

Govt appoints new pensions minister

[Ruby Hinchliffe](#) 13 hours ago



Alex Burghart, the UK's new pensions minister

Alex Burghart has been appointed as the new parliamentary under secretary of state in the Department of Work and Pensions in Liz Truss' latest cabinet reshuffle.

Burghart has been elected twice as MP for Brentwood and Ongar. He was previously parliamentary under-secretary for the Department for Education between September 2021 and July 2022.

The Department for Work and Pensions confirmed the appointment, but did not comment on it.

In a [statement released yesterday \(September 20\)](#), Truss sacked the UK's longest serving pensions minister Guy Opperman after he was in the post for five years.

He said in a Twitter post he was relieved of his duties on September 8, but delayed the announcement to respect the period of mourning for Queen Elizabeth II.

Opperman's replacement, Burghart, was announced amid a list of other cabinet appointments today (September 21). The list also included a number of reappointments.

According to the government website, the minister's responsibilities include:

- Pensioner benefits, including new State Pension, Winter Fuel Payments, Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance
- Private and occupational pensions, including regulatory powers and the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST)
- Automatic enrolment into a workplace pension
- Oversight of arms-length bodies, including the Pensions Regulator, Pension Protection Fund, Financial Assistance Scheme and Pensions Ombudsman
- Financial guidance, budgeting, saving and debt, including the Money and Pensions Service and Financial Inclusion Policy Forum
- Methods of payment and Post Office Card Accounts
- Net Zero
- Cross-DWP spokesperson – shadowing Lords.

Burghart's voting record shows he has voted for a reduction in spending on welfare benefits, voted against paying higher benefits over longer periods for those unable to work due to illness or disability, and according to They Work For You, "Consistently voted against measures to prevent climate change".

Experts have said Opperman brought much needed stability to the pensions

brief after “something of a revolving door policy” at the DWP.

He previously [stepped down from the government](#) in July amid a wave of resignations in protest at the conduct of then-prime minister Boris Johnson.

Opperman [agreed to return](#) as pensions minister a day later, until the new leader was elected.

Burghart has inherited a department in the midst of upcoming industry reforms, including regulations for the [new DB funding code](#), [auto-enrolment expansion](#), the [single code of practice](#), and the Pensions Regulator’s [notifiable events regime](#).

Opperman, the MP for Hexham, was appointed as pensions minister in June 2017, after previously serving as a government whip and working as a barrister.

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