

Debate Pack

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General debate on government support for coalfield communities

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Summary

There will be a general debate on government support for coalfield communities on Thursday 6th February.

1

Background

UK coal production peaked in 1913, with an output of 292 million tons of coal from over 3,000 mines, while employment in coal mining peaked at 1.2 million in 1920.¹

Both coal output and employment in mining generally fell from this point onwards. The economic historian Barry Supple argued that post-1920, coal “never regained its pre-eminence among Britain's exports” owing to greater levels of international competition in coal production, while the UK’s peacetime domestic demand “never recovered sufficiently to sustain the industry.”²

The 1960s saw the first significant post-war programme of pit closures. Employment in coal mining fell from 607,000 in 1960 to 290,000 in 1970, as a result of falls in demand for coal owing to increased use of alternative energy sources, including oil, gas and nuclear power, as well as increased levels of mechanisation.³

Output and employment continued to fall, a trend that increased following the miners’ strike of 1984/5, with employment in coal mining falling from 139,000 in 1984 to 7,000 in 1994.

The UK’s last three remaining deep cast mines all closed in 2015 – Hatfield in Yorkshire closed in June 2015, Thoresby in Nottinghamshire in July 2015, while Kellingley in Yorkshire closed in December 2015.⁴ The UK’s last opencast coalmine, Ffos-y-Fran in Merthyr Tydfil, closed in November 2023.⁵

This debate pack provides background on six topics affecting coalfield communities and former miners:

- Government support for coalfield communities
- Health inequalities
- Deprivation and child poverty

¹ Figures from Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, [Historical coal data: coal production, availability and consumption](#), July 2024

² Professor Barry Supple, [The British coal industry between the wars](#), Refresh 9, Autumn 1989, pg.

³ Ben Curtis, [The life and death of king coal](#), The Conversation, 23 December 2015

⁴ James Wilson, [Hatfield coal mine closes](#), Financial Times, 30 June 2015; [Nottinghamshire's Thoresby Colliery closes after 90 years](#), BBC, 19 July 2015; Terry Macalister, [Kellingley colliery closure: 'shabby end' for a once mighty industry](#), Guardian, 18 December 2015

⁵ [Coal: UK's last opencast mine shuts after legal row](#), BBC, 30 November 2023

- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- Compensation for mining related illness
- Mineworkers' pensions

Government support for coalfield communities

The June 1998 report *Making a difference: A new start for England's coalfield communities* published by the Coalfields Task Force recommended the creation of the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, with the intention of providing funding to community-based projects located in or benefiting coalfield areas.

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust was launched in 1999 as an independent charity designed to fund projects that would increase access to employment opportunities, education and skills training, improve health and well-being and develop enterprise.⁶

The State of the Coalfields reports

The Coalfields Regeneration Trust have commissioned three reports published by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University, examining how former coalfield areas compare to the rest of the country on a range of social and economic indicators.

The most recent of these reports was [published in April 2024](#).

The report defines coalfields as wards where in 1981 at least 10% of male residents in employment worked in the coal industry. A slightly lower threshold was applied to two areas (Lancashire and North Staffordshire) where mining “took place in a more urban context alongside other industries”; some wards that had failed to meet the original labour market criteria where colliery site reclamation was occurring were also included.⁷

Findings of the 2024 report included:

- Former coalfields accounted for 8% of the population in England, 10% in Scotland, and 25% in Wales.
- Combined, former coalfield areas in England, Scotland and Wales have a combined population of 5.7 million – this is roughly the same as a “typical English region.”

⁶ See the CRT website for details of current funding schemes available in [England](#), [Wales](#) and [Scotland](#)

⁷ Steve Fothergill, Tony Gore and David Leather, [The State of the Coalfields 2024: Economic and social conditions in the former coalfields of England, Scotland and Wales](#), Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, pg. 7

- There are proportionally more older people (65+) and fewer of people of working age (16-64) in former coalfield areas.
- Average life expectancy in the former coalfields is around a year less than the national average and there is a greater incidence of long-term health problems.
- Former coalfields generally have higher numbers of people of working age out of work claiming incapacity benefits.
- The number of businesses in coalfields was around two-thirds the national average, leading to low levels of job density.
- All the coalfields of England, Scotland and Wales have “an occupational structure that is skewed towards manual occupations” and lower levels of high skilled jobs.

The report concludes that while former coalfield areas do not have “monopoly on any of these problems” they are distinguished in that “they lag behind on such a wide range of indicators.”⁸

The report also identifies the wide geographical distribution of former coalfield areas as inhibiting efforts at economic regeneration.

Funding for coalfield areas

The [2019 State of the Coalfields report](#) drew a parallel between coalfield areas and coastal communities, which like former coalfield areas are not geographically concentrated, but also face distinct socio-economic problems, which various governments have sought to address through the creation of specific funds, including the Coastal Communities Fund, the Coastal Revival Fund and Coastal Communities Teams.⁹

Despite the existence of these funds, the 2019 report concluded that similar efforts aimed at former coalfield areas would not necessarily be effective, stating “a single fund, however useful or large... seems unlikely by itself to deliver the transformational change that is needed in the former coalfields” and that “action and funding across a broad front is still needed for some years to come.”¹⁰

⁸ Steve Fothergill, Tony Gore and David Leather,, [The State of the Coalfields 2024: Economic and social conditions in the former coalfields of England, Scotland and Wales](#), Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, pg. 42

⁹ For more information on these funds, see the Library briefing [The future of coastal communities](#), 5 September 2022

¹⁰ Christina Beatty, Steve Fothergill and Tony Gore, [The State of the Coalfields 2019: Economic and social conditions in the former coalfields of England, Scotland and Wales](#), Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University, pg. 44

The 2024 State of the Coalfields report argued that “local authorities and successive governments have made major efforts to regenerate former mining areas” and that “most of the physical scars of the industry have now been removed”, though mining communities themselves continued to face distinct problems.

Health inequalities

Various studies have found some former coal mining areas in England can have poorer health outcomes, such as higher mortality rates or higher levels of limiting long-term illnesses, compared to national averages in England.¹¹ Limiting long-term illnesses can include arthritis, asthma and back problems.¹² Health outcomes of former coal mining areas are not the same and can differ depending on the aspect of health being considered and the specific geographical area.¹³

Health inequalities in former coal mining areas have affected older generations by occupational hazards from their former work and younger generations by poor employment opportunities and low expectations.¹⁴ Reasons for poorer health outcomes include:

- Higher levels of unemployment in these areas. Unemployment is associated with increased mortality and morbidity.¹⁵ A report published in July 2024 by the Health Foundation found unemployed people are more than five times as likely to have poor health than employees.¹⁶
- Higher levels of deprivation in these areas. It is well established that deprivation, such as a lack of money, resources and access to life opportunities is associated with poorer health, including poorer mental health.¹⁷

¹¹ Mylène Riva and others, “[Coalfield health effects: Variation in health across former coalfield areas in England](#)”, March 2011, Health & Place, Volume 17, Number 2, pages 588-597; Matthew Shaikh, “[The health legacy of coal mining: Analysis of mortality rates over time in England and Wales \(1981–2019\)](#)”, September 2024, SSM - Population Health, Volume 27; Royal Geographical Society, “[Tackling health inequality in former coalfield communities](#)”, accessed 29 January 2025

¹² Royal Geographical Society, “[Tackling health inequality in former coalfield communities](#)”, accessed 29 January 2025

¹³ Mylène Riva and others, “[Coalfield health effects: Variation in health across former coalfield areas in England](#)”, March 2011, Health & Place, Volume 17, Number 2, pages 588-597; Royal Geographical Society, “[Tackling health inequality in former coalfield communities](#)”, accessed 29 January 2025

¹⁴ Janet Shucksmith and others, “[Health Inequalities in Ex-Coalfield/Industrial Communities](#)” (PDF), 2010, Improvement and Development Agency

¹⁵ UK Government, “[Health matters: health and work](#)”, 31 January 2019

¹⁶ The Health Foundation, “[How employment status affects our health](#)”, 3 July 2024

¹⁷ UK government, “[Mental health: environmental factors](#)”, accessed 29 January 2025; Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, “[Challenges facing disadvantaged and deprived communities](#)”, 7 October 2024; The King’s Fund, “[Illustrating the relationship between poverty and NHS services](#)”, 18 March 2024

Occupational hazards, such as accidents and mining related diseases, have affected older generations. For example, coal workers are likely to have had some exposure to coal dust, and this may lead to pneumoconiosis, a group of lung diseases caused by the inhalation and retention of dust in the lungs.¹⁸ There is usually a delay of at least ten years between exposure and the onset of disease.¹⁹

[A report by the Improvement and Development Agency](#) (PDF) published in 2010 identified potential solutions to health inequalities in former coalmining areas, including:²⁰

- targeted clinical interventions, such as for cancer screenings or to stop smoking
- local authorities working with the NHS to improve access to health services for former coalmining communities
- local authorities addressing wider determinants of poor health, such as improving housing conditions

The coalfield regeneration review board published an [independent review report](#) (PDF), on coalfield regeneration in 2010, commissioned by the government. The review examined, amongst other things, health inequalities in England's former coalfield areas. It said some local authorities and health organisations had become more involved in promoting health and wellbeing in many coalfield areas to tackle health inequalities.

The subsequent [government response in 2011 set out £30 million over two years](#) (PDF), to focus on key issues including health inequalities and community support.

In November 2022, the former all party parliamentary group on coalfield communities launched an inquiry titled "[Next Steps in Levelling up the Former Coalfields](#)".²¹ The inquiry report, published in 2023, found:²²

There have been successful health initiatives in former coalfield areas, notably the Breathing Space centre in Rotherham, established with help from the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, which provides respite care and support. Submissions from smaller communities report shortages of local healthcare services - Bestwood Village Parish Council in Nottinghamshire states that villagers have to travel to access GP practices, which is a challenge for some older and less mobile residents.

¹⁸ House of Commons Library, "[Miners and mining communities](#)", CDP 2024/0015, 8 May 2024

¹⁹ As above

²⁰ Janet Shucksmith and others, "[Health Inequalities in Ex-Coalfield/Industrial Communities](#)" (PDF), 2010, Improvement and Development Agency

²¹ All Party Parliamentary Group on Coalfield Communities website, "[Coalfields Inquiry](#)", accessed 30 January 2025

²² All Party Parliamentary Group on Coalfield Communities, "[Next Steps in Levelling Up the Former Coalfields](#)", 2023, pages 14-15

Mental health and social isolation, as with many elderly residents in general, are identified by East Lothian and Bolsover councils as issues affecting many older miners. It was noted by the Coalfields Regeneration Trust that the support to tackle loneliness and isolation among former miners, delivered by CISWO [The Coal Industrial Social Welfare Organisation] and funded by the South Wales Miners' Welfare Trust Fund, has ended.

In 2024, a report commissioned by the charity Coalfields Regeneration Trust was published titled "[The state of the coalfields 2024](#)".²³ The report found health problems continue to be widespread in former coalmining areas. It found average life expectancy is around a year less than the national average and around three years less than in Southeast England. Furthermore, from analysing Census of Population data, it found 8% of adults (370,000 people) reported to have "bad or very bad health".²⁴

Deprivation and child poverty in coalfield communities

Deprivation

Deprivation statistics are produced by combining a wide range of data for small areas, covering various aspects of deprivation. The statistics show relative levels of deprivation between areas, indicating whether one area is more or less deprived than another.

The Library briefing [Deprivation in English constituencies](#) provides detail about how deprivation is measured. The [Library's deprivation dashboard](#) provides deprivation for constituencies and small areas in England.

Deprivation statistics are calculated separately for England, Scotland and Wales, so deprivation data for areas in different countries are not comparable.

The table below shows the percentage of small areas in each coalfield which are highly deprived (in the top 10% most deprived in each country). The average percentage of highly deprived small areas is 10%.

The percentage of highly deprived small areas varies between coalfields. The coalfields with the highest percentages of highly deprived small areas are North Staffordshire (27%) and Northumberland (25%).²⁵

²³ Sheffield Hallam University, "[The State of the Coalfields 2024: Economic and social conditions in the former coalfields of England, Scotland and Wales](#)", 19 April 2024

²⁴ As above, page 14

²⁵ Coalfields are defined using 2021 LSOAs provided by Christina Beatty, Steve Fothergill and Tony Gore, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University.

Percentage of highly deprived small areas	
Indices of Multiple Deprivation	
Coalfield	% top 10%
England	
Kent	0%
Yorkshire (North)	3%
Yorkshire (South)	22%
Yorkshire (West)	13%
South Derbyshire/North West Leicestershire	2%
Nottinghamshire	13%
Durham	17%
Northumberland	25%
Warwickshire	7%
South Staffordshire	3%
North Staffordshire	27%
Lancashire	21%
Cumbria	19%
Wales	
North Wales	0%
South Wales	11%
Scotland	
Fife	10%
Lothian	3%
Ayrshire/Lanarkshire	10%

Notes: Coalfields are defined using 2021 LSOAs provided by Christina Beatty, Steve Fothergill and Tony Gore, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University.

This data comes from releases in 2019 (England and Wales) and 2020 (Scotland) but much of the underlying data is from 2015 and 2016.

Sources:

England: Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, [English indices of deprivation 2019](#), 26 September 2019

Wales: StatsWales, [Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019](#) (accessed 4 February 2024)

Scotland: Scottish Government, [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation](#)

Child poverty

Relative child poverty rates vary between coalfield communities: North Staffordshire had the highest relative child poverty rate (around 33%), followed by Nottinghamshire and Fife (both around 27%).²⁶

²⁶ Coalfields are defined using 2021 LSOAs provided by Christina Beatty, Steve Fothergill and Tony Gore, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University.

A child is in relative poverty if they live in a household with income less than 60% of median household income in the UK.

The table below provides relative child poverty rates for coalfield communities.

Relative child poverty rates	
2022/23, children aged 0-15, before housing costs	
Coalfield	%
North Staffordshire	33%
Nottinghamshire	27%
Fife	27%
Lancashire	25%
Ayrshire/Lanarkshire	25%
Cumbria	24%
South Wales	23%
Yorkshire (South)	23%
South Staffordshire	22%
North Wales	22%
Warwickshire	22%
Northumberland	22%
Durham	21%
UK	20%
South Derbyshire/North West Leicestershire	19%
Lothian	19%
Kent	19%
Yorkshire (West)	18%
Yorkshire (North)	12%

Notes: Coalfields are defined by 2021 LSOAs provided by Christina Beatty, Steve Fothergill and Tony Gore, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University

Sources: DWP and HMRC, Children in low income families, via [Stat-Xplore](#)

The Library briefing [Poverty in the UK: statistics](#) provides more information on how poverty is measured. The [Library's child poverty dashboard](#) provides child poverty data by small area and constituency.

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit

[Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit \(IIDB\)](#) is a non-means-tested, tax-free, non-contributory benefit payable to people who have become disabled as a result of an accident at work, or because of one of over 70 prescribed diseases known to be a risk from certain jobs. IIDB is payable on a “no-fault”

basis – the claimant does not have to prove any negligence on the part of the employer to be eligible for benefit.²⁷

The scheme only covers employees or those who were on an approved employment training scheme or course when the accident or event happened.

IIDB is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in Great Britain.

A person may qualify for IIDB if they satisfy all of the following conditions:

- they were an employed earner
- they suffered a personal injury in an industrial accident, or are suffering from a prescribed industrial disease
- as a result of the accident or disease they suffered a “loss of faculty”
- as a result of that loss of faculty, they are disabled.

Regulations set out a [list of over 70 prescribed industrial diseases](#) and, for each, the occupations or types of work known to have a link to that disease. To qualify for IIDB for a prescribed disease, a person must have worked in an occupation listed for that disease, and the disease must have been caused by that occupation.

Pneumoconiosis (including silicosis and asbestosis) is [Prescribed Disease D1](#).

Supporting evidence

The Department for Work and Pensions has published [technical guidance on the IIDB](#) (updated 23 February 2024).

Specifically for pneumoconiosis, the guidance says:

In claims for pneumoconiosis, we will normally arrange for you to have an X-ray of your chest. If the X-ray and other evidence shows that you may have the disease you will then have a medical examination. If the X-ray shows no trace of the disease your claim will be sent back to the decision maker who will consider whether to disallow it.²⁸

The guidance provides further information on the medical examination, the claimant’s provision of evidence in respect of their claim, and the provision of a doctor’s opinion about whether the relevant illness is a result of the work in question.

²⁷ For further information see the Commons Library constituency casework page, [Industrial Injuries Benefit](#)

²⁸ DWP, [Industrial injuries disablement benefits: technical guidance](#), updated 23 February 2024

The guidance notes that DWP may contact the claimant's employer to confirm details about their employment and the nature of the work in question.

Information how to make a claim for IIDB, including claim forms, is on GOV.UK – see [Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit > How to claim](#).

Review of Prescribed Disease D1

The [Industrial Injuries Advisory Council \(IIAC\)](#) reviews the list of prescribed diseases and occupations for IIDB and makes recommendations to the Secretary of State on what diseases the scheme should cover.

In November 2023, the IIAC published a report, [Review and update of the prescription for Prescribed Disease D1 \(Pneumoconiosis\)](#).

The IIAC report observed that the current PD1 prescription had been in place for nearly 80 years and had not undergone any substantial revision in that time, despite changes to modern working practices. IIAC concluded that the current prescription was now unsatisfactory in several aspects, including being difficult to navigate for both claimants and administrators. It also noted that many of the occupations specified are largely historic and do not reflect occupations where current exposures occur.

IIAC recommended that the prescription should be revised so that the disease should be 'pneumoconiosis' without any further qualification, and that there should be four simplified categories of occupational exposure giving rise to entitlement to benefit, namely any job involving exposure to:

- Asbestos
- Coal or coal mine dust
- Silica-containing dusts
- Metal dusts: aluminium, beryllium, cobalt, indium tin oxide, rare earth metals, and tungsten carbide

IIAC also recommended, among other things, that:

- Awards of IIDB for pneumoconiosis should reflect the degree of disability and should not be made automatically if there is no associated disability.
- A claimant's condition should be presumed to be due to work in one of the categories listed above if they have a diagnosis of pneumoconiosis or of a form of pneumoconiosis established by an appropriate specialist.

The government has not yet responded to IIAC's report.

Payments

The [amount of IIDB payable](#) depends on the [degree of disablement](#) – up to £221.50 a week in 2024/25, for those assessed as 100% disabled. Benefit is not normally payable if disablement is assessed at less than 14%.

Additional amounts may also payable depending on the person's degree of disablement and needs:

- [Constant Attendance Allowance](#)
- [Exceptionally severe disablement allowance](#)

Two other benefits may still be payable in addition to or instead of IIDB to people who had an accident or started to have a disease before 1 October 1990 – [Reduced Earnings Allowance](#) or [Retirement Allowance](#).

Compensation for mining related illness

The Coal Industry Pneumoconiosis Compensation Scheme (CIPCS)

The term 'pneumoconiosis' refers to a group of lung diseases caused by the inhalation and retention of dust in the lungs. This includes pneumoconiosis caused by the inhalation of coal dust. Coal workers are likely to have had some exposure to coal dust, and this may lead to pneumoconiosis.

There is usually a delay of at least ten years between exposure and the onset of disease. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website provides [more information about pneumoconiosis](#).

People who worked in a coalmine licensed by the National Coal Board (NCB) or the British Coal Corporation (BCC) for 10 years or more, and who develop pneumoconiosis or certain other lung conditions may be eligible for compensation payments under the [Coal Industry Pneumoconiosis Compensation Scheme](#) (CIPCS). This scheme was established in 1974 and is also referred to as the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Scheme (CWPS) or the 1974 Scheme.

The scheme awards different types of compensation payments. For more information, see the previous government's response to a parliamentary question ([PQ135504](#), 10 March 2022).

Mineworkers pensions

The Library briefing paper [Mineworkers' pensions](#) covers the arrangements made for mineworkers' pensions (MPS) and British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme (BCSSS) following privatisation of British Coal in 1994.²⁹

²⁹ Commons Library briefing paper CBP 1189, [Mineworkers' pensions](#)

Privatisation in 1994

Before privatisation, British Coal had two main pension schemes:

- The Mineworkers' Pension Scheme (MPS)
- The British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme (BCSSS)

British Coal funded both schemes through pension contributions. If the schemes had a deficit, meaning the assets were not enough to cover the promised pensions, British Coal covered the shortfall.

After privatisation, the government guaranteed the pension in both schemes. The main parts of the agreement were:

- the government replaced British Coal as guarantor
- the schemes closed to future contributions
- the government agreed to share any surplus equally with the schemes.³⁰

The surplus sharing arrangement

When the government privatised British Coal in 1994, both the MPS and BCSSS had surpluses, meaning they had more assets than they expected to need to pay the schemes' pensions.

The government and the schemes agreed to use half the surpluses immediately to improve members' pensions. They placed the other half in investment reserves, which would gradually transfer to the government if the scheme did not use them.

The government and the schemes agreed to share any future surpluses equally.

The government agreed to end BCSSS' surplus sharing arrangement in 2015 due to the 2009 and 2012 valuations showing substantial deficits. However, it continues to guarantee the scheme's pension benefits.³¹

Autumn Budget 2024

In the Autumn Budget 2024, the government announced it would review the MPS surplus sharing arrangements and transfer the remaining investment reserve to the scheme's trustees.³² The trustees are responsible for ensuring the scheme is run properly and in the members' interests.

³⁰ [HC Deb 27 April 1994 cc167-169w](#); and DEP1994-1828 ([Coal Industry Bill: exchange of letters on British coal pensions after privatisation. DTI, 1994](#))

³¹ British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme, [Report and Accounts 2014/15](#) (PDF)

³² HM Treasury, [Autumn Budget 2024](#), 30 October 2024

The government said that transferring the investment fund to the trustees would “mean a 32% boost to the annual pensions of 112,000 former mineworkers – an average increase of £29 per week for each member.”³³

BCSSS trustees sought similar improvements, highlighting the similarities between the schemes.³⁴ On 16 January 2025, the BCSSS trustees outline what they believed equal treatment with the MPS would mean:

- Transferring BCSSS’ £2.3 billion investment reserve to members.
- The government committing to review how any future surplus is shared.³⁵

On 29 January 2025, the Minister for Industry confirmed that the government met with the BCSSS trustees to consider their proposals.³⁶

Payments to the government

Between October 1994 and July 2024, the government received £4.8 billion from the MPS and £3.1 billion from the BCSSS.³⁷ The government is due a further payment of £1.9 billion from the BCSSS in 2033.³⁸

The government has made no direct payments to the MPS.

Payments to scheme members

Pensions

In 2019, the average weekly pension from the MPS was £84. This consisted of:

- £65 guaranteed pension
- £19 bonus pension paid from surpluses.

One-off lump sums

Between 2002 and 2005, the scheme made one-off lump sum payments to members with the lowest pensions.³⁹

³³ Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, [Government ends miners’ pension injustice](#), 31 October 2024

³⁴ British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme, [We’ve asked the Government to transfer the BCSSS investment reserve to members](#), 22 November 2024

³⁵ British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme, [How you can help BCSSS Trustees advocate equal treatment for members](#), 16 January 2025

³⁶ PQ 25410 [[British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme](#)], 29 January 2025

³⁷ PQ 828 [on [British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme and Mineworkers’ Pension Scheme](#)], 29 July 2024

³⁸ British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme, [Report & Accounts 2023/2024](#)

³⁹ Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, [Mineworkers’ Pension Scheme](#) (PDF), 23 March 2021, HC 1331 2019–21, qq18-19

Bonus pensions

Under the original guarantee, bonus pensions could increase or decrease depending on the scheme's funding. In November 2019, the government agreed to guarantee bonus pensions built up to that date.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ PQ 120263 [on [Mineworkers' Pension Scheme](#)], 23 December 2020; Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, [Letter from Rachel Reeves to Kwasi Kwarteng](#) (PDF), 21 April 2020

2

Press articles

[Miners 'thrown to the wolves' over pensions](#)

Stephen Fairclough

BBC, 13 January 2025

[Ex-mineworkers call for share of pension surplus](#)

Mark Ansell

BBC, 2 January 2025

[Britain to ban new coalmines in 'signal to the world': Ed Miliband pays tribute to miners as Labour stops future projects — including Whitehaven site for steel-making](#)

Adam Vaughan

The Times, 14 November 2024

[How warehouse jobs have transformed the coalfields](#)

Stephanie Miskin

BBC, 11 November 2024

[Labour hands £1.5bn pensions pot back to miners](#)

Jack Fenwick

BBC, 31 October 2024

[Labour must ensure benefits of future growth are shared equally across Britain: Regeneration efforts in former coalmining communities have not led to enough job creation](#)

Larry Elliott

The Guardian, 6 October 2024

[The deep history of British coal – from the Romans to the Ratcliffe shutdown: With the last coal-fired plant closing on Monday, we chart the rise and fall of the once-indispensable fuel that powered modern Britain](#)

Jillian Ambrose

The Guardian, 30 September 2024

[UK court quashes Cumbrian coal mine plan: Decision to block first new colliery in 30 years highlights shift away from fossil fuel projects under Labour government](#)

Leslie Hook

Financial Times, 13 September 2024

[Barnsley aims to crack the worklessness crisis — and Starmer is listening](#)

James Beal

The Times, 13 September 2024

[Ex-mining areas losing out on 'quality jobs' - report](#)

Andrew Barton

BBC, 23 April 2024

[Government gets £420m from miners pension scheme](#)

Jack Fenwick

BBC, 23 March 2024

['People have lost faith': life in former mining towns 40 years on from strike: Conservatives' closure of collieries tore communities apart, and four decades later memories from that period remain powerful](#)

Jem Bartholomew and Clea Skopeliti

The Guardian, 7 March 2024

['No alternative' to closing pits - Lord Heseltine](#)

Tim Iredale, David Spereall

BBC, 5 March 2024

[Miners' strike: Coal towns falling further behind – charity](#)

Chris Baynes and Stephanie Miskin

BBC, 4 March 2024

[Almost 40 years on, the miners' strike still casts a long shadow over UK politics today: The pit closures seem a distant memory to many, but they have had a huge impact on our very social fabric](#)

John Harris

The Guardian, 27 August 2023

[Levelling up? More like left out, says ex-mining town of Bolsover](#)

Tom Ball

The Times, 19 January 2023

3 Parliamentary material

3.1 Written questions

[Question for Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Coal: Regeneration: UIN 187659](#)

Asked by Dan Jarvis

Asked on 5 June 2023

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to increase investment into former coalfield communities.

Answered by Answered on 8 June 2023

This Government is committed to levelling up the UK by spreading opportunity more equally across the country, investing in places that need it most, including coalfield communities.

Several former coalfield communities are benefiting from our Towns Fund, our Community Ownership Fund, and our £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund.

Finally, every area of the UK will receive a share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which empowers local places to identify and build on their own strengths and needs. It provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025.

[Question for Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Coal: Regeneration: UIN 76045](#)

Asked on Chris Elmore

Asked on 1 November 2022

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on plans for regeneration of coalfield communities in the next five years.

Answered by Dehenna Davison

Answered on 9 November 2022

In line with the practice of successive administrations, details of internal discussions are not normally disclosed. This Government is, however, committed to levelling up the UK by spreading opportunity more equally across the country, investing in places that need it most, including coalfield communities. Several former coalfield communities are benefiting from our Towns Fund, including Goldthorpe and Mansfield which have Town Deals running until 2025/26. Through our Community Ownership Fund, coalfield communities can apply for funding to save assets like local pubs, shops and sports clubs from closure - like the CANA resource and training centre in Rhondda Cynon Taf which received funding in Round 1.

3.2 Oral questions

[Former Mineworkers' Pensions](#)

HC Deb 21 January 2025, c 852-54

3.3 Debates

[Mineworkers' Pension Scheme](#)

HC Deb 16 May 2024, c 525-32

[Miners and Mining Communities](#)

HC Deb 9 May 2024, c 714-61

[Miners' Strike \(Pardons\)](#)

HC Deb 19 December 2023, c 1282-86

3.4 Early Day Motions

[25th anniversary of the Coalfields Regeneration Trust](#)

That this House congratulates the Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT) on its 25th anniversary; commends its outstanding contribution to supporting former coalfield communities across the UK in the aftermath of the devastating pit closure programme; recognises the dedication and tireless

efforts of CRT staff and volunteers, whose work has transformed thousands of lives by addressing health, skills, and employment challenges to combat economic inactivity; and encourages the Government to work in partnership with the CRT to deliver their shared missions and the long-overdue regeneration that former mining towns and villages deserve.

EDM (Early Day Motion) 533: tabled on 10 December 2024

3.5 Library briefings

[Mineworkers' pensions](#)

House of Commons Library, 31 January 2025

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Further reading

[State of the Coalfields 2024](#)

Coalfields Regeneration Trust, April 2024

[Just what should levelling up mean in the coalfields?](#)

Centre for Cities, March 2024

[Next steps in levelling up the former coalfields](#)

All Party Parliamentary Group on Coalfield Communities, June 2023

[Job displacement costs of phasing out coal](#)

Institute for Fiscal Studies, September 2022

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