
The Rt Hon Prime Minister, Keir Starmer MP
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The Rt Hon Home Secretary, Shabana Mahmood MP
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Andy Burnham MP
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YOUR REF: N/A

OUR REF: N/A

DATED: 10 July 2026

Dear Prime Minister, Home Secretary and Andy Burnham MP

Re: The Windrush Schemes

Next year marks ten years since the first stories of the Windrush scandal surfaced in the national media. These stories revealed how people who had settled lawfully in the UK after the Second World War, from British colonies and former British colonies, had been detained, deported, prevented from returning to the UK, or denied employment, housing, banking, healthcare and education.

In 2018, the then Government committed that "where people have suffered loss, they will be compensated" and, in March 2020, published the *Windrush Lessons Learned Review* which made 30 recommendations to prevent such an occurrence from ever happening again. In September 2024, the government published *The Historical Roots of the Windrush Scandal* report which explained how the history of race, empire, immigration law and Home Office policy, had shaped the scandal.

Yet almost a decade later, too many members of the Windrush Generation, and their families, remain without redress. While the contributions of the Windrush Generation have rightly been recognised and celebrated, recognition had not been matched by effective redress for those impacted by the scandal.

We therefore ask you to commit to the following urgent actions.

Citizenship

First - The Government must restore the right of the Windrush Generation and their decedents to register as British citizens. The assurances given to Parliament in 2018 by the then Home Secretary cannot be honoured unless the relevant provisions of the British Nationality Act 1981 are amended so that those who had a right to remain under section 1(2) of the Immigration Act 1971, can register as British citizens.

Independent Oversight and Scrutiny

Second - The Home Office, with the Windrush Commissioner in attendance, should establish quarterly oversight meetings with an independent group of community leaders, lawyers and other experts to review the operation of the Windrush Schemes, monitor implementation, and publish progress against. This happened at the start of the scheme and was effective. It is imperative that this group is provided with data which enables an analysis of claim types, heads of losses applied and outcomes of each, time frames, variances granted after reviews and time frames of each stage of review. This data, which ought to be provided on a real case though anonymised basis, will help to identify weaknesses and solutions.

Windrush Compensation Scheme

Third - The compensation scheme has developed over time. By way of an example, pension loss was brought into the scheme after criticism by lawyers and campaigners; those compensated prior to this addition need their claims re-opened and recalculated, swiftly. Larger preliminary payments pending reviews is another welcome development. However, there are too many examples of claimants whose awards have increased, sometimes from nil to six figures, following specialist legal representation. This illustrates the importance of legal advice. Claimants who have incurred legal costs should have these refunded. Like in most comparable schemes, the state or tortfeasor pays for the legal costs. Where systemic or repeated decision-making errors are identified, there should be an independent audit of comparable decisions to determine whether other claimants have been under-compensated. Every successful primary claimant should be asked if there are close family members who may have suffered a detriment and therefore have a claim. In addition, legal support should be provided for the families of those who have died, particularly where, as a result of the actions of the state, these victims were left destitute or unable to make provision and died intestate. Via an immediate legislative amendment, the scheme should be turned from an ex-gratia scheme and placed on a statutory footing.

Independent Statutory Inquiry

Fourth - The Government should establish a full independent statutory inquiry into the causes, operation, administration and continuing consequences of the Windrush scandal, including the actions of government departments, public bodies and private organisations that contributed to the harm suffered, together with the design and implementation of the Windrush Scheme and the Windrush Compensation Scheme. Windrush remains one of the few major public scandals of modern Britain that is not the subject of a statutory public inquiry.

Eligibility

Fifth - The Windrush Taskforce must clarify the basis upon which eligibility for compensation is determined, particularly in relation to those prevented from returning to the UK through no fault of their own, those affected by historic criminal convictions, and cases where similar family claims have produced inconsistent outcomes. Decisions that appear inconsistent with published guidance should be independently reviewed. Those working on such cases can identify case studies.

There is a clamour for the Windrush Compensation Scheme be taken out of the Home Office. This may be effective, but so too would the Home Office's use of a case workers with redress and compensation expertise.

The approaching tenth anniversary of the Windrush Scandal provides yours and any new governments with an opportunity not just to commemorate the contribution of the Windrush Generation, but to provide justice. Delivering the commitments made by

previous governments would represent an important step towards restoring confidence in public administration and demonstrating that the United Kingdom honours both its legal obligations and moral responsibilities.

We request a meeting with each of you and a delegation comprising Windrush victims and survivors, legal representatives, community and faith leaders. Such a meeting would enable those most directly affected to discuss these proposals with you and to agree a programme of work capable of delivering lasting justice.

We look forward to receiving your response and to an opportunity of meeting with you at the earliest.

Yours sincerely – the undersigned lawyers and campaigners who are or have worked on Windrush cases, in alphabetical order per section

UK Kings Counsel

Gary Green KC
Leslie Thomas KC
Marcia Willis Stewart KC (Hon)
Martin Forde KC Independent Windrush Compensation Scheme Advisor to the Home Office 2018-2022

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Nicola Burgess
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Trainees, Paralegals and others working/worked on Windrush cases

Issac Wilson Jones
Joanna Mbugua
Kelys Malouda
Lianne Walters
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Shmaila Ahmad
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Organisations and campaigners

Pastor Acquoi Karbah - Manchester South Seventh-Day Adventist Church
Adrian Davids, Chairman - Arawak Walton Housing Association
Alexandra Ankrah, Chair - National Black Artist Alliance
Alison Hewitt - National Nubian Networking
Angela Clarke BEM, CEO - RAFFA International Development Agency
Anna Rothery - Former Lord Mayor of Liverpool
Anthony Brown, Director - WD Legal, Manchester
Anthony Hillary - Windrush Campaigner, London
Charlie Williams, Co-Founder - Windrush Movement UK
Christopher Oliver - Windrush Campaigner
Claude Hendrickson MBE - Leeds African and Caribbean Centre
Dawn Hill CBE, Former Chair - Black Cultural Archives and Windrush Campaigner
Dr Enobong Okokon, Windrush Advocate
Euan Herbert-Small - British Nationality Researcher
George Brown, Scorch Studio - Windrush Campaigner
Glenda Andrew BEM - Preston Windrush Generation UK
Glenis Williamson, Windrush Artist
Hilary Brown - Windrush Campaigner, Wales
Inzinga Samms-Alcott - Law Student
Cllr Jacqui Burnett - Luton Windrush Partnership
Dr Juanita Cox, Co-Founder - Guyana Speaks
Judith Shaw - Moving Parts Media
Kimberley McIntosh - Windrush Justice Community Collective
Leah Brown, Chair - Address the Harm, National
Lee Jasper, Chair, - Alliance for Police Accountability
Leonie Shaw-Brown - Windrush Advocacy and Community Alliance

Leroy Logan, Chair - Transition to Adulthood
Lorna Downer - Moss Side and Hulme Community Development Trust
Lorna Markland - African Caribbean Development Forum, Luton
Louis Brown - Researcher
Martin Seaton - De Motivator Show
Nana Asante, Co-Chair - Global African Congress
Otis Thomas - TAP Project CIC
Patsy Cummings - former Labour & Cooperative Party Councillor & Windrush Campaigner
Pastor Paul Davidson - Church of God Prophecy
Sir Patrick Vernon – Windrush Campaigner
Paul Elleston, Church Elder
Richard Black, Windrush Campaigner, London
Richard Davies, CEO - Amazing Business Solutions
Saundra Glenn, Founder Luton Windrush and Community Advocate
Sharon Thompson, Director - Global Counsel Forum, International
Sonia Winifred - Windrush Campaigner and Lambeth Community Activist
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Tony Gordon, Business Consultant
Dr Wanda Wyporska, CEO - Black Cultural Archives
Washington Alcott - WIOCC Saturday School
Yvonne Bowling - York - Member of the Pastoral Support team for General Synod
Zita Holbourne, Founder - BARAC, National

Overseas

Arley Gill, Attorney and former CARICOM ambassador, Grenada
Glenroy Githukia, Secretary General, Global Afrikan Congress, Zanzibar
Jomo Thomas, Attorney, St Vincent and the Grenadines
Samantha Simms, Attorney - Jamaica and New York
Yours Sincerely



Leigh Day
CC: CARICOM Diplomatic Corps
Clive Foster Windrush Commissioner

ANNEX

Why These Actions Are Necessary

The Home Office originally estimated that between 11,500 and 15,000 people might be impacted by the Windrush Scandal, including people from across the Commonwealth. This figure was revised downwards from their being a potential cohort of over 50,000 people. However, by April 2026, although 11,196 decisions had been made, only 4,032 claimants had received compensation (GOV UK Windrush Compensation Scheme data: April 2026). Too few people have received compensation. Experienced practitioners continue to see significant delays, under-assessments, and cases in which claimants only secured fair compensation after obtaining specialist legal representation. The review process is slow, and the adjudicator only has the power to remit applications back to base. Delays remain widespread, with some claimants waiting three or four years for decisions and elderly claimants dying before receiving satisfactory outcomes (McKenzie, Hansard 25 June 2026).

The evidence also demonstrates that access to justice depends heavily on legal representation. The JUSTICE report highlights that lawyers routinely spend around 45 hours preparing claims, while claimants without funded legal advice are often unable to secure the compensation to which they are entitled (JUSTICE et al., 2025).

Ten years on, the injustices include the points raised above, and:

1. Inordinate delays - the cohort is recognised as being an elderly one. There have been a significant number of people who have died before their claims were decided.
2. Practitioners continue to encounter a significant number of cases in which initial decisions are revised following review or legal representation, raising serious concerns about consistency and quality of first-instance decision-making. It takes a year to get an initial decision. Seeking further appeals can take another year or two and there are cases which have been pending a final decision for 4 and 5 years.
3. There have been refusals in some claims where a claimant has past criminal convictions. Not only was there no consultation on this during the consultative phase, but it was also not in earlier forms of the guidance.
4. Variances in the decision-making process even amongst close family members with similar fact cases continues to plague the implementation of the schemes.
5. Home Office direct engagement with claimants who have legal representation, often by letters and telephone calls, is reported by claimants to be retraumatising.
6. The failure of the state to provide adequate financial support to community organisations who have developed an expertise on working with the cohort to conduct outreach, engagement and some advocacy work.
7. There is a need for outreach to claimants still stuck overseas and more joined up work is required by government departments to obtain records from overseas missions and departments.
8. The failure to adopt professional drawn and proofed witness statements as evidence in the absence of documentation going back decades is unduly restricting.
9. The move away from a light touch approach to requiring corroborated evidence of life events which are decades old is also unduly restricting.
10. There is considerable delay in applying corrections are being applied, including to compensating previous claimants for losses incurred re their pensions.

References

- **JUSTICE, Dr Jo Wilding (University of Sussex) and Dechert LLP.** *The Windrush Compensation Scheme: The Case for Funded Legal Assistance* (2025). (JUSTICE et al., 2025).
- **Jacqueline McKenzie.** *Hansard* 25 June 2026.
- **Home Office,** *The Historical Roots of the Windrush Scandal*. Published, 26 September 2024