



Minutes

Title of meeting	Windrush Cross-Government Working Group Meeting		
Date	17 May 2023	Time	10:00 – 11:30
Venue	2 Marsham Street		
Chair	Home Secretary, Rt Hon Suella Braverman KC MP and Bishop Derek Webley OBE DL	Secretary	Debbie Hughes
Attendees	For a full list of attendees see Annex A	Copies to	Members of the Windrush Cross-Government Working Group
Apologies	For a full list of apologies see Annex A		

Welcome and opening remarks

1. The Home Secretary opened the meeting and thanked Lord Murray and everyone who had been working on the Windrush Compensation Scheme and wider Windrush activities since the last meeting. She noted this was the penultimate meeting and there were important items up for discussion. The Home Secretary put on record her thanks to Bishop Webley and the Working Group members for their commitment and excellent contribution.
2. The Home Secretary noted the focus was on preparations for the Windrush Day events to mark the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush (Windrush 75), which was an opportunity to look back on what we have done, how we have worked to correct the wrongs, but most importantly how we can all celebrate the contribution of the Windrush generation to British life.
3. Bishop Webley stated this meeting was very important for everyone as they looked to mark Windrush 75 and that he was pleased to see the range of activities planned to mark the day, which the Working Group would have the opportunity to feed into. He noted he was grateful to all members who continued to dedicate their time and commitment, and the Home Office, which has been working to do their best to see that those who have been wronged are treated with dignity.

75th Anniversary HMT Empire Windrush

4. Angela Wilson from the External Engagement team introduced the paper on Windrush 75 plans noting internal and external activities for the Home Office, including a Home Secretary reception, and a No.10 reception, which the Home Office was planning in conjunction with No.10 and DLUHC.
5. It was also noted for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, that the Victoria & Albert Museum would hold an exhibition showcasing artists and designers from the Windrush Generation, and there would be other events at museums across the UK.
6. The Department for Health is also celebrating the 75th anniversary of the NHS and had planned a boat trip for NHS staff from Waterloo to Tilbury.
7. A Thanksgiving service would be held at Southwark Cathedral on 22 June, preceded by a Pilgrim walk from Waterloo. Representatives from OGDs then set out their departmental plans in turn.
8. **Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities** – Sabin Khan noted that the Windrush Day Grant Scheme funding had increased to £750,000 and put on record her thanks to Loanna Morrison and Paulette Simpson for their work on the Scheme. Other activities included an updated branding toolkit with Windrush 75 branding, a new set of educational materials, and a series of Windrush 75 talks in collaboration with an educational charity. It was noted that the Department was working in conjunction with the Home Office and No.10 to deliver a No.10 reception and that the Department was leading on wider communications across government to amplify and celebrate events. DLUHC welcomed the partnership from OGDs.
9. **Ministry of Defence** – Air Commodore Wendy Rothery noted Windrush 75 would be aligned with Armed Forces Week, and lands specifically on Veteran's Day. Focus was on commemorating the sacrifice the Windrush Generation had made in the service of their nation, but also on inspiring future generations. Several events and activities were planned, including a gala dinner, attended by representatives from all 3 Services, together with exhibitions at RAF museums. On 25 June, there would be an RAF service at Edgbaston Church.
10. **Department for Work & Pensions** – Simon Townsend noted a series of events planned to celebrate Windrush 75, the centrepiece of which was an all-staff call on 22 June to commemorate the Windrush anniversary. Focus would also be on publicising Windrush colleague led stories on the intranet and bringing about and hearing about colleagues' experiences.
11. **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office** – Scott Adams noted two events in Jamaica during the Foreign Secretary's visit, both of which had Windrush on the agenda. Minister Rutley would also mark Windrush 75 at the next quarterly Caribbean Heads of Mission meeting and the FCDO Permanent Secretary would publish a blog on their intranet to commemorate Windrush 75. It was also noted the British High Commission in Kingston, Jamaica is developing plans for an event in the 'Windrush Gardens' at the residence, with an invited Jamaican minister.
12. **Cabinet Office** - Dominic Smales noted they were looking into making the day a positive, inclusive event for staff.

13. **Open discussion** - Paulette Simpson thanked those involved in increasing the Windrush Day Grant funding from £500,000 to £750,000, and noted Buckingham Palace had commissioned 10 Windrush pioneer portraits, which would be unveiled in June. A BBC documentary and brochure would accompany this exhibition. Blondel Cluff stated her organization wanted to thank MoD by donating books to the department. The National Lottery was also launching a Windrush Grant Scheme, the Royal Mint was launching a Windrush 50p coin, and Windrush stamps would be launched.

Windrush Schemes

14. The Home Secretary noted the Compensation Scheme was a focus of our work and reaffirmed the commitment to processing claims and giving people the support they needed. She noted very good progress had been made, in part due to the surge in case-working resource to resolve the backlog of claims. She paid tribute to the caseworkers, noting that the waiting time for cases to be actioned had reduced from 18 months to 3 months
15. Gabi Monk provided an update on the latest numbers interacting with the Schemes to the end of April 2023, stating almost 16,000 people had been issued with documentation, and over £59 million had been paid in compensation. She noted they were keen to continue working closely with community groups to publicise the Schemes to ensure people have access to them. Additional caseworkers and changes to the Compensation Scheme, such as to the family members and homelessness categories, were making a real difference. She noted another focus was on engagement and that a new structure had been put in place, which had started to do more in person outreach with communities and was tackling misinformation and building trust.
16. Lord Murray stated it was a privilege to work with the Compensation Scheme team, focusing on engagement and noted outreach could be uncomfortable but was important to do. There was consensus in expressing thanks to the team for their commitment and motivation.
17. Martin Levermore then gave his update and commended the data and systems the department has in place in order to have a fit for purpose Scheme. He noted his deep dive report would be published shortly (report was published on 19 May 2023) and that he was travelling to Jamaica and would aim to get an objective view from overseas whilst there.
18. The Home Secretary thanked Martin for his work and for being a critical friend.

Publicising Windrush Achievements

19. The Home Secretary opened this item saying she was very keen to ensure positive news stories are shared widely and expressed her desire for the department to be active in doing this. The Narrative and Comms strategy needs to communicate the experiences of individuals.
20. Hannah Franke-Seaton (Head of Media, Safe and Legal Migration) outlined the broadcast plan noting the flagship comms item would be a BBC interview with the Home Secretary on the work which has been done since 2018. She noted they were working with the Compensation Scheme team to identify people willing to

Speak publicly about their experiences. There were plans to interview Working Group members to speak about the success of the Group and how it worked closely with the Home Office, and to hold a background conversation with Amelia Gentleman of the Guardian, to add balance to her reporting.

21. **Open discussion** – Bishop Webley noted it was important to shift the narrative away from the negative message. He noted there are assumptions that the work the Home Office has done in response to Windrush is widely known in communities, which is wrong, as it is not widely known. He also noted the Working Group's involvement in pushing the positive messaging is crucial and the need to connect deeper into the life of the community. The Home Secretary stated that the good work and collaboration of the Working Group needs to be highlighted.
22. Paulette Simpson noted that case studies were critical, saying more people will come forward if they see others' success and we need to promote the improvements to the Compensation Scheme to increase this. It was noted the Home Office does share data and messaging with stakeholders and had increased its face-to-face engagement to keep delivering those messages. Duwayne Brooks stated that it must be acknowledged in interviews that people were facing issues around the Windrush scandal before the scandal broke in 2018.
23. There was further discussion about other methods of documenting the work and sharing stories. The Home Secretary noted getting something on record in Parliament to coincide with Windrush 75. There was general consensus that social media was important in spreading messages, with Loanna Morrison noting many people do not want to talk on camera so social media is a different outlet. There was general agreement social media would be a valuable tool.

Beyond the Windrush Lessons Learned Review (Cross-Government updates)

24. **Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities** – Sabin Khan stated that DLUHC's update was covered in a previous item during the meeting.
25. **Department for Work & Pensions** – Simon Townsend noted a collective focus on the Race Plan, led by the Race Programme Delivery Executive, and aims with monitoring ethnic representation, improving recruitment and talent development, and focussing on senior leaders role modelling behaviours.
26. **Ministry of Defence** – Air Commodore Wendy Rothery spoke about the establishment of the Conduct, Equity and Justice Directorate, the championing of PSED in Defence policy, improved diversity and inclusion training and Chiefs of Defence Staff D&I commitments.
27. **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office** – Scott Adams noted continued outreach operations and the hotline for individuals in Jamaica, the Jamaica media campaign and the 11th UK-Caribbean Ministerial Forum and inaugural UK-Jamaica Strategic Dialogue.

Closing Remarks

28. Bishop Webley noted his appreciation of the work to mark Windrush 75 and asked for departments to share events members could attend. He recognised the Home Secretary for honoring the request for additional Compensation Scheme casework resource and paid special tribute to the Compensation Scheme team, noting the

work was not easy but it was important to be open and transparent about it. He also stated that an overarching Windrush story document should be pulled together, highlighting the collaborative working across government. Thought should be given to the agenda for the final meeting on how we look forward. He was keen that the valuable work which has been done around Windrush does not disappear. Home Office communications will liaise directly with Loanna Morrison.

29. The Home Secretary thanked Bishop Webley for his kind words and for his honest and valuable partnership. She echoed consensus on the need for a compendium of all our work.
30. Lord Murray stated for the final meeting of the Working Group there should be a media report on the story of the Group.

Annex A – Attendees and Apologies

Stakeholder members:

Bishop Derek Webley (Chair of the Windrush Working Group)
Duwayne Brooks (Managing Director, Active Community Engagement and Development)
Loanna Morrison (Journalist and founder of London Apprenticeship Fair)
Blondel Cluff (Chief Executive, West India Committee)
Paulette Simpson (Executive Director, 'The Voice')

Martin Levermore (Independent Adviser to the Windrush Compensation Scheme)

Other government department representatives

Scott Adams (Caribbean and SIDS Department, FCDO)
Simon Townsend (Internal Communications Manager, DWP)
Air Cdre Wendy Rothery (Deputy Director, Diversity and Inclusion, MoD)
Sabin Khan (Deputy Director, Communities & Integration, DLUHC)
Dominic Smales (Race Disparity Unit, Cabinet Office)

Myles Stacey (No.10 Special Adviser)

Home Office representatives

Lord Murray (Lord's Immigration Minister)
Alex Hurst (Director, Transformation)
Gabi Monk (Director, Customer Operations Support Services)
Angela Wilson (Head of Windrush External Engagement)
Hannah Franke-Seaton (Head of Media, Safe and Legal Migration)
Katie Lam (Special Adviser to the Home Secretary)
Private Secretary to the Home Secretary
Private Secretary to Lord Murray
WWG Secretariat

Apologies

Kunle Oludole (Director, Voice4Change England)
Mark Osborne (Head of Strategic Insight and Improvement Unit)
Stephen O'Connor (Ministry of Justice)
Nigel Hills (Deputy Director, Customer Operations Support Services)
Clive Palmer (Department for Education)