*

Central government grant funding to local authorities is being cut by over a quarter in real terms (£7.6 billion) between 2011 and 2015. The Department for Communities and Local Government is also introducing fundamental changes to the local government finance system with reforms to business rates and council tax benefits, so the pressures on the sector are set to increase. The Department does not properly understand the overall impact on local services that will result from the funding reductions, nor has it modelled how funding changes may adversely affect other areas of the public sector. It must improve its ability to foresee what effects the full package of funding reductions and reforms will have on local authority areas,

particularly for those authorities which face higher deprivation levels. Local authorities' statutory duties have stayed broadly the same, and in some areas, such as adult social care, the demand for services is increasing.

There is a risk that the worst-affected councils will be unable to meet their statutory obligations, threatening their viability. The Department must clarify its plans to respond if councils become unviable. More information is needed to understand councils' spending and performance. The Department did not make clear how it will monitor councils' ability to cope with funding changes, or the extent to which they are able to do this by increasing efficiency rather than reducing services. Neither has it demonstrated that the information published is sufficient to provide assurance on the value for money with which councils spend their resources.

**House of Commons - Welsh Affairs Committee: The Impact of Changes to**

## **Housing Benefit in Wales - HC 159** - Great Britain:

Parliament: House of Commons: Welsh Affairs Committee 2013-10-17

The costs of housing benefit currently makes up more than a tenth of the UK Government's expenditure on welfare, with costs forecast to reach £25 billion by 2014-15. The Government's policy on under-occupation came into force in April 2013 and it is estimated that 40,000 tenants in Wales will be affected; representing 46% of working age housing benefit claimants living in the social rented sector. This is the highest proportion of any region in Great Britain. There could therefore be a shortage of one and two bedroom homes in Wales to re-house everyone who wants to downsize. If local authorities are struggling to find alternative smaller accommodation for Government should undertake a speedy review of this policy. It is also increasingly urgent for the Welsh Government to continue with its house-building programme, with a

particular focus on the building of smaller sized properties: obviously this is a long-term solution that would require additional resources. If no social housing is available, tenants may need to move to the private rented sector and private rental costs would need to be monitored. The costs of moving disabled households who require adaptations are also a concern. There may be a case for exempting disabled households from the policy. The Government's proposal to pay housing benefit direct to social tenants under Universal Credit may result in some tenants being unable to manage their rent payments. The Committee recommends that the Government provide for housing benefit to be paid direct to the landlords in certain circumstances, for example after a specified period of non-payment

**The Stationery Office Annual Catalogue - Stationery Office (Great Britain) 2013**

## **Changes to housing benefit**

**announced in the June 2010 budget** - Great Britain:

Parliament: House of Commons: Work and Pensions Committee 2010-12-22  
The Work and Pensions Committee report that there is still a level of uncertainty around the impact of the proposed changes to Housing Benefit and their cumulative effect on households. The report examines the wide-ranging reforms to the Housing Benefit system proposed by the Government, and in particular for claimants in the private rented sector, in receipt of Local Housing Allowance. The Committee accepts the Government's desire to slow the sharp rise in Housing Benefit costs, particularly in the private rented sector, and thereby to influence the private rental market. However, it expresses some concerns about the availability of private rented accommodation in certain localities, which tenants are likely to be able to secure at the new Housing Benefit levels.

**Financing of new housing**

**supply** - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Communities and Local Government Committee 2012-05-07

This report concludes that the Government must employ a basket of measures, covering all tenures of housing, if sufficient finance is ever to be available to tackle the country's housing crisis. For decades, successive Governments have failed to deliver sufficient homes to meet demand. The country faces a significant housing shortfall, and the financial crisis has amplified the problem. 232,000 new households are forming each year in England, and yet in 2011 fewer than 110,000 new homes were completed. The Committee sets out four key areas for action, which, taken together, could go a long way to raising the finance needed to meet the housing shortfall: large-scale investment from institutions and pension funds; changes to the financing of housing associations, including a new role for the historic

grant on their balance sheets; greater financial freedoms for local authorities; new and innovative models, including a massive expansion of self build housing.

### **HM Revenue & Customs -**

Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Committee of Public Accounts 2011-12-20 HM Revenue & Customs faces a huge challenge to resolve long-standing problems with the administration of PAYE and tax credits while making substantial reductions to its running costs. The Department needs to stabilise its administration of PAYE following the problems encountered after a new processing system was introduced in 2009. It also needs to recover a significant amount of outstanding tax credit debt while minimising the amount of new debt being accumulated. While £900 million extra has been allocated to tackle tax avoidance, at the same time, following the 2010 Spending Review, the Department is required to reduce its running

costs by £1.6 billion over the next four years. The Department has made progress in improving PAYE administration since the Committee's last examination of this area in 2010. However, as a consequence of the Department's handling of the 2009 transition to the new PAYE Service, it has had to forgo up to £1.2 billion of income tax underpaid from 2004-05 to 2009-10. Under current plans, it will take until 2013 before all processing backlogs are cleared and the new PAYE Service is operating as intended. The Department needs to focus on improving data quality in particular to sustain progress in PAYE administration. Without a clear plan for reducing tax credit debt, the level of uncollected debt will continue to rise to an estimated £7.4 billion by 2014-15. The Department has been forced to acknowledge that much of this debt will never be recovered from tax credit claimants, and recently wrote off some £1.1 billion of debt dating back to the

introduction of the scheme.

## Universal Credit

Implementation - Great Britain:  
Parliament: House of  
Commons: Work and Pensions  
Committee 2012-11-22

The Universal Credit pilots (Pathfinders) will begin in the north west of England in April 2013 and full national roll-out is due to start in October 2013. The Government has designed a welfare system which should help ease the transition from benefits to work, but significant concerns remain about the potential impact of the changes on some of the most vulnerable benefit claimants, especially the online claims system and the proposed single monthly payment. The Government needs to reflect on its ambitious implementation timetable. Under Universal Credit, payments to cover the costs of rent will go to the benefit claimant, rather than direct to the landlord. This is a major change and the Committee therefore recommends that, during the initial phases of

implementation, claimants who currently have their housing costs paid to their landlord should have the option to continue with this arrangement. The Committee also notes that it has not yet received sufficient evidence to satisfy itself that the Government will achieve its stated aim of ensuring more generous support for the disabled. The Government plans to calculate monthly Universal Credit payments by using information taken from data feeds from HMRC's new Real Time Information (RTI) system though there are concerns about that programme. The Committee, further, recognises that there is likely to be a significant increased demand for advice services during the four-year transition to Universal Credit. The report also comments on closely-related policy areas, including: the conditionality and sanctions regime; passported benefits; localisation of council tax support; localisation of the Social Fund

## **House of Commons - Environmental Audit**

### **Committee: Energy**

#### **Subsidies - HC 61 - Great**

Britain: Parliament: House of  
Commons: Environmental  
Audit Committee 2013-12-02

The Government is shifting the goal-posts on fuel poverty so that official statistics record far fewer households as fuel-poor. The changes to the fuel poverty definition and target, in part being made through amendments to the Energy Bill, should be stopped unless the Government is prepared to make a public commitment to end fuel poverty altogether. A short-term bid to cut bills must not throw energy and climate change policy off-course. In the longer term green levies could actually keep bills down if they drive energy efficiency improvements that cut the cost of heating our homes. Insulating homes and supporting green technologies is vital to help the fuel poor and cut the emissions causing climate change. At the Rio+20 Summit and the G20, the Government committed itself to

phasing out fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. The Government must set a target to reduce subsidies to harmful fossil fuels. The Government should also use the Autumn Statement as an opportunity to provide a clear and comprehensive analysis of energy subsidies in the UK. The report also looks at whether Government support for the new nuclear power station at Hinkley Point constitutes a subsidy and concludes that it does, despite the Government's assurance otherwise. The Government's policy of 'no public subsidy for new nuclear' requires it to provide only 'similar' support to that provided to other types of energy, but even on that basis the deal for Hinkley Point C is 'dissimilar', notably on support for decommissioning and waste.

*Autumn Statement 2012 -*

Great Britain: Parliament:  
House of Commons: Treasury  
Committee 2013-01-30

The Treasury should re-

establish the annual Budget as the main focus of fiscal and economic policy making. The Autumn Statement is not, nor should it be, a second Budget. An additional budget can create uncertainty and carries an economic cost. Treasury and business managers also need to ensure that there is adequate Parliamentary time to allow proper scrutiny of the Finance Bill. About half of general government expenditure is to be protected from the new spending cuts but the complete protection of ring-fenced departmental budgets will be difficult to sustain while other departments are substantially affected. The Committee also intends to question the future Governor of the Bank of England, Dr Mark Carney, on possible alternatives to the inflation targeting that currently underpins the work of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank. The Treasury and to some extent the Bank were at fault for failing to coordinate the announcement of the Asset Purchase Facility transfer with

that of the November MPC press release. It is vital that the MPC fulfils its duty to demonstrate its independence. There is concern at reports that the Funding for Lending Scheme may be biased in favouring lending for mortgages rather than lending to SMEs. The sums expected from the sale of the 4G spectrum and Swiss tax repatriation represent the majority of the additional receipts the Treasury intends to offset against the tax reductions and investment but both are uncertain. The Chancellor must also use the 2013 Budget to set out a clearer strategy for fuel duty over at least the medium term HM Revenue and Customs - Great Britain. Parliament. House of Commons. Committee of Public Accounts 2012-12-03 This report looks at a range of issues among HM Revenue & Customs' activities, but principally into the corporation tax paid by multinational companies. International companies are able to exploit national and international tax

structures to minimise corporation tax on the economic activity they conduct in the UK. It is believed that this practice is widespread and that HMRC is not taking sufficiently aggressive action to assess and collect the appropriate amount of corporation tax. Both HMRC and corporate taxpayers are failing to meet the legitimate public expectations from the tax system. Evidence received was unconvincing, in some cases evasive, and there is concern that multinationals have an unfair competitive advantage. A change of mindset needs also to apply to HMRC's approach to the Tax Gap - the difference between tax collected and that which, in the Department's view, should be collected. While total tax revenues have increased by £4 billion since 2010-11, the Department's own assessment of the gap stands at £32 billion and has only reduced by £1 billion since 2004-05. HMRC deserves praise for clearing the backlog of un-reconciled legacy PAYE cases, before its target of

December 2012, but is too complacent about the service it provides to customers. The next challenges HMRC faces are the roll-out of the Real Time Information system and the changes to child benefit. The system is vital for the Department for Work and Pensions' introduction of Universal Credit, but HMRC has no contingency planning to cope with any delays in implementation. The Department's performance in reducing the level of error and fraud on the tax credits it pays has got worse rather than better, and it has failed to meet its target

*House of Commons -  
Committee of Public Accounts:  
Charges for Customer  
Telephone Lines - HC 617 -  
Great Britain: Parliament:  
House of Commons: Committee  
of Public Accounts 2013-11-11*  
Telephone services are a vital part of government support, accounting for 43% of all customer contacts. But departments are continuing to make extensive use of higher rate phone numbers for

customer telephone lines despite the fact that many people are put off calling as a result. The most vulnerable callers, on the lowest incomes, face some of the highest charges. Costs to callers are even higher because the caller has to endure long waiting times and poor customer service. In the face of this evidence we welcome the Cabinet Office's acknowledgement that it was "inappropriate" for vulnerable citizens to pay a substantial charge to access public services and its commitment to establish best practice in this field and ensure it is followed across government  
*Fair Society, Healthy Lives* - Michael Marmot 2013

**Post Office network transformation** - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Business, Innovation and Skills Committee 2012-07-17  
In this report the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee outlines its concerns with regards to the

Government's proposals for change to the ownership and administration of the Post Office network. The new role of post offices as front offices for Government services will be vital to their ongoing financial viability. The Government must set out the services that are to be delivered through this method whilst Post Office Ltd must demonstrate a clear marketing strategy to ensure post offices are promoted as the preferred outlet for such services. The new method of remuneration for 'Local' post offices may not be viable for subpostmasters, increasing the likelihood that large supermarkets will take over the Post Office mantle. There is little detail on the programme for change with regards to mutualisation and particularly on how any such mutualisation would be affected should the majority of 'Locals' be owned by a small number of major companies. The Committee recommends that the Government outline how such a situation would affect the ability of the Post Office to

become a mutual organisation. On the question of a Post Office subsidy, the Committee supports the long-term objective for post offices to become financially self-sufficient. Indirect financial support, largely in the form of the Front Office Government services will be key to achieving this ambition, but some smaller offices may never achieve financial independence and they should be supported as they often deliver some of the most vital services to rural or deprived areas.

#### Localisation issues in welfare

reform - Great Britain:

Parliament: House of

Commons: Communities and  
Local Government Committee  
2011-10-13

This report examines the implications of the Government's welfare reform plans for the localism agenda. Under these plans, Council Tax Benefit and elements of the discretionary Social Fund will be abolished and replaced by localised schemes run by councils. Restrictions placed on local authorities in designing

their own schemes for council tax support will produce only the illusion of local discretion. Combined with a planned 10 per cent cut in spending on support for council tax, the MPs argue these restrictions are likely to squeeze the funds available to support working-age unemployed people. The Committee also expresses concerns about the timetable for change, with local authorities having little time to design their council tax support schemes before they are due to be introduced in 2013. The Committee welcomes plans to localise the discretionary Social Fund, but warns ministers they need to fund the new schemes adequately. Collecting information about how these funds are used would allow residents to hold local authorities to account for how effective their local schemes are. Housing Benefit, which is currently administered by local authorities, is to be incorporated into the centralised Universal Credit system under the Government's

plans, an incongruous move for an administration committed to decentralisation. Finally, the Committee urges the Government to think carefully about the proposed system of paying housing costs support directly to tenants under Universal Credit, as this could seriously hamper the ability of social landlords to borrow to invest in their current or new properties.

### **The Single-tier State**

**Pension** - Great Britain:

Parliament: House of Commons: Work and Pensions Committee 2013-04-04

This report welcomes the improvements in retirement income that the new Single-tier State Pension will bring.

However, the key to the policy's successful implementation lies in the Government informing the public as soon as possible about how it will affect individuals. The Committee criticises the Government for hampering its scrutiny of the proposals. The Government not only imposed an extremely tight timetable, but brought

forward the implementation date by a year, after the Committee had completed taking evidence. The Committee says that the Government must work with them to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible and that Defined Benefit pension schemes do not suffer as a result. The Government should also develop and publish a clear explanation of how means-tested support, including passported benefits, will operate under the Single-tier Pension, and the transitional protection that will be put in place. Many women born between 1952 and 1953 believed that they would suffer a double adverse effect on their State Pension income, arising from the increases in their State Pension Age combined with their ineligibility for the Single-tier Pension, if it was introduced in 2017 as set out in the White Paper. The Government should clarify the position. Some women did not build up their own NI record because they had an expectation that they would be

able to rely on their husband's contributions to give them entitlement to a Basic State Pension. The Government should assess and publish the cost of allowing women in this position who are within 15 years of State Pension Age to retain this right

*Means testing - Great Britain:*  
Parliament: House of Commons: Committee of Public Accounts 2012-01-12

The Government uses means testing to distribute at least £87 billion of benefits to claimants each year, around 13% of total public spending. The poorest fifth of households rely on means-tested benefits for a third of their net income. The planned introduction of a new means-tested Universal Credit will replace a number of existing means-tested benefits. Currently 30 different means tested benefits are managed by nine departments and 152 local authorities in England. But Departments have a limited understanding of how their design of benefits affects incentives for employment, the burden on claimants, take-up

and administrative costs. Departments need to improve their understanding of how all benefits interact and how changes to eligibility rules can affect claimants. Complexity increases the burden on claimants which can harm take-up, and is likely to disadvantage the most vulnerable members of society in particular. The Government expects Universal Credit reforms to simplify the system and improve incentives to find work. The DWP's priority is to focus on the effective delivery of these reforms. However, success will also depend on proper coordination between Universal Credit and other means-tested benefits. In addition, DWP and HMRC are designing a real-time information (RTI) system for Universal Credit to reduce the risk of overpayments, with benefits being recalculated as soon as circumstances change. Both DWP and HMRC need to understand how the introduction of this system will impact on small businesses and the self-employed who may not

have the necessary IT to administer it.

Budget 2012 - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Treasury Committee 2012-04-18

The Budget 2012 published as HC 1853, session 2010-12 (ISBN 9780102976045). For Volume 1, see (ISBN 9780215043863)

**House of Commons - Scottish Affairs Committee: The Impact of the Bedroom Tax in Scotland: Interim Report - HC 288** - Great

Britain. Parliament. House of Commons. Scottish Affairs Committee 2013-12-16

The Scottish Affairs Committee calls for the repeal of the Bedroom Tax. While this is being considered, the Committee calls on the Government to suspend application of the Bedroom Tax for all those tenants to whom a reasonable alternative offer cannot be made. There are not enough smaller houses available for tenants to transfer into. The lack of any alternative offers means that tenants have no choice but to go into arrears

if they simply cannot afford the extra costs. Other amendments proposed for the operation of the tax include: exemptions for those disabled people who require a room to store or use equipment or aids; non application where it would be financially perverse to do so - eg where removing fixed aids and adaptations, and then reinstalling them in a smaller home, would be more expensive than the savings over two years; all children of secondary school age should be allowed a bedroom of their own to allow quiet study; all disabled children, of whatever age, should have a bedroom of their own. The Committee also calls for changes to the system of Discretionary Housing Payments, which have been designed by the Government to mitigate the worst impacts of the Bedroom Tax. There should be a standard nationwide entitlement system, across the UK as a whole, rather than the present postcode lottery. The UK and Scottish Governments should make longer term commitments to the provision

of DHP payments in order to allow local authorities to plan and structure their budgets.

**HM Revenue & Customs accounts 2010-11** - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Committee of Public Accounts 2011-12-20

The Commons Public Accounts Committee publishes its 61st Report of the Session which, on the basis of evidence from the Cabinet Office and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), examined tax disputes. At 31 March 2011 HM Revenue & Customs was seeking to resolve tax issues valued at over £25 billion with large companies, some of which included disputes over outstanding tax. In this report, the Committee expresses concern about how the Department handled some cases involving large settlements and that there needs to be proper separation between the negotiation of tax settlements and the authorization of such settlements. The Committee also states that HMRC made matters worse by trying to

avoid scrutiny of these settlements, keeping confidential the details of specific settlements with large companies. This effects Parliament's ability to establish value for money, compounded further by imprecise, inconsistent and potentially misleading answers given by senior departmental officials, including the Permanent Secretary for Tax in particular over his evidence on his relationship with Goldman Sachs, in facilitating a settlement with the company over their tax dispute. HMRC governance processes in these matters were inconsistent and it has now appointed two new Commissioners with tax expertise, and plans to introduce a new assessor role to permit independent review of large settlements before they are finalised. The Committee further states that it saw little evidence of personal accountability within the Department, and that a perception has developed that large companies are treated more favourably, receiving

preferential treatment compared to small businesses and individuals.

Searching and Seizing Computers and Obtaining Electronic Evidence in Criminal Investigations - Orin S. Kerr 2001

House of Commons - Committee of Public Accounts: HMRC Tax Collection: Annual Report & Accounts 2012-13 - HC 666 - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Committee of Public Accounts 2013-12-19

In pursuing unpaid tax, HMRC has not clearly demonstrated that it is on the side of the majority of taxpayers who pay their taxes in full. Last year the Department collected less tax in real terms than it managed to collect in 2011-12. This was despite the stated ambition to crack down on tax avoidance. The tax gap as defined by HMRC did not shrink, but in 2011-12 grew to £35 billion. Furthermore, this figure does not include all the tax revenue lost. HMRC pursues tax owed by the smaller businesses but

seems to lose its nerve when it comes to mounting prosecutions against multinational corporations. It predicted that it would collect £3.12 billion unpaid tax from UK holders of Swiss bank accounts and this figure was built into budget estimates, but in 2013-14 it has so far secured just £440 million. HMRC aims to make the UK more attractive to business but the incentives to international corporations may also enable them to avoid tax. HMRC needs to strike the right balance between support and enforcement. The implementation of the Real Time Information system has been encouraging overall though some small businesses are continuing to struggle. It is of concern that HMRC is planning from April 2014 to fine companies even though some face continuing challenges. The successful implementation of Universal Credit depends on RTI continuing to work properly but the system does not have full disaster recovery arrangements. System failures

could have serious consequences for payments to individuals

*Department for Work and Pensions - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Committee of Public Accounts 2013-03-26*

Housing Benefit helps those on a low income in social or private housing to pay all or part of their rent, and supported some five million households in Great Britain in 2011-12 at a cost of £23.4 billion. Reforms aim to reduce annual expenditure by £6.2 billion by the end of 2014-15. The changes are being introduced without comprehensive modelling of the likely outcome on individuals or on housing supply and with limited understanding of the costs local authorities will incur. Those individuals who receive Housing Benefit are by definition on low incomes and even small reductions in entitlement can have a significant impact on their finances. The reforms are expected cut benefits for two

million households. The impact of these reforms on claimants' finances may be compounded by other changes to the welfare system. The Department cannot model the impacts of the reforms as they depend on the actions claimants take in response to changes in their individual circumstances. Instead the Department plans to adopt a reactive approach, changing rules as problems arise. Claimants need to understand now how their benefit payments will change and what options they have to minimise the impact on their finances, for example, by taking in a lodger. Strong efforts must be made by the Department, local authorities and Social Housing organisations to inform claimants about the reforms; however, to date the evidence suggests that they have not been effective. Also, the Department has failed to take into account the administrative costs of implementing the reforms.

Implementing the Transparency Agenda - Great

Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Committee of Public Accounts 2012-08

Whilst progress towards the Government's objectives for transparency is recognised there are areas where further work needs to be done. It does not help government to meet the objectives of the transparency agenda when large quantities of raw data are released without ensuring that the data are fit for purpose. Some data are very difficult to interpret, and some is not being presented on a consistent basis, for example in local government. Poor or incomplete data hinders the ability of users to exercise effective choice and undermines the ability of service deliverers and policy makers to focus on improving quality. The Government has not yet developed a full understanding of costs and benefits of making information transparent, and so decisions on what data to make available and in what form are not yet guided by value for money considerations. The Cabinet

Office says the Open Data Institute will establish a fuller evidence base on the economic and public service benefits of open data. The push for release of more data has also thrown up new challenges which departments need to meet, facilitated by strong leadership from the Cabinet Office. These include questions on how to sustain interest in data after the initial launch (for example crime maps), how to ensure sufficient disclosure of information by private firms delivering government contracts, vigilance over protecting personal privacy, and how the benefits of data disclosure can be realised by those without internet access

### **Support for Armed Forces Veterans in Wales** - Great

Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Welsh Affairs Committee 2013-02-12

This Report examines whether the level of support provided to Armed Forces veterans in Wales - both immediately before they leave the service and once they return to civilian life - is adequate. The key

recommendation is that the Welsh Government take forward proposals to establish a network of 'one-stop shops' for veterans across Wales. A great deal of support is available for veterans in Wales, but often a lack of awareness means that support is not taken up. A one-stop shop for veterans would be a convenient way for veterans to access information and receive advice on a range of important issues, such as housing, finances and employment. To avoid duplication, however, the Welsh Government needs to take into account the support launched or planned by local authorities as part of their Community Covenants. There should also be better co-ordination of the work done by the many charities supporting veterans. In the light of recent court cases which have illustrated the need for vigilance to prevent fraudsters taking advantage of the public's willingness to give to veterans' charities there should be much more stringent inspection of charities'

finances. There is also concern about charities providing treatments for complex psychological issues that do not meet NICE guidelines. The regulation of charities may be insufficiently robust in this area. The Charity Commission should insist that veterans' charities which offer medical, psychological or counselling services provide documentation from the relevant professional bodies to confirm that they have the appropriate endorsement for the services they offer

White paper on universal credit  
- Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Work and Pensions Committee  
2011-03-07  
The white paper published as Cm. 7957 (ISBN 9780101795722)  
Social Policy Review 34 - Jolly, Andy 2022-06-27  
Experts review the leading social policy scholarship from the past year in this comprehensive volume. Published in association with the Social Policy Association, the latest volume in this long-

running series addresses current issues and critical debates throughout the international social policy field with a particular focus on employment policy, housing policy and climate justice. Contributors also explore key developments including researching during the COVID-19 pandemic, migrants' access to social benefits in Germany, the right(s) to healthcare in Italy, American and European homelessness policies and much more. This annual review is essential reading for students and academics in social policy, social welfare and related disciplines.

Government and IT - "a recipe for rip-offs" - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Public Administration Select Committee 2011-07-28  
Additional written evidence is available in Volume 3, available on the Committee website [www.parliament.uk/pasc](http://www.parliament.uk/pasc)  
**The Stationery Office Annual Catalogue 2011** - Stationery Office 2012-04-12

The Stationery Office annual catalogue 2011 provides a comprehensive source of bibliographic information on over 4900 Parliamentary, statutory and official publications - from the UK Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly, and many government departments and agencies - which were issued in 2011.

House of Commons - Communities and Local Government Committee: The Work Of The Regulation Committee Of The Homes And Communities Agency - HC 130 - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Communities and Local Government Committee 2013-09-11

Despite acknowledging that a 'handful' of providers give him concern, the Regulator is reluctant to give them lower financial viability ratings, fearing that doing so might trigger an upward re-pricing of their debt. Instead, the Regulator uses governance ratings to signal concerns about financial viability. This

practice lacks openness and should stop and accurate financial viability ratings should be published. The fear of triggering a re-pricing also prevents the Regulator from using many of his statutory powers, preferring to adopt informal approaches instead. This lacks transparency and risks too close a relationship developing between the Regulator and providers. The devolved administrations' housing regulators, not to mention regulators in other sectors, must encounter similar dilemmas. The Regulator should work with them to see how they have addressed his concern that the use of statutory powers could prove counter-productive. The Committee's concerns are underlined by the case of Cosmopolitan Housing Group, which came close to insolvency in 2012. The Regulator only lowered its financial viability rating for Cosmopolitan in December 2012, despite the fact that he had been monitoring the situation for months and the possibility of

insolvency had been raised in the media two months previously. The report also raises concerns about how effectively the Regulator is discharging his remit for consumer regulation. Noting that of 111 complaints related to consumer standards referred to the Regulator no case of serious consumer detriment was found, the Report calls for an annual external check to be carried out to provide assurance that the Regulator is discharging his duties effectively

**Administration and effectiveness of HM Revenue and Customs -**  
Great Britain: Parliament:  
House of Commons: Treasury  
Committee 2011-07-30

This report identified serious concerns in a number of areas, including: unacceptable difficulties contacting HMRC by phone during peak periods; endemic delays in responding to post; and an increasing focus on online communication that may exclude those without reliable internet access. The Committee recognises that the

Department performs a crucial role and operates under significant external pressures including continuing resource reductions, deficiencies in tax legislation and the legacy of the merger. It also acknowledges the commitment of management to tackling these problems and the dedication and professionalism of HMRC staff. However, it concluded that the Department has a difficult few years ahead of it, as it attempts to improve its service. The Committee makes recommendations in the following areas: Improving the service provided by contact centres; providing robust alternative to online contact; ensuring greater awareness of the impact of process changes on individuals and businesses; ensuring reductions in resources are managed in a way that is commensurate with the enabling IT and process improvements and minimises the loss of Departmental tax expertise; reviewing the division of responsibilities between HMRC and HM Treasury in relation to making

tax policy, to ensure practical considerations are taken into account at the earliest possible stage; better targeting of letters that threaten serious consequences against individuals; having the National Audit Office externally audit preparations for Real-time Information, to ensure Ministers can be held accountable for progress against the Government's ambitious timetable; and examining how the Department can achieve better accountability around the settlement of large tax cases

Good Times, Bad Times - John Hills 2017-02-22

Two-thirds of UK government spending now goes to the welfare state, and where that money is spent--healthcare, education, pensions, benefits--is at the heart of major political and public debate. Much of that debate is dominated by the myth that the population is divided into those who benefit from the welfare state and those who pay into it. But this groundbreaking book--fully revised in this second edition

with current data, discussion of key policy changes, and a new preface reflecting on the changed UK political context following the 2015 election and 2016 Brexit vote--uses extensive research and survey evidence to challenge that view. It shows that our complex and ever-changing lives mean that all of us rely on the welfare state throughout our lifetimes, not just a small welfare-dependent minority. Using everyday life stories and engaging graphics, top UK social policy expert John Hills clearly demonstrates how the facts are far removed from the popular misconceptions.

### **Implementation of Welfare Reform by Local Authorities**

- Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons:

Communities and Local Government Committee  
2013-04-03

The significance, timetable and volume of the proposed welfare reforms should not be underestimated. The changes will see Housing Benefit, currently administered by local authorities, transferring into

Universal Credit (UC), to be administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Moving in the other direction, Council Tax Benefit and parts of the Social Fund will be replaced with schemes designed and administered by local authorities. This report focuses on implementation and the part that local authorities are playing. It identifies four key areas that will be crucial to the successful implementation of the changes. First, these reforms require close interdepartmental working, particularly between the Department for Communities and Local Government and DWP. Second, the Government needs to work with the Local Government Association to assess the cumulative impact of the entire programme on local authorities' resources. Third, for the simplification of benefits, the Government is switching the payment of housing support from the landlord directly to the claimant. Housing associations may therefore face increased

rent arrears and collection costs, though the Government has agreed that this may be offset by excluding "vulnerable" tenants and an automatic switchback mechanism (paying rent to the landlord when a tenant's arrears hit a threshold level). In addition, it is vital that DWP makes good on its assurances that the financial viability of housing associations will not be damaged by the welfare reforms. Fourth, there are concerns about the readiness of ICT systems, specifically that the systems for fraud detection within UC were still at early development even though implementation is now advanced

**House of Commons -  
Committee of Public  
Accounts: Universal Credit:  
Early Progress - HC 619 -**

Great Britain: Parliament:  
House of Commons: Committee  
of Public Accounts 2013-11-07  
Universal Credit is the DWP's  
single biggest programme and  
enjoys cross-party support, yet  
its implementation has been  
extraordinarily poor. The

failure to develop a  
comprehensive plan has led to  
extensive delay and the waste  
of a yet to be determined  
amount of public money. £425  
million has been spent so far  
on the programme. It is likely  
that much of this, including at  
least £140 million worth of IT  
assets, will now have to be  
written off. Lack of day-to-day  
control meant early warning  
signs were missed, with senior  
managers becoming aware of  
problems only through ad hoc  
reviews. Pressure to deliver a  
programme of this magnitude  
within such an ambitious  
timescale created a fortress  
culture where only good news  
was reported and problems  
were denied. There has been a  
shocking absence of control  
over suppliers, with the  
Department failing to  
implement the most basic  
procedures for monitoring and  
authorising expenditure. The  
pilot programme is not a  
proper pilot. Its scope is  
limited and does not deal with  
the key issues that Universal  
Credit must address: the  
volume of claims; their

complexity; change in claimants' circumstances; and the need for claimants to meet conditions for continuing entitlement to benefit. The programme will not hit its current target of enrolling 184,000 claimants by April 2014. The Department will have to speed up the later stages of the programme if it is to meet the 2017 completion date but that will pose new risks. Meeting any specific timetable from now on is less important than delivering the programme successfully

*Southern Reporter* - 1912

Includes the decisions of the Supreme Courts of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi, the Appellate Courts of Alabama and, Sept. 1928/Jan. 1929-Jan./Mar. 1941, the Courts of Appeal of Louisiana.

## **Universal Credit**

### **Implementation: Monitoring DWP's Performance in**

**1012-13 - HC 1209** - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Work and Pensions Committee 2014-04-09

There remains worrying

uncertainty about the new Universal Credit (UC) IT system. This includes how it will work, how much it will cost, and who will develop it. National roll-out of UC was due to begin in October 2013. But problems with IT systems meant that major changes to the implementation timetable were made in July and then again in December 2013. Currently, UC claims are still limited to 10 Pathfinder Jobcentres. New claims are not expected to be extended to the whole of Great Britain until 2016; and the bulk of existing claimants will not move over to UC until 2016-17. Only 4,280 people were claiming Universal Credit by December 2013 and the majority of these claims were of the simplest nature. By comparison, in the same month, 1.22 million people were claiming Jobseekers Allowance. The DWP is developing a new 'end-state solution' for UC IT which will eventually replace the IT system currently in use in the UC Pathfinders. This is costing £25-32 million to develop up to

November 2014, with no indication of how much more it will cost in the long-term. The Government has hampered the Committee's scrutiny of UC implementation by not providing accurate, timely and detailed information. And there is a lack of detail on how support for vulnerable people being provided in partnership with local authorities, housing providers and the voluntary sector will operate. Delays to UC implementation mean that local authorities will now administer housing benefit for much longer than anticipated.

*Work Programme - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Work and Pensions Committee 2011-05-08*

The Work Programme will be implemented nationwide from June 2011, and will replace the range of existing programmes to help benefit claimants find jobs. It will be delivered on a regional basis by a framework of prime contractors, the majority of which will come from the private sector. These prime contractors will be paid by the Government based on

their results in achieving sustainable employment for jobseekers. Prime contractors are expected to subcontract service provision to specialist local organisations, including voluntary sector providers. There is a risk that, even under the payment-by-results model, Work Programme providers might focus on the clients they assess as being easier to help. The Committee recommends that the Government keeps the payment model under review and assesses the outcomes for all participants. The Work Programme creates a significant financial challenge for prime contractors. This might lead to some clients receiving lower quality support and to significant costs to the Government in responding to service failures. The Government should put contingency arrangements in place to ensure the continuity of provision for clients. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) should remind prime contractors that a key aspect of their role is to bear financial risk, rather than

passing it on to subcontractors disproportionately. Contracting arrangements need to ensure that subcontractors are fairly managed and that prime contractors are able to hold subcontractors to account for poor performance. The DWP must establish robust and independent arbitration and sanctioning arrangements.

Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States - National Research Council 2009-07-29

Scores of talented and dedicated people serve the forensic science community, performing vitally important work. However, they are often constrained by lack of adequate resources, sound policies, and national support. It is clear that change and advancements, both systematic and scientific, are needed in a number of forensic science disciplines to ensure the reliability of work, establish enforceable standards, and promote best practices with consistent application.

Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A

Path Forward provides a detailed plan for addressing these needs and suggests the creation of a new government entity, the National Institute of Forensic Science, to establish and enforce standards within the forensic science community. The benefits of improving and regulating the forensic science disciplines are clear: assisting law enforcement officials, enhancing homeland security, and reducing the risk of wrongful conviction and exoneration. Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States gives a full account of what is needed to advance the forensic science disciplines, including upgrading of systems and organizational structures, better training, widespread adoption of uniform and enforceable best practices, and mandatory certification and accreditation programs. While this book provides an essential call-to-action for congress and policy makers, it also serves as a vital tool for law enforcement agencies, criminal prosecutors and attorneys, and forensic

science educators.

Spending review 2010 - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Treasury Committee 2010-11-26

The Spending Review 2010 published as Cm. 7942 (ISBN 9780101794220)

**Reducing errors in the benefits system** - Great Britain: Parliament: House of Commons: Committee of Public Accounts 2011-03-10

There are around 30 different types of benefits and pensions, and £148 billion was paid out to 20 million people in 2009-10. The Department for Work and Pensions estimates that £2.2 billion of overpayments and £1.3 billion of underpayments were made in 2009-10 as a result of administrative errors by its staff and mistakes by customers. Efforts to tackle error have had little success and levels of error have remained constant since 2007. A joint HM Revenue and Customs and Department for Work and Pensions fraud and error strategy announced in October 2010, along with additional funding of £425

million over four years, is an opportunity to inject a new impetus. Importantly, the Department has not addressed underpayments, despite the hardship that benefit underpayments can create for people in need. Interventions to reduce error must be targeted where they are most likely to get the greatest return. Progress on reducing error requires a better understanding of where and why errors arise, and a greater focus on preventing errors occurring in the first place. The Department is not making use of all available sources of information to identify the reasons why staff make mistakes, where guidance and training efforts should be directed, and to identify which customers are most likely to make mistakes on their benefit claims. Wider welfare reforms have the potential to reduce errors in the long term by simplifying benefits administration, but waiting for the implementation of the Universal Credit is not an option.