



HANDOUTS: Alex Aiken

Comms aid 'is a waste'

EXCLUSIVE

by Nigel Nelson

BRITISH aid money sent to help foreign governments handle publicity about Covid-19 has been branded a waste of cash.

Tunisia got £21,000 to survey its people's opinions of coronavirus as part of a £250,000 communications funding package.

Whitehall comms chief Alex Aiken gave a total £900,000 in aid to "global partners" Tunisia, India, Philippines and Nigeria.

The TaxPayers' Alliance discovered the handouts via a freedom of information request and branded them "government waste".

It said: "Ministers should not be wasting money spinning around the globe."

But the Cabinet Office said giving communications advice to foreign partners is "vital when a global response is required to tackle the biggest health emergency in a generation".



BOTTOM: Giant Wickes

DIY stores turn us off

by Stephen Hayward

DIY giants are our least favourite shops for buying home appliances.

Homeware chain Wickes came bottom in a poll after being panned for its range and availability of products.

Homebase and B&Q were second and third from bottom in the survey by watchdog Which?

John Lewis was favourite for home appliances, followed by AO.com and independent stores in the Euronics network.

Which? says cost is the biggest reason for choosing where to buy, followed by speed of delivery.

But editor Harry Rose added: "People rate retailers [on] customer service, as well as an impressive range at a good price."

Wickes, Homebase and B&Q did not respond to requests for comment.



MISSION: Family in charity T-shirts

My children are redefining what it means to be beautiful



MODEL FAMILY

Catwalk siblings fight for equality



WORKING: The Jones siblings on photoshoot

EXCLUSIVE

by Emma Pearson

THIS family of beautiful child models are taking the catwalks by storm, beating the bullies – and raising awareness for albinism.

Nora Jones, ten, and her brother Shem, 16, were born with the condition that removes pigment from skin and hair.

Meanwhile brother Ezra, 13, has brown skin and black hair like their parents.

The family had to get used to being stared at – and Nora was even bullied.

But now they have turned their looks to their advantage. The kids all model for top firms like Nike and Primark and Nora has graced the pages of Italian Vogue.

And they are committed to raising awareness of albinism and campaigning for equality for all skin colours.

Mum Maria said: "My children are stunning, but they're also courageous, inspiring and kind. And they're redefining what it means to be beautiful."

Crying

The siblings, from Gorton, Manchester, shot to stardom last year when healthcare worker Maria, 42, enrolled them at Zeb-ede Management model agency.

She said: "I've had people who simply wouldn't believe Nora and Shem are my children, or that Ezra is their brother."

"People stare at us everywhere we go and Nora used to come home crying because other children were teasing her."

"Now when people stare at them it's while they're strutting down a catwalk."

Maria's brother has albinism so she wasn't surprised to have kids with the same condition. She has also set up a charity, Voice of Albinism, to raise awareness.

Of her kids she said: "I want them to know that when you have a condition you can still do anything that you want to do."

Shem said: "I'm more willing to try new things now that I would not have dared do before I started modelling."

Nora is determined to tackle discrimination. And her message is simple.

She said: "Don't bully other people just because of the way they look... if they're white or black. Because it's not very nice."

feedback@people.co.uk



LOOKING GOOD: Shem and sis Nora