

# Client survey feedback

News story

GAD is highly valued by clients, who've awarded us 4.8 stars out of 5 in our annual client survey. Also over 90% of respondents have said overall we offer value for money.



## Details

The Government Actuary's Department (GAD) is rated as 'highly valued' by 95% of respondents in our [annual client feedback survey](#).

The survey ran throughout the 2021 to 2022 financial year. We sent out 243 questionnaires to our clients and asked for their views on our work overall and how we meet our strategic objectives.

## Headline results

Respondents rated our service on a scale from 'always' to 'never'. In the survey we asked clients how they rated our ability to meet their requirements in the following areas:

- on time
- to budget
- within scope
- clearly communicated
- overall value for money

Along with respondents awarding GAD an average rating of 4.8 stars out of 5 for being highly valued, some 93% considered that overall, GAD's service offers value for money.

## Strategic objectives

Our successful webinar programme keeps clients updated on a range of topical issues. This is just one way in which we aim to develop thought leadership,

which includes introducing clients to a broad range of ideas. We also publish articles and blogs that meet their needs, and we host events to share our knowledge and expertise.

GAD's clients provided feedback on whether we demonstrate:

- collaboration
- innovation
- thought leadership

The top score is 96% when it comes to collaboration.

## Great work

Ian Rogers, the Head of Business Development, led on the survey and said:

"It's great to see that our focus on project management has resulted in visible improvements. We always strive to deliver great work that meets our clients' expectations, so we'll build on these and all of our other skills."

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## [New Schools Bill to boost education standards across the country](#)

The Schools Bill is set to deliver on the government's mission to raise standards across the country, increasing attendance and improve safeguarding for children wherever they are educated.

Education remains at the forefront of the government's agenda because by ensuring every child receives an excellent standard of teaching in a high-performing setting, they will be given the opportunity to fulfil their future potential and secure the jobs needed to support our economy.

The bill, published today (Thursday 12 May), will pave the way for all schools to join a strong multi-academy trust. It provides the framework for a new, legally enforceable set of standards for academy trusts, replacing disparate standards agreed with each trust at the point it was created – so that parents will know what they can expect for their children. It introduces a new legal tool for local authorities to request some or all of their schools join a strong academy trust, in addition to the existing powers that individual school governing boards hold.

It includes new powers for Ofsted to gather evidence and act against schools operating illegally, and removes loopholes that allowed some settings not to

register as a school despite having children attend during most or all of the school week.

Subject to the passage of the bill, inspectors will gain a new power to 'search' for evidence of suspected criminal activity in relation to the rare cases of illegally operating schools, removing another loophole where evidence could be hidden in locked cabinets or password protected computers, out of inspectors' legal reach.

This bill follows the plans set out in the Schools White Paper, including a pledge to parents that if their child falls behind in English or maths they will receive tailored support to get back on track, and the ambition for 90% of children to leave primary school at the expected standard in reading, writing and maths by 2030. This will mean that every child no matter where they live are given the same opportunities to succeed.

Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi said:

My mission is clear; I want to make sure every single child across our country has access to an excellent education, supporting them to reach the full height of their potential.

Between the strengthened safeguarding measures and greater accountability in our new Schools Bill, and our Schools White Paper ambitions to embed evidence, tutoring and excellent teacher training in the school system, I am confident we will achieve these ambitions for every child.

Other stronger safeguards the bill sets out in relation to suspected independent school criminal activity include making it an offence for individuals to not provide information or assistance to Ofsted inspectors, in effect making sure Ofsted can gather witness statements to use in evidence.

Alongside this, reforms to expand the remit of the Teaching Regulation Agency will make sure unsuitable teachers are prohibited from the profession, regardless of whether they were currently teaching at the time of their misconduct.

Other safeguarding powers in the bill include a new legal requirement for local authorities to maintain registers of children not in school, helping make sure no child gets lost from the education system, as well as new requirements for schools, trusts and councils to work together to drive the highest possible levels of attendance in every corner of the country.

As all schools join multi-academy trusts, the new statutory academy standards will help make sure trusts themselves all remain strong, effective and able to command public confidence.

In the rare cases failures occur in trusts, there will a clear and consistent approach to dealing with them, as is currently the case for schools themselves.

The bill also encodes protections for grammar schools to retain their current status when joining multi-academy trusts, and for faith schools to similarly retain their existing freedoms.

This Bill also delivers on the government's commitment to move to a direct National Funding Formula, increasing fairness by making sure every school receives funding on the same basis, wherever it is in the country. This is all backed by huge government investment – core school funding will rise by £4 billion in 2022/23 compared with 2021/22, which represents a 7% increase per pupil. On top of this, £5 billion has been invested in the Government's ambitious education recovery programme, including in the National Tutoring Programme, offering high-quality catch-up tutoring for students who fell behind during the pandemic.

By giving every child a good education, it gives them the opportunity to thrive and secure the jobs needed to support our economy – and this is absolutely vital to the government's levelling up mission.

ENDS

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## [Increased mental health support for children and young people](#)

Thousands of young people will benefit from additional mental health support in their schools, colleges and universities, the government has announced.

To mark Mental Health Awareness Week, the Department for Education is today (12 May 2022) announcing a further £7 million for schools and colleges to train a senior mental health lead, bringing the total amount of funding for 2022/23 to £10 million.

Senior Mental Health Leads will play an important role in helping schools and colleges embed a culture of openness when it comes to mental health, whilst also forging stronger links with local health services to ensure young people can access the right level of support.

The Government's [green paper](#) committed to offering training to all eligible settings in England by 2025, and new figures released today show that the Government is well on track to achieve this. Over 8,000 schools and colleges claimed a £1,200 grant to train a senior mental health lead between October 2021 and March 2022, which includes half of all state-funded secondary schools in England – well above ambitions to reach one third of settings.

The new investment will mean up to 8,000 more schools and colleges – the equivalent of two-thirds of eligible settings – will be able to apply for a training grant by the end of this financial year, which will support them to

promote and support the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils.

Children and Families Minister, Will Quince, said:

It is vital that we continue to support the wellbeing and mental health of young people alongside their academic recovery, and senior mental health leads will play an important role in doing this. I am grateful to those who have signed up for training so far, as well as all education staff who actively support their pupils' wellbeing.

I am continuing to work across government to ensure we meet the commitments set out in our mental health green paper. This includes rolling out mental health support teams so that millions of children across England can access the support they need.

Feedback from schools on the training has so far been positive, with one member of staff writing that they "feel much better prepared and empowered to support students", which going forward will be vital as pupils return to normality following the pandemic.

Funding for five leading charities and organisations working to tackle bullying and champion respect has also been announced today, to continue supporting pupils in thousands of schools in England. After a successful first six months, these organisations will receive an additional £1 million to continue the rollout of training and support programmes until March 2023.

These are:

- National Children's Bureau (Anti-Bullying Alliance)
- Diversity Role Models
- Equaliteach
- Anne Frank Trust
- The Diana Award

The grants will focus on projects aimed at tackling bullying against children who identify as LGBT, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and victims of hate-related bullying. It follows previous grants worth £1 million provided to the organisations in November, as well as an additional £3.5 million to various charities working within the anti-bullying space in previous years.

Today's new report also details the outcome of the Wellbeing for Education Return and Wellbeing for Education Recovery programmes, which provided local authorities with £15 million of additional funding over the course of the pandemic to help pupils recover from the emotional impact of the pandemic. Findings show that over 14,000 state-funded schools and colleges in England benefitted from the two programmes. 92% of councils who responded to a survey from the Department said the funding improved their plans to support schools and colleges, while 77% reported the funding had helped to improve joined-up work locally to support mental health.

Additional information on the rollout of Mental Health Support Teams is also included in today's report, which follows the news that more than 2.4 million children and young people now have access to in school and college support. NHS England has also announced that over 500 teams will be confirmed this year, which will surpass the Government's original ambition to have 400 teams in place by April 2023.

To further support individuals with their mental health, the Department of Health and Social Care recently launched a [call for evidence](#) to inform a new 10 year mental health plan. This will set an ambitious agenda for setting out where the mental health of the nation should be a decade from now. It seeks views from the public, those with lived experience of mental ill-health and health and care professionals on how support and services should adapt for the future.

Minister for Mental Health Gillian Keegan, said:

The last two years have been particularly challenging and although children are incredibly resilient, it's crucial they can access mental health support as early as possible.

We're making great progress on better supporting young people's mental health and this additional funding to train senior mental health leads will complement our work on the accelerated rollout of Mental Health Support Teams in schools and expansion of community services which is well underway.

We have recently opened a call for evidence and I encourage people of all ages to share their views to inform a new 10-year mental health plan to keep the nation in positive mental wellbeing.

The £10 million funding for senior mental lead training includes a [£3 million pre-commitment](#) that was announced in February 2022.

Schools can find further information on how to register for a senior mental health lead training grant [here](#).

The transparency data release on the 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Implementation Programme' is available [here](#).

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) delivers videos, co-created with 11–18-year-olds with input from clinical experts and charities, which address topics affecting young people's mental health (such as managing unhelpful thoughts, bullying and sleep) and model self-care behaviours. These videos are shared with young people via social media (eg Snapchat and Instagram) and via [Better Health-Every Mind Matters](#)

OHID also offers lesson plans for Year 6 and Key Stages 3 and 4 to support the Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum and enable teachers to support the wellbeing of students. Written and peer reviewed by teachers, the lesson plans feature films co-created with young people to encourage pupil

discussion and are accessible via OHID's dedicated teacher website, the [School Zone](#).

To further support students and marking this year's Mental Health Awareness Week theme of 'loneliness', the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, in partnership with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, is also encouraging people to 'Lift Someone Out of Loneliness'.

Minister for Civil Society and Youth, Nigel Huddleston, said:

We know our young people are disproportionately affected by loneliness. Mental Health Awareness Week is an important moment for everyone to do what they can to help and this £10 million investment from the Government will ensure more students will have access to mental health pathways in our schools.

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## **Cabinet visits Staffordshire to set out Queen's Speech benefits**

- Ministers to visit the West of England, Midlands and Wales to hear from communities and businesses on how new bills will help them prosper
- Comes as government sets out landmark legislative agenda to drive economic growth and level up opportunities across the country
- The Prime Minister and cabinet ministers will today meet with communities, businesses and organisations across the West of England, Midlands and Wales which will benefit from the new legislative agenda.

In a meeting of Cabinet, ministers will discuss how the Queen's Speech will deliver for people by boosting our economic growth and recovery, improve living standards and level up opportunities across the country – with Stoke-on-Trent being a prime example of levelling up in action. They will also discuss the upcoming major events for this year, including the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and Commonwealth games which will provide a tremendous opportunity to boost pride in Britishness and serve an important role in the economic renewal and recovery in this country.

The Queen's Speech has been designed to deliver direct benefits for communities like Stoke, for example, with a new bill that will improve the planning system to give residents a louder voice, making sure developments are beautiful, green and accompanied by new infrastructure and affordable housing. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will help spread opportunities by creating more of the jobs, homes and high streets that people want, as well as empower local leaders to regenerate their areas and ensure everyone can share in the United Kingdom's success.

The Government will also continue to deliver improvements to transport networks across the UK through our Transport Bill, providing for reliable services, reducing journey times and spreading economic growth to all regions. And the Handsacre Link which will connect HS2 to the West Coast will allow compatible trains to stop at Stoke-on-Trent helping to relieve congestion, improve reliability and speed up journey time.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

I'm delighted to bring Cabinet to Stoke-on-Trent today – a city which is the beating heart of the ceramics industry and an example of the high skilled jobs that investment can bring to communities.

This government is getting on with delivering the people's priorities and tackling the issues that matter most to the public.

This week we've set out how we'll use new landmark legislation to grow our economy to address the cost of living, and level up opportunities for communities across the country.

The Government has injected £56 million into Stoke-on-Trent from the first round of the Levelling up Fund which will go towards boosting the supply of quality housing in the city, as well as attracting visitors to the new arena in the City Centre Regeneration Area and putting heritage assets to good use for now and the future.

Stoke-on-Trent also received six successful Community Renewal Fund bids totalling over £3.5 million for projects supporting education, jobs and boosting skills. This includes Discover: Boosting Digital Inclusion in Stoke-on-Trent (£616,520), SHARP – Sector Hub Action Research Project (£516,787) and Stoke-on-Trent Digital Innovation and Education Hub.

The Prime Minister has called on cabinet colleagues and departments to double down on exploring innovative ways to ease pressures on household finances, promoting the support that is available but not widely taken up, and helping people into high-quality, well-paid jobs across the UK.

Over the coming months we will continue examining what more we can do to ease the pressures on hard-working people and families on top of the existing £22 billion package, which includes boosting the incomes of the lowest paid through a rise in the National Living Wage, saving a typical employee over £330 a year by increasing National Insurance thresholds, and providing millions of households with up to £350 to help with rising energy bills.

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# New protections for rape victims available at more Crown Courts

- pre-recorded evidence now available in North-East and South of England
- measure aims to reduce trauma for victims and witnesses to help them give better evidence
- 24/7 Rape Support Helpline moves step closer as operator selected

The scheme, which has already been successful in 12 Crown Courts, allows victims and witnesses of crimes such as rape and modern slavery to have their cross-examination video-recorded and played later during trial.

The recording takes place as close to the time of the offence as possible, while memories remain fresh, and helps victims avoid the stress of giving evidence in a courtroom setting, which many find traumatic.

From today (12 May 2022), the measure will be available immediately at Crown Courts in:

- Sheffield
- Doncaster
- Newcastle
- Portsmouth
- Southampton
- Isle of Wight
- Winchester
- Bournemouth
- Bristol
- Exeter
- Gloucester
- Plymouth
- Salisbury
- Truro

This extension means it is now available for victims of rape at 26 Crown Courts, with the government committed to rolling it out nationwide by September.

The move follows the successful implementation for vulnerable victims, such as children or those who have limited mental capacity, to all Crown Courts in England and Wales – with more than 2,500 witnesses having already benefitted from the technology since August 2020.

Victoria Atkins MP, Minister for Tackling Violence against Women and Girls, said:

This measure is a key part of our plan to overhaul the justice system's response to rape – minimising stress for victims and

helping them to provide the best possible evidence.

Alongside this, we're recruiting more independent sexual violence advisers, launching a new 24/7 helpline and improving collaboration between police and prosecutors to ensure victims get the support and justice they deserve.

While there is still much more to do, convictions have increased by 15 percent over the last quarter and these measures will drive improvements further.

The measure is also designed to maintain a defendant's right to a fair trial and any decision to pre-record evidence is made by a judge on a case-by case basis.

Today's update comes as the government announces that Rape Crisis England and Wales (RCEW) will operate a new 24/7 helpline service – providing free telephone and online support to victims of rape and sexual violence at any time of the day. The service will be launched in June and will ensure help is available to victims whenever they need it.

Jayne Butler, CEO of Rape Crisis England & Wales, said:

This service will be a vital support provision for victims and survivors of sexual violence and abuse.

We are pleased to be delivering a specialist, trauma-informed support service: one that puts survivor needs at its heart.

The funding of this service is a welcome contribution to the government's commitment of increasing support for victims and survivors of rape and sexual assault.

Both the helpline and the extension of pre-recorded evidence are key pledges within the Government's Rape Review Action Plan. The plan sets out clear actions for the police, prosecutors and courts. These include a new approach to investigations, reducing the number of victims withdrawing from the process, increasing the volume of trials being heard, protecting the public and putting more rapists behind bars.

On the extension of pre-recorded evidence to Newcastle Crown Court, Elaine Langshaw, Chief Executive Officer of Newcastle Women's Aid, said:

We welcome this move and strongly believe it should be available in every Crown Court as soon as possible, to ensure every survivor or witness can expect the same service.

Survivors and witness should be made to feel safe, protected and supported. In our experience survivors of sexual crimes are often

reluctant to progress prosecutions as they cannot face further trauma in the courtroom.

We feel if this barrier is removed it will encourage survivors to report to the police and to seek justice.

The government has also announced it will fund victim support services on a multi-year basis – with at least £147 million per year up to 2025. This investment will enable charities and service providers to plan for the future, build capacity and help even more victims.

Today's announcement builds on recent government action to increase confidence in the justice system including bringing forward a new Victims' Bill, ensuring violent and sexual offenders spend longer in prison and investing nearly half a billion pounds to deliver swifter justice through the courts.

#### Guidance:

- Both the defence and prosecution lawyers will be present in court during the pre-recording as will the judge and the defendant.
- The independent judiciary will be responsible for overseeing the use of pre-recorded evidence and will have discretion to ensure that the interests of justice are served.
- Pre-recording cross-examination preserves a defendant's right to a fair trial.
- Vulnerable witnesses and victims are defined as all child witnesses under 18 and any witness whose quality of evidence is likely to be diminished because they are suffering from a mental disorder or physical disability or has significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning.
- Intimidated witnesses and victims for the purposes of this pilot are defined as complainants or witnesses of sexual offences and modern slavery offences.
- The courts already operating pre-recorded evidence for intimidated victims are: Liverpool, Leeds, Kingston-Upon-Thames, Harrow, Isleworth, Wood Green, Durham, York, Grimsby, Hull, Bradford and Teesside Crown Courts.
- Rape convictions are increasing – there has been a 15 percent increase in the number of people convicted for rape offences in the last three months. There were 467 convictions last quarter (October to December 2021), compared to 407, 398 and 376 in the quarters before.
- Total completed prosecutions for rape cases have increased by 10 percent from 600 (July – September 2021) to 661 (October-December 2021).
- The average number of days for adult rape from CPS charge to the case being completed continued to fall, down by 38 days (8.3 percent) since the peak in June 2021 – down from 457 days to 419 in October – December 2021.