



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 23 January 2020 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:32 P.M., 23 January 2020). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

### CONTENTS

<b>ANSWERS</b>	<b>6</b>	■ Fireworks: Environment Protection	12
ATTORNEY GENERAL	6	■ Horizon Europe	13
■ Domestic Abuse: Criminal Proceedings	6	■ Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance: Payments	13
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	6	■ Minimum Wage	13
■ Business: Billing	6	■ Ministry of Defence: Iron and Steel	14
■ Carbon Monoxide: Poisoning	7	■ New Businesses	14
■ Companies: Fees and Charges	8	■ Public Houses: West Midlands	16
■ Companies: Registration	8	■ Renewable Energy	17
■ Credit Cards: Fees and Charges	8	■ Solar Power	17
■ Delivery Services	9	■ Solar Power: Costs	19
■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Climate Change	9	■ Solar Power: Housing	19
■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Families	10	■ Solar Power: Innovation	20
■ Electric Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries	10	CABINET OFFICE	20
■ Employment: Pregnancy	11	■ Cabinet Office: Climate Change	20
■ Energy: Libya	11	■ Cabinet Office: Families	20
■ Environment Protection	11	■ Ministerial Responsibility	21
■ Fireworks: Climate Change	12	■ Polling Stations: Schools	21
		■ Universal Credit: Vulnerable Adults	21
		DEFENCE	22
		■ Army: Young People	22
		■ Dockyards: Asbestos	22

■ Early Warning Systems	22	■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Climate Change	36
■ Firing Ranges: Colchester	23	■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Families	37
■ Household Cavalry: Armoured Fighting Vehicles	23	■ Floods	37
■ Libya: Peacekeeping Operations	24	■ Fly-tipping	38
■ Military Aircraft: Wales	24	■ Hunting Act 2004	39
■ Ministry of Defence: Advertising	25	■ Inland Waterways: Chesterfield	39
■ Nuclear Power Stations: Costs	25	■ River Hipper and River Rother: Flood Control	39
■ Rosyth Dockyard: Asbestos	25	■ Solid Fuels: Heating	40
■ Unmanned Air Vehicles	25	■ Weedkillers	40
■ Veterans: Northern Ireland	26	EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION	41
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	26	■ Borders: Northern Ireland	41
■ Cannabis: Medical Treatments	26	■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Pay	41
■ Football	27	■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Trade Unions	42
■ Football: Sportsgrounds	27	FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE	42
■ Listed Events	27	■ Bahrain: Overseas Aid	42
■ Television: Licensing	28	■ British National (Overseas): Detainees	43
EDUCATION	28	■ British Nationals Abroad: Detainees	43
■ Children: Protection	28	■ Climate Change: International Cooperation	43
■ Children: Social Services	29	■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Climate Change	44
■ Learning Records Service	29	■ Giulio Regeni and Shaimaa al- Sabbagh	44
■ Pre-school Education: Finance	30	■ Hong Kong: Police	45
■ Primary Education: Free School Meals	31		
■ Schools: Restraint Techniques	31		
■ Sex and Relationship Education	32		
■ Special Educational Needs	33		
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	34		
■ Air Pollution	34		
■ Chemicals: Regulation	35		

■ Hong Kong: Politics and Government	45	■ Joint Replacements: Waiting Lists	58
■ Indonesia: Military Aid	45	■ Learning Disabilities Mortality Review Programme	58
■ Iran: Conflict Prevention	46	■ Loneliness: Older People	59
■ Nuclear Weapons: Proliferation	46	■ NHS: Pensions	60
■ Overseas Aid	47	■ Primary Health Care: Homelessness	60
■ Persecution of Christians across the Globe Independent Review	48	■ Prostate Cancer	61
■ Tanzania: Diplomatic Relations	48	■ Social Services: EU Nationals	62
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	49	HOME OFFICE	62
■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Standards	49	■ Counter-terrorism	62
■ Cancer: Drugs	49	■ Immigration	62
■ Cannabis: Medical Treatments	49	■ UK-Africa Investment Summit	63
■ Carers: Young People	51	HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	63
■ Degarelix	51	■ Building Regulations	63
■ Department of Health and Social Care: Brexit	51	■ Buildings: Fire Prevention	63
■ Doctors: Pensions	52	■ Buildings: Insulation	64
■ Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome: Health Services	52	■ Buildings: Safety	64
■ Epilepsy: Drugs	53	■ Flats: Standards	64
■ General Practitioners: Hertford and Stortford	54	■ High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention	65
■ General Practitioners: Romford	54	■ High Rise Flats: Insulation	65
■ General Practitioners: Standards	55	■ Homelessness	66
■ Hormone Replacement Therapy: Gender Recognition	56	INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	67
■ Hormone Replacement Therapy: Shortages	56	■ Department for International Development: Climate Change	67
■ Irlen Syndrome	57	■ Developing Countries: Coal	67
		■ Developing Countries: Education	68
		■ Developing Countries: Fossil Fuels	68
		■ Developing Countries: Overseas Investment	69

■ Developing Countries: Overseas Trade	69	■ Ministry of Justice: Iron and Steel	81
■ Marie Stopes International: Expenditure	70	■ Prison Sentences: York	81
■ Somaliland: Elections	70	■ Prisoners: Disability and Older People	81
■ UK-Africa Investment Summit	70	LEADER OF THE HOUSE	82
INTERNATIONAL TRADE	71	■ House of Commons: Bullying	82
■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	71	SCOTLAND	82
■ Department for International Trade: Pay	72	■ Scotland Office: Climate Change	82
■ Department for International Trade: Recruitment	73	■ Stronger Towns Fund: Scotland	83
■ Department for International Trade: Staff	73	TRANSPORT	83
■ Department for International Trade: Trade Unions	74	■ A1: Newark	83
■ Department for International Trade: Training	74	■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points	84
■ Fossil Fuels: Export Credit Guarantees	74	■ High Speed 2 Railway Line	84
■ Overseas Trade: Commonwealth	75	■ Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation	84
JUSTICE	75	■ South Western Rail Franchise	85
■ Administration of Justice: Czechia	75	■ South Western Railway	85
■ Crime: Retail Trade	76	■ South Western Railway: Strikes	86
■ Crown Courts	76	TREASURY	86
■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service and Ministry of Justice: Public Relations	77	■ Air Passenger Duty	86
■ Justice and Security Act 2013	78	■ Capital Investment: Northern Ireland	87
■ Legal Aid Scheme	78	■ Child Benefit: Adoption	87
■ Legal Aid Scheme: York	79	■ Cider: Excise Duties	88
■ Ministry of Justice: Climate Change	80	■ Coastal Erosion: Fairbourne	88
■ Ministry of Justice: Families	80	■ Financial Services: Wales	88
		■ Funerals: Pre-payment	89
		■ Housing: Foreign Nationals	89
		■ Housing: Repairs and Maintenance	89
		■ Motorhomes: Excise Duties	90

■ National Insurance :Contributions	90	<b>WRITTEN STATEMENTS</b>	<b>101</b>
■ Occupational Health: Taxation	91	BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	101
■ Sanitary Protection: VAT	91	■ Offshore Wind Energy Infrastructure Projects	101
■ Treasury: Climate Change	92	CABINET OFFICE	101
■ Treasury: Families	92	■ Advance from the Contingencies Fund	101
WALES	92	■ Government Transparency and Accountability	102
■ Capital Investment: Northern Ireland	92	DEFENCE	103
■ Overseas Trade	93	■ Gifting of Royal Navy Historic Flight Aircraft	103
■ Wales Office: Climate Change	93	DUCHY OF LANCASTER	104
WORK AND PENSIONS	93	■ Update on the EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill	104
■ Children: Maintenance	93	EDUCATION	105
■ Department for Work and Pensions: Climate Change	94	■ Correction	105
■ Food Banks: Greater Manchester	95	HOME OFFICE	106
■ Local Housing Allowance	95	■ College of Policing Limited Annual Report and Accounts 2018 – 2019	106
■ Maternity Allowance	96	TRANSPORT	106
■ Social Security Benefits: Poverty	96	■ Annual accounts for the Dartford - Thurrock Crossing and Severn River Crossing	106
■ Universal Credit	97		

**Notes:**

Questions marked thus [R] indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

## ANSWERS

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

#### ■ Domestic Abuse: Criminal Proceedings

**Dan Jarvis:**

[\[5428\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what plans he has to increase the amount of time victims of domestic violence are given with the Crown Prosecution Service before being called as a witness at trial.

**Michael Ellis:**

The Crown Prosecution Service understands that attending court is often an intimidating experience for all victims of crime, including victims of domestic abuse. The Crown Prosecution Service is committed to treating all victims and witnesses at court with respect and sensitivity. Victims of domestic abuse are encouraged to take part in pre-trial familiarisation visits, which can help them understand what will happen when they attend court. Additionally, the Speaking to Witnesses at Court guidance commits the prosecutor to meet the victim before they give their evidence to explain court processes and procedures and answer questions the victim may have.

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Business: Billing

**Mr Toby Perkins:**

[\[3727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate she has made of the number of businesses that went into administration as a result of the cashflows of those businesses being affected by outstanding invoices in the latest period for which such information is available.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Insolvency Service publishes National Statistics on the total number of companies entering administration each calendar quarter at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and details of the circumstances leading to each administration must be provided by the administrator in the form of documents filed with Companies House.

The Government is completely focused on fulfilling its manifesto commitment to clamp down on late payments as part of its aim of making the UK the best place to work and grow a business. This includes strengthening the powers of the Small Business Commissioner to support small businesses that are exploited by their larger partners, strengthening the Prompt Payment Code, taking a tougher compliance approach with larger companies which includes greater transparency reporting requirements, and reviewing the role supply chain finance plays in prompt payment.

**Mr Toby Perkins:**

[3728]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress has been made in tackling the late payment of invoices by businesses.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The government is completely focussed on fulfilling our manifesto commitment to clamp down on late payment and strengthen the powers of the Small Business Commissioner to support small businesses that are exploited by their larger partners.

Good progress is being made on the policies announced in our Government Response to the 2018 Call for Evidence to assess what further steps and intervention may be needed to create a responsible payment culture, where we will be:

- o consulting on the merits of strengthening the Commissioner's existing powers, to assist and advocate for small businesses in the area of late payments;
- o strengthening and reforming the Prompt Payment Code and moving its administration to the Small Business Commissioner;
- o taking a tough compliance approach to large companies who do not comply with the Payment Practices Reporting Duty. We have sent over 2,000 'help and enforcement' letters to non-complaint companies and over 1,000 more unique companies have since filed reports;
- o reviewing role supply chain finance plays in prompt payment & greater transparency in companies reporting supply chain finance.

In October we launched a Business Basics Fund competition of up to £1 million, which will encourage SMEs to utilise payment technology and boost productivity in SMEs by reducing the time taken to chase payments. Winners will be announced in April.

In November, the Financial Reporting Council issued an open letter to company report preparers recommending payment practices are reported in annual reports.

## ■ Carbon Monoxide: Poisoning

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

[4303]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if she will include a policy on reducing the effect of carbon monoxide poisoning in the updated Fuel Poverty Strategy for England; and if she will make a statement.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The Government takes the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning in the home seriously and is taking steps to raise awareness of and tackle these risks. A summary of Government activities can be seen at [www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/cross-government-group.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/cross-government-group.htm).

Carbon monoxide poisoning can affect families at any income level. We are grateful for the All Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group's response to our consultation on updating the fuel poverty strategy. We are currently considering all

responses to the consultation and we will publish a Government response in due course.

#### ■ Companies: Fees and Charges

**Thangam Debbonaire:** [\[3782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to bring forward regulations on the amount that companies can charge when their services automatically renew; and if he will make a statement.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Government is committed to tackling so-called subscriptions traps and other business practices that harm consumers.

In response to specific complaints about these practices in telecoms, insurance, and cash savings, regulators (Ofcom and the FCA) are taking action to ensure that longstanding customers are not charged more. For example, Ofcom has agreed with most major mobile and broadband providers to give discounts to customers that have been paying high “out of contract” prices in mobile and broadband.

The Government will consult on stronger enforcement powers to ensure harmful trading practices like these are tackled.

#### ■ Companies: Registration

**Kerry McCarthy:** [\[5361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what her timescale is for publishing the response to the Corporate transparency and register reform consultation which closed on 5 May 2019.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Corporate Transparency and Register Reform Consultation was launched on the 5th May 2019 and closed on the 5th August 2019. It received a significant number of responses. I plan to publish a response shortly.

#### ■ Credit Cards: Fees and Charges

**Paul Girvan:** [\[4476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what information her Department holds on the number of instances that businesses have been (a) warned and (b) fined for charging fees for the use of credit or debit cards since January 2018.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

No such information is held by the Department.



## ■ Delivery Services

**Paul Girvan:**

[4475]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if she will make an assessment of the potential effect of banning the geographical restriction by sellers on deliveries to parts of the UK.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Government is clear that information about costs and restrictions must be transparent at the point of purchase, and this is set out in legislation. Enforcement bodies such as the Competition and Markets Authority and the Advertising Standards Authority take action where retailers fail to comply.

The aim of Government in relation to postal services is to secure a sustainable, efficient and affordable universal postal service in the UK. It is a matter for retailers and any private delivery partners they use to determine whether it is within their commercial interests to deliver to a particular location. Parties must be able to cover their costs in delivering to consumers which may be higher or prohibitive in some areas due to varying factors including volume.

## ■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Climate Change

**Darren Jones:**

[R] [4442]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment she has made of the effect of climate change on the work of her Department; and what steps she is taking in response to that effect.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

Leading the world in tackling climate change to deliver a stronger, greener United Kingdom is my key priority for the Department. We are committed to delivering our world-leading target to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions and end the UK's contribution to global warming by 2050, while maximising the economic opportunities of this transition – creating new business opportunities and up to 2 million green jobs by 2030.

Between 1990 and 2017, the UK has reduced emissions by more than 40% while growing our economy by over two thirds – decarbonising our economy faster than any other G20 country. Meeting our net zero target will require us to build on this progress by transforming our economy, including our homes, transport, industries, how we generate and use energy, and how we use our land.

Throughout 2020 we will set out further plans to ensure the UK is on track to meet our ambitious targets, building on the strong framework we have established in the Clean Growth Strategy, including an Energy White Paper and a policy roadmap for heat in buildings. We are also preparing to host the crucial 2020 UN climate negotiations, COP26, in Glasgow in November. We will use COP26 to push for ambitious action from all countries to deliver the 2015 Paris Agreement, and showcase the UK's climate leadership.

HM Government is making good progress towards the Greening Government Commitment to reduce emissions from the central government estate by 43% between 2009/10 and 2019/20, having exceeded the original target of 32% three years early. Since 2009/10, the Department reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 57%. This equates to a 36,448 tCO<sub>2</sub>e reduction.

#### ■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Families

**Steve Double:**

[\[4377\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether her Department has a single individual who is responsible for leading her Department's application of the Family Test.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

Each department has a Family Test lead who is part of our Family Test Network. This Network is the central forum through which we have sought input and comments on the support departments need to help with Family Test implementation.

This includes Network members feeding into improvements to the existing guidance for officials in all departments on Family Test implementation.

#### ■ Electric Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries

**Paul Girvan:**

[\[4472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment she has made of the potential economic effect of the development of gigafactories.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

This Government recognises the economic benefits that securing a UK gigafactory could bring and made this a manifesto commitment. That is why last autumn we announced up to £1 billion of additional funding to develop UK electric vehicle supply chains, and for further electric vehicles research and development.

This builds on the £274 million Government has already invested in the Faraday Battery Challenge through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. Faraday is a cutting-edge programme, helping businesses in the UK to lead the world in the design, development, and manufacture of batteries for electric vehicles. The UK Battery Industrialisation Centre is on course to open for business in spring 2020 with the first industry-led projects to scale-up battery technology fully underway by the summer.

The Faraday Institution commissioned a study which showed that by 2040, an estimated eight gigafactories (of 15GWh per year capacity) will be needed in the UK and consequently employment in the automotive industry and battery supply chain could increase to 246,000 jobs.

## ■ Employment: Pregnancy

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[4292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps she is taking to end maternity discrimination; and if she will make a statement.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Government recognises the importance of tackling pregnancy and maternity discrimination.

That is why we committed in our Manifesto to reform the law so that women returning from maternity leave receive additional protection from redundancy.

We will extend the redundancy protection period for six months once a new mother has returned to work and provide similar protections for those parents taking adoption leave and shared parental leave.

## ■ Energy: Libya

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[\[5386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether her Department has had any discussions with representatives from the Libyan National Army on energy policy.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The UK regards the Government of National Accord as the UN-endorsed government in Libya. There have been no discussions between members of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and representatives of the Libyan National Army on energy policy.

## ■ Environment Protection

**Christian Matheson:**

[\[3775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of the loss of research funding from the EU emissions trading system on the UK's green technology sector after the UK leaves the EU.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) does not provide research funding. The terms of the Withdrawal Agreement mean that the UK will continue to participate in EU Programmes financed by the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework until their closure.

The UK is the first major economy to legislate for net zero emissions by 2050. The Government's Clean Growth Strategy sets out how we want to make sure that the UK continues to reap the benefits from the transition to a low carbon economy.

The Government is investing over £3 billion to support low carbon innovation in the UK between 2015 and 2021, to ensure that the UK continues to grasp the economic

opportunities of the global shift to a low carbon future, and have committed to raise total research and development investment to 2.4% of GDP by 2027.

This is already benefiting clean growth innovation – for example the £505 million BEIS Energy Innovation Programme, which aims to accelerate the commercialisation of innovative clean energy technologies and processes.

### ■ Fireworks: Climate Change

**Mr Stephen Morgan:**

[\[3873\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment she has made of the effect of fireworks used in public displays on levels of climate change.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory publishes an annual assessment of greenhouse gas emissions by source and removals. Fireworks are listed under the Waste Incineration sector (5C) according to Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Common Reporting Format sector classifications.

Greenhouse gas emissions from fireworks used in public displays are not included in the UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory as they have been judged not to be a significant source of greenhouse gases in the UK. It is estimated that 10-20 thousand tonnes of fireworks are typically used in the UK each year. Even assuming the fireworks are entirely made of carbon and entirely oxidised, the greenhouse gas emissions from this level of activity would be less than 100kt CO<sub>2</sub>e (carbon dioxide equivalents). This is below the threshold of significance for including a source of greenhouse gas emissions in the inventory. The threshold was set by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as being both less than 500kt CO<sub>2</sub>e and 0.05% of the total national greenhouse gas emissions (which is 236kt CO<sub>2</sub>e for the UK).

### ■ Fireworks: Environment Protection

**Mr Stephen Morgan:**

[\[3874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if she will bring forward legislative proposals to reduce the effect on the environment of fireworks used in public displays.

**Mr Stephen Morgan:**

[\[3875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to limit the noise level of fireworks to 90 dB for the welfare of animals.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Government understands concerns about the potential impact caused by fireworks on individuals, animals and the environment. This is why the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) is developing a fact-based evidence base on

the key issues that have been raised around fireworks. This includes looking at data on noise and disturbance, anti-social behaviour, non-compliance, environmental impact, and the impact on humans and animals. This will build a full picture of the data around fireworks in order to identify whether further action is appropriate.

## ■ Horizon Europe

**Darren Jones:**

[\[4460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will take steps to secure associate membership of Horizon Europe at the same time as the Multi-Annual Financial Framework is agreed, prior to the end of the transition period.

**Chris Skidmore:**

We will continue to collaborate with the EU on scientific research and we have been clear that, where it is in the UK's interests, we will seek to participate in some specific EU Programmes.

The shape and content of the next EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework Programmes for 2021-2027, including Horizon Europe, are currently being negotiated in the EU Institutions and have not yet been finalised. Horizon Europe must be adopted by the EU before any potential formal negotiations on association could begin.

The UK has played a constructive role in the development of Horizon Europe to ensure that it aligns with UK priorities and we look forward to continuing our relationship in research and innovation with our European partners.

## ■ Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance: Payments

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[4311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if she will publish the payment request of 3 January 2020 to her Department from the Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 20th January 2020 to Question [3683](#): the letter is being considered and a response will be provided in due course. In the meantime, is not appropriate for Government to publish the payment request.

## ■ Minimum Wage

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

[\[5461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when her Department plans to publish the outcomes of the review of the National Minimum Wage Naming Scheme announced in June 2019.

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** [5462]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when her Department plans to publish its next list of employers for National Minimum Wage breaches under the National Minimum Wage Naming Scheme.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Government is committed to ensuring that everyone entitled to the National Living Wage (NLW) and National Minimum Wage (NMW) receives it. This is why we have more than doubled the compliance and enforcement budget for the NMW and NLW to £27.4 million for 2019/20, up from £13.2 million in 2015/16.

I have reviewed the National Minimum Wage Naming scheme and the Department will shortly publish the outcome of that review. This will detail the changes we are making to the scheme to ensure its continued effectiveness as a deterrent to non-compliance. Following this, we will resume the naming of employers who breach NMW legislation.

#### ■ Ministry of Defence: Iron and Steel

**Jessica Morden:** [5366]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of steel procured by her Department was produced in the UK, in each of the last five years.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

BEIS does not procure any steel directly, however, we are working hard to make sure that UK producers of steel have the best possible chance of competing for and winning contracts across all Government procurement. All Government departments and arms-length bodies are required to consider socio-economic and environmental factors when procuring steel. We also publish a Steel Pipeline, signalling upcoming steel requirements for national infrastructure projects.

BEIS collates data, including origin where known, for arms-length bodies undertaking infrastructure projects with significant steel content, including UKRI and the NDA as well as Offshore Wind builds and Hinkley Point C. This information is published annually on gov.uk at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/steel-public-procurement>

The data was first published in January 2019, with the next iteration due to be published shortly.

#### ■ New Businesses

**Rachael Maskell:** [4407]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many small and medium-sized enterprise start-ups there were in (a) York, (b) Yorkshire and the Humber and (c) England in each year since 2010.

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[4409]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what financial support her Department has provided to small and medium-sized enterprises in (a) the City of York local authority and (b) Yorkshire and the Humber in each year since 2010-11.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The below table lists the number of start-ups according to ONS Business Demography UK data (the most recent of which is for 2018). Please note, this data refers to the number of VAT/PAYE registrations, and is available at the following links:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitysizeandlocation/datasets/businessdemographyreferencetable/current/previous/v2/businessdemographyexceltables2015.xls>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitysizeandlocation/datasets/businessdemographyreferencetable>

**Number of start-ups**

YEAR	YORK UA	YORKSHIRE AND THE	
		HUMBER	ENGLAND
2010	665	16,630	207,520
2011	655	17,235	232,460
2012	720	17,990	239,975
2013	945	23,120	308,565
2014	880	23,465	312,920
2015	830	25,140	344,065
2016	870	26,775	373,580
2017	775	22,600	339,345
2018	850	23,405	340,045

We want to make the UK the best place to work and grow a business. The Government-owned British Business Bank's programmes are supporting more than £7.0bn of finance to over 91,000 SMEs, the majority outside London and the South East. The BBB in collaboration with ten Local Enterprise Partnerships, combined authorities and growth hubs manages the £400m Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund (NPIF). By September 2019, NPIF had invested £135m in over 500 ambitious SMEs across the Northern Powerhouse region, in deals that have attracted an additional £123m of investment from the private sector. This support seeks to address the disparity in the availability of finance across the UK and was further

bolstered last autumn, with the launch of the £100m Business Angel investment programme designed to support clusters of business angels outside London. The BBB also established a UK-wide network of relationship managers to help tackle regional imbalances in access to finance.

The number of loans made by the BBB's Start Up Loans programme in York local authority and Yorkshire & Humber is as follows:

Start-Up Loans:

FY	YORK LA	YORKSHIRE & HUMBER
2012-13	3 loans - £22,000	160 loans - over £726,000
2013-14	26 loans - £139,000	1,083 loans - over £5.5m
2014-15	24 loans – over £167,000	965 loans – over £5.1m
2015-16	26 loans – over £215,000	765 loans - over £5.8m
2016-17	25 loans - £244,000	762 loans – over £8m
2017-18	32 loans – over £448,000	774 loans – over £10.2m
2018-19	26 loans – over £264,000	783 loans – over £7.8m
2019- 31 December 2019)	17 loans – over £154,000	583 loans – over £6.3m

The local York, North Yorkshire and East Riding and Leeds City Region Growth Hubs provide a free, impartial, 'single point of contact' to help businesses in these areas identify and access the right support for them at the right time no matter their size or sector.

SMEs across Yorkshire and Humber are also benefiting from over £1.3 billion investment over the years 2015-2021 through Yorkshire and Humber LEP Growth Deals. This includes over £145m through the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP Growth Deal and £695m through the Leeds City Region LEP Growth Deal.

#### ■ Public Houses: West Midlands

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

**[4310]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps her Department is taking to prevent pub closures in the West Midlands.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Government recognises the importance of pubs to the economy and to community life in providing a place to socialise and encourage responsible drinking and welcomes recent data from the Office of National Statistics that suggest an increase in the number of pubs and bars in the UK for the first time in a decade. In order to provide support for pubs, the Government announced a freeze on beer duty



at Budget 2018 which, together with previous cuts and freezes to alcohol duty, means a typical pint of beer is estimated to cost 14p less than it otherwise would have since ending the beer duty escalator in 2013.

Some 2,000 pubs have been listed as Assets of Community Value across the country in recognition of the positive role they play in their local areas and to allow the community to bid for those pubs should they be put up for sale. The Government has committed to help community groups to take over local community assets which are under threat, including pubs, by establishing a new £150m Community Ownership Fund.

In addition, many pubs will benefit from the business rates retail discount announced at Budget 2018, which cuts bills for eligible businesses by one third for two years from April 2019. The Government has committed to increasing the discount to 50% in 2020/21.

## ■ Renewable Energy

**Wera Hobhouse:**

[\[5496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps she is taking to deliver the recommendation from the Committee on Climate Change that large-scale solar PV and onshore wind should have a Government-backed route to market.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

Latest figures indicate we now have more than 27GW of combined onshore wind and solar PV capacity installed in the UK, enough to power over 13 million UK homes. A number of renewable energy projects, including onshore wind and solar PV projects, are now deploying without subsidy in the UK and we expect others may follow.

No decisions have been taken on future Contracts for Difference (CfD) allocation rounds for established technologies such as onshore wind and solar PV. We keep the CfD scheme under review and will announce the scope of future allocation rounds in due course.

## ■ Solar Power

**Steve Double:**

[\[4374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans she has to encourage greater uptake of rooftop solar PV.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

Low carbon electricity, including solar – whether at the household level or the national level – is central to the transition to the smart and flexible energy systems of the future.

Since 2010, we have quadrupled the electricity we generate from renewables – installing 99% of the UK's solar capacity and over 800,000 installations – exceeding

our historic projections on solar PV deployment. We now have over 13.3GW of solar capacity installed in the UK, which is enough to power over 3 million UK homes.

The Smart Export Guarantee (SEG), which came into force on 1 January 2020, gives small scale low-carbon electricity generators, such as homes with solar panels, the right to be paid for the renewable electricity they export to the grid. Renewable generators now have a several competitive SEG tariffs to choose from, in some cases even higher than the FIT export tariff.

Permitted development rights have been introduced allowing the installation of solar panels up to 1 megawatt on domestic properties, schools, businesses and farm buildings without any need for planning permission.

**Alan Brown:**

**[4401]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the quantity of ground mount solar PV used in (a) 2015, (b) 2016, (c) 2017, (d) 2018 and (e) 2019.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The figures for (a) and (d) are published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/solar-photovoltaics-deployment>.

The ground-mounted solar PV is broken down into FiTs (standalone), RO (ground mounted and CfD (ground mounted) in Table 2.

(e) Figures for solar deployment up to November 2019 are published by the Department at the link in part (a) – (d).

These figures include data from BEIS's major power producers survey, the Renewable Energy Planning Database (REPD) and the Microgeneration Certification Scheme database (MCS).

**Kevin Hollinrake:**

**[4413]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps she is taking to support the deployment of rooftop solar PV; and if she will make a statement.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

Low carbon electricity, including solar – whether at the household level or the national level – is central to the transition to the smart and flexible energy systems of the future.

Since 2010, we have quadrupled the electricity we generate from renewables – installing 99% of the UK's solar capacity and over 800,000 installations – exceeding our historic projections on solar PV deployment. We now have over 13.3GW of solar capacity installed in the UK, which is enough to power over 3 million UK homes.

The Smart Export Guarantee, which came into force on 1 January 2020, gives small scale low-carbon electricity generators, such as homes with solar panels, the right to be paid for the renewable electricity they export to the grid. Renewable generators

now have a several competitive tariffs to choose from, in some cases even higher than the FIT export tariff.

Permitted development rights have been introduced allowing the installation of solar panels up to 1 megawatt on domestic properties, schools, businesses and farm buildings without any need for planning permission.

## ■ Solar Power: Costs

**Alan Brown:**

**[4398]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what has been the cost reduction in (a) rooftop solar PV and (b) ground-mount PV since 2010.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The Department has published two sets of estimates of the cost of solar PV over time:

1) Outturn statistics on the cost of installations below 50kW capacity in each financial year since April 2013. These statistics are based on installations that are registered on the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS), and do not differentiate between rooftop and ground-mounted PV although the majority relates to rooftop. These are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/solar-pv-cost-data>.

2) Projections of current and future installation costs across a number of capacity sizes, from 2010 onwards. These are based on reports commissioned by the Department, and are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/energy-generation-cost-projections>.

## ■ Solar Power: Housing

**Alan Brown:**

**[4396]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the quantity of domestic rooftop solar PV installed in (a) 2015, (b) 2016, (c) 2017, (d) 2018 and (e) 2019.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

(a) - (d) The generating capacity and number of domestic solar PV installations for 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 is published by the department at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/monthly-central-feed-in-tariff-register-statistics>. This data is based on the Central FITs Register (CFR) of installations accredited on the Feed in Tariff scheme.

(e) Figures for solar deployment up to November 2019 are published by the department at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/solar-photovoltaics-deployment>

These figures are based on BEIS's major power producers survey, the Renewable Energy Planning Database (REPD) and the Microgeneration Certification Scheme database (MCS).

**■ Solar Power: Innovation****Kevin Hollinrake:** [\[4414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to encourage (a) innovation and (b) product development in the UK solar PV industry.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) provides grant funding to innovative businesses in many different ways, including Innovate UK's SMART grants, which deliver ambitious R&D innovations that can make a significant impact on the UK economy.

Through the Clean Growth Strategy, BEIS has committed £900 million of public funds to innovation, which includes £177 million to further reduce the cost of renewables.

We are also investing over £3 billion to support low carbon innovation in the UK up to 2021, to ensure that the UK continues to reap the benefits from the transition to a low carbon economy.

**CABINET OFFICE****■ Cabinet Office: Climate Change****Darren Jones:** [R] [\[4459\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the effect of climate change on the work of his Department; and what steps he is taking in response to that effect.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The UK is a world leader in cutting emissions while growing the economy, and has set an ambitious net zero target which will require transformation across the economy.

Tackling climate change is a priority for the whole of government, which is why the Prime Minister has set up the Cabinet Committee on Climate Change. This committee will hold departments to account for their actions to combat climate change and oversee the UK's preparations to host the COP26 summit.

The Government is leading from the front, and delivering on the Greening Government Commitments. Cabinet Office monitors and reports performance against these Commitments through the annual publication of the [State of the Estate Report](#). The Report describes the size and cost, efficiency of use and sustainability of property for central government buildings.

**■ Cabinet Office: Families****Steve Double:** [\[4376\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his Department has a single individual who is responsible for leading on his Department's application of the Family Test.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Each department has a Family Test lead who is part of DWP's Family Test Network. This Network is the central forum through which DWP have sought input and comments on the support departments need to help with Family Test implementation. This includes Network members feeding into improvements to the existing guidance for officials in all departments on Family Test implementation.

**■ Ministerial Responsibility**

**Kevin Brennan:** [5342]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish an updated list of Ministerial responsibilities.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Details of Ministerial responsibilities can be found on GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/ministers>).

The List of Ministerial Responsibilities was last updated in October 2019.

**■ Polling Stations: Schools**

**Stephen McPartland:** [5413]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of schools that closed for polling the 2019 general election in (a) Hertfordshire, (b) Stevenage, (c) England and (d) throughout the UK; and if he will make a statement.

**Chloe Smith:**

The Government does not hold information centrally on the number of primary schools that are used as polling stations. It is the responsibility of the relevant Returning Officer to choose venues for polling stations.

For the 2019 General Election, the Government offered to reimburse the additional cost of using alternative venues where schools or other community spaces ordinarily used as polling places were already booked for other planned events on the day of the poll in order to avoid disrupting activities in the run up to the festive season. The Minister for the Cabinet Office provided such reassurance in the following letter to Returning Officers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-to-returning-officers>

**■ Universal Credit: Vulnerable Adults**

**Marsha De Cordova:** [4483]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, which voluntary organisations were consulted as part of the Prime Minister's Implementation Unit's research on the effect of universal credit on vulnerable claimants.

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[4484]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, when the Prime Minister's Implementation Unit plans to complete its research into the effect of universal credit on vulnerable claimants.

**Oliver Dowden:**

Research by the Prime Minister's Implementation Unit is conducted in partnership with Departments to provide advice and recommendations as part of ongoing policy development.

Research by the Prime Minister's Implementation Unit relies on the voluntary supply of information from third parties, which is provided on the basis that details of individuals and organisations will not be disclosed.

## DEFENCE

### ■ Army: Young People

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

[5487]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 7 October 2019 to Question 293678 on the Junior Entry Review, if he will place in the Library a copy of the Junior Entry Review Market Research final report, dated April 2018, referenced in the Junior Entry Review.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

A copy of the Junior Entry Review Market Research final report will be placed in the Library of the House shortly. It is currently being reviewed for commercial and personal data sensitivities.

### ■ Dockyards: Asbestos

**Sir Alan Campbell:**

[5341]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many compensation claims for asbestos-related disease from employees or former employees who were employed as Electrical Overseers and who allege their exposure occurred at a shipyard in the UK between 1965 and 1989 have been settled by his Department.

**Johnny Mercer:**

The information requested relating to employees or former employees who were employed as electrical overseers is not held as claimant trades are not recorded.

### ■ Early Warning Systems

**Mr Stephen Morgan:**

[5522]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, recent assessment he has made of the effect of potential delays to the Crowsnest radar system on the ability of Carrier Strike to operate (a) safely and (b) effectively.

**James Heappey:**

The Department's approach to capability delivery places safety foremost, through strict compliance to policy, regulation and certification requirements. There are regular updates on the progress of the CROWSNEST programme. The schedule provides an incremental build-up of CROWSNEST to support Initial Operating Capability for Carrier Strike in December 2020 and the inaugural Carrier Strike Group deployment in 2021.

**Mr Stephen Morgan:**[\[5523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the timely completion of the (a) Carrier Strike project and (b) Crowsnest radar function.

**James Heappey:**

The Ministry of Defence continues to work closely with its contractors to manage programme performance and the remaining schedule of activity for Carrier Strike and CROWSNEST. Initial operating capability for Carrier Strike remains on track for December 2020 and all components of the programme, including F-35 and CROWSNEST, are due to deploy on the inaugural Carrier Strike Group deployment in 2021.

**■ Firing Ranges: Colchester****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[5355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the cost of expanding the capability of the military firing range at Fingringhoe, Colchester Garrison to accommodate the training requirements to be transferred there from the firing range at Middlewick, Colchester as a result of the closure of that training facility; and if he will make a statement.

**James Heappey:**

The expansion of the military firing range capability at Fingringhoe Ranges, Colchester Garrison will sustain the same range capability that is currently provided by both Fingringhoe and Middlewick. All work at Fingringhoe will be completed prior to the closure of Middlewick.

I am withholding the information in relation to the cost of the development as any disclosure would prejudice commercial interests.

**■ Household Cavalry: Armoured Fighting Vehicles****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[5354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reason his Department did not meet the planned date for delivering Ajax armoured vehicles to the Household Cavalry; and whether that delay will affect plans for the vehicle to be operational by the mid-2020s.

**James Heappey:**

Due to the complex nature of integrating the very latest technology into the Army's first fully digital armoured fighting vehicle, the delivery of Ajax armoured vehicles to

the Household Cavalry did not begin on the date we had planned. Delivery will begin shortly and we do not expect our plans for the vehicle to be operational by the mid-2020s to be affected by this.

### ■ Libya: Peacekeeping Operations

**Jonathan Edwards:** [\[5390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Government has received a request for the UK to join a peacekeeping force in Libya.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The UK and other participants of the Berlin Conference issued a declaration calling upon the United Nations to facilitate ceasefire negotiations between the parties in the conflict, including through the immediate establishment of technical committees to monitor and verify the implementation of the ceasefire. The UK has received no formal request to join a peacekeeping force in Libya.

### ■ Military Aircraft: Wales

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[5488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many incidents of (a) irresponsible and (b) reckless flying have been reported (a) on the Machynlleth Loop and (b) in Wales in each of the last five years; and what steps he is taking to ensure that pilots behave appropriately and responsibly.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The information is not held in the format requested.

The Defence Flying Complaints Investigations Team (DFCIT) is charged with investigating instances of military low flying complaints reported by members of the public. The table below gives the number of investigations undertaken for the whole of Wales and the number of occasions that were identified as a breach of flying regulations.

YEAR	2017	2018	2019
Number of Investigations	10	12	4
Number of Breaches	0	1	0

All RAF pilots receive extensive training to ensure they operate in accordance with the appropriate low flying regulations and this training is re-emphasised throughout their careers. These stringent regulations are in place in order to protect the public, our aircrew and aircraft. All aspects of flight safety are kept under continuous review. Aircrew are not permitted to carry out manoeuvres beyond their proven capabilities, or those of the aircraft. All our pilots are constantly assessed to ensure that high standards of professionalism are maintained.



**■ Ministry of Defence: Advertising****Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[4723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the cost to the public purse is of his Department's advertising for High Flying Entertainment on Channel 4's (a) Film 4 (b) E4 and (c) More 4 television channels.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The cost of a 12 month sponsorship of Channel 4 / E4 High Flying Entertainment programming was £594,332.34 excluding VAT.

**■ Nuclear Power Stations: Costs****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[5353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to page 27 of the report entitled Managing infrastructure projects on nuclear-regulated sites, published by the NAO on 10 January 2020, what the £339m cost attributed to other factors comprised.

**James Heapey:**

The £339 million cost referred to in the National Audit Office report relate to Project MENSA, the new-build warhead assembly/disassembly facility at the Atomic Weapons Establishment's Burghfield site. The additional costs include changes to project management and resourcing, design approvals, construction changes, equipment installation, facility commissioning and Ministry of Defence held contingency.

**■ Rosyth Dockyard: Asbestos****Sir Alan Campbell:**[\[5340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many claims for asbestos-related diseases his Department has settled with apprentice electricians and electricians or former apprentice electricians and electricians alleging exposure to dust who were employed at the Rosyth shipyard at any time between 1942 and 1954.

**Johnny Mercer:**

The information requested relating to apprentice electricians and electricians or former apprentice electricians and electricians is not held as claimant trades are not recorded.

**■ Unmanned Air Vehicles****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[5344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 25 February 2019 to Question 223964, Unmanned Air Vehicles, whether similar mechanical issues have been reported on other Reaper drones.

**James Heapey:**

There have been no similar mechanical issues. Following initial investigation of the incident involving Reaper ZZ201 in October 2015, the Ministry of Defence modified

the undercarriage on the rest of the fleet to minimise the likelihood of a reoccurrence of this type of mechanical issue.

## ■ Veterans: Northern Ireland

**Gavin Robinson:**

[\[5448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the document entitled *New Decade, New Approach*, published on January 2020, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on creation of a Veterans Commissioner for Northern Ireland.

**Johnny Mercer:**

We have regular discussions about areas of mutual interest with colleagues across Government, including the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The UK Government's commitment in the '*New Decade, New Approach*' (NDNA) Agreement to create a Northern Ireland Veterans' Commissioner is an important one. It builds on the UK Government's establishment in 2019 of the Office for Veterans' Affairs to provide lifelong support to ex-military personnel. Officials in Defence, the Office for Veterans Affairs, and the Northern Ireland Office are engaging to ensure effective implementation of the UK Government's commitments relating to veterans within the NDNA, and both I, and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, will be monitoring the progress of that work closely.

## DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Cannabis: Medical Treatments

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[4317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether a foundation providing financial support towards private medical cannabis prescriptions for patients where clinically appropriate would be eligible for charitable status; and if she will make a statement.

**Helen Whately:**

In England and Wales, an organisation is a charity if it meets a number of legal tests; namely that it is established for exclusively charitable purposes for the public benefit and that it falls within the jurisdiction of the High Court regarding charities. Supporting the cost of medical treatment has long been recognised as capable of being a charitable purpose where the benefit and safety of the treatment can be demonstrated

The Charity Commission, as the independent charity regulator in England and Wales, is responsible for determining whether or not an institution is a charity and for registering those that are and which meet the legal threshold for registration

The Commission robustly assesses each application on its merits against these tests, based on the information provided in the application.

## ■ Football

**Catherine West:** [\[5493\]](#)

To ask the Minister of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to enable a fan-led review into football club ownership and management.

**Nigel Adams:**

Football clubs are the heart of local communities, they have unique social value and many with a great history. It is vital they are protected and fans should have their voices heard.

We have committed to a fan led review of football governance, which will include consideration of the Owners' and Directors' test. I recently met with the EFL to discuss the progress of their own review into club governance and we will take this into account as we decide the scope and structure of a government review.

## ■ Football: Sportsgrounds

**Catherine West:** [\[5492\]](#)

To ask the Minister of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will undertake a trial of safe standing areas in football stadia in England for the next football season.

**Nigel Adams:**

We are working with the football authorities and supporters' groups to deliver the government's commitment to move towards introducing areas of standing in football stadia currently subject to the all-seater policy. I will be setting out the government's next steps once I have considered the findings of the independent research commissioned by the Sports Grounds Safety Authority into the management of standing at football, the associated safety risks, and how these can be mitigated.

## ■ Listed Events

**Kevin Brennan:** [\[5343\]](#)

To ask the Minister of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will add the Six Nations rugby union championship to the category A list of events not permitted to be broadcast solely on paid television services.

**Nigel Adams:**

Events on Group B of the list, including the Six Nations, can have live coverage on subscription television provided that secondary coverage is offered to the eligible free-to-air broadcasters.

The Government is clear that the existing list works well with the inclusion of the Paralympic Games and women's equivalents of men's events currently on the list, on which the Government is consulting, and strikes the right balance between retaining free-to-air sports events for the public, and allowing rights holders to negotiate agreements in the best interests of their sport. The Government therefore has no

intention of undertaking a review of the list, or of moving the Six Nations from the category B list to the category A list.

### ■ **Television: Licensing**

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[5336\]](#)

To ask the Minister of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will hold discussions with representatives of the BBC on reinstating the TV licence concession for the over-75s.

**Nigel Adams:**

The Secretary of State has met with the Chairman of the BBC Board and the Director-General of the BBC and asked them to do more to help those affected by its decision

The Government is disappointed with the BBC's decision to restrict the over 75 licence fee concession to only those aged over 75 and in receipt of Pension Credit. We recognise the value of free TV licences for over-75s and believe that they should be funded by the BBC.

## EDUCATION

### ■ **Children: Protection**

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[5497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of contextual safeguarding.

**Michelle Donelan:**

Through the children's social care Innovation Programme, the Department for Education is funding the London Borough of Hackney up to £2 million to test "contextual safeguarding theory". This approach creates a system in which practitioners can appropriately assess and intervene when risk of harm comes from beyond an adolescent's family. The project is being externally evaluated and we expect the final report in March 2020.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[5517\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions of the effect of the roll-out of universal credit on the number of children on child protection plans.

**Michelle Donelan:**

The department has not made any assessment on the effect of the roll-out of universal credit on the number of children on child protection plans. However, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education and the department regularly meet with other government ministers and their departments to discuss their policies, including the impact of changes to the welfare system and children's social care. The

department recognises the importance of a cross-government approach to tackling social issues.

### ■ Children: Social Services

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[5498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to introduce a new funding round for the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme.

**Michelle Donelan:**

Since 2014, we have invested £200 million in the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme to give local authorities and children's social care organisations the permission, funding and support to test ways of doing things differently and to improve outcomes for vulnerable children.

We are committed to supporting innovation and want to make sure we use funding available in 2020-21 to learn from the current projects showing most promise. We are looking at how we can best spread learning to other areas, including considering the evaluations of projects which report in the coming months. We are in discussions with projects and hope to announce next steps shortly.

### ■ Learning Records Service

**Catherine West:** [\[5494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the privacy of young people of the Learning Records Service's provision of access to their data by gambling firms.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The recent use of the Learning Records Service (LRS) by a data broker was unauthorised and not sanctioned by the department. There was no data released about individual learners, only a confirmation or denial that a record existed.

Learning Record Service is designed to help learning providers verify their potential student's previous educational achievements and their eligibility for additional funding.

Education Providers who wish to use the service must register with the UK Register of Learning Providers (UKRLP). Once they are registered with UKRLP, Education Providers fill out an LRS registration form where their UKRLP data is verified, and sign the LRS provider agreement that states their data protection and security responsibilities.

We have temporarily disabled the service whilst our investigations are ongoing.

**Layla Moran:** [\[5525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when his Department plans to conclude its investigation into the reasons why an unauthorised third party was given access to data held by the Learning Records Service.

**Layla Moran:** [5526]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish the conclusions of his Department's investigation into the reasons why an unauthorised third party was given access to data held by the Learning Records Service.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The recent use of the Learning Records Service by a data broker was unauthorised and not sanctioned by the department. There was no data released about individual learners, only a confirmation or denial that a record existed.

The department is conducting thorough and urgent investigations into this which will conclude shortly.

In addition to internal investigations, the department is working with the Information Commissioner's Office to provide information on the events around this unsanctioned and unauthorised use of the Learning Records Service data by a third party.

#### ■ Pre-school Education: Finance

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [5514]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the level of funding for maintained nursery schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department recognises that Maintained Nursery Schools (MNS) are an important part of the early years sector and provide valuable services to disadvantaged children.

Last October we announced increases in hourly funding rates paid to local authorities for the early education entitlements for 2020-21.

In 2020-21, all local authorities will see an increase of 8p an hour to the hourly funding rates for the 2-year-old entitlement and an increase of 8p an hour for the vast majority of areas for the 3- and 4-year-old entitlement.

In addition to the hourly funding rates above, the Department invests approximately £60 million in 'maintained nursery school supplementary funding' each financial year, to allow local authorities to preserve MNS funding levels and last October we announced that this additional funding will continue at its current level for the whole of the 2020-21 financial year.

Details of funding paid to local authorities can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-funding-2020-2021>.

The Department remains committed to funding for MNS in the longer term. Any reform to the way they are funded in the future will be accompanied by appropriate funding protections. The Department plans to spend more than £3.6 billion on early education in 2020-21.

## ■ Primary Education: Free School Meals

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[5515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to introduce free school meals for all primary schoolchildren.

**Michelle Donelan:**

This government is committed to ensuring that children are well nourished and develop healthy eating habits that stay with them for the rest of their lives. Healthy eating not only supports children's health but also has an important contribution to make in ensuring children are able to concentrate and learn in schools, and therefore achieve their potential in life.

Under the benefits-based criteria, around 1.3 million of the most disadvantaged children are eligible for and claiming free school meals. Benefits-related free meals were extended to disadvantaged further education students in September 2014. A further 1.4 million infants receive a free nutritious meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme.

We do not currently have plans to extend free school meals to all primary pupils. We believe in prioritising the policy so it is focused on children that are most in need. We will review the eligibility criteria for free school meals at the end of the roll-out of Universal Credit. We have increased access to free meals through the introduction of Universal Infant Free School Meals and Further Education Free Meals. Our amended free school meal criteria, introduced in April 2018 mean we expect more pupils to benefit from benefits-related free school meals in 2022, compared to the legacy system.

## ■ Schools: Restraint Techniques

**Mike Kane:**

[\[5446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children were subjected to the use of physical restraint in schools in each of the academic years (a) 2017-18, (b) 2016-17 and (c) 2015-16.

**Mike Kane:**

[\[5447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if the Government will bring forward legislative proposals to amend the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 to introduce mandatory reporting of incidents of restraint in schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department does not collect or record information about schools' use of restraint or restrictive practices, and does not intend to introduce mandatory reporting at this time. We trust schools to use their judgement in recording incidents involving force and, when serious incidents occur, we would expect schools to record the incident and let the parents know.

Schools need to be safe and calm environments with effective behaviour management policies and approaches that meet the needs of all pupils, including those with mental health difficulties, special educational needs or disabilities.

At times, it may be necessary to use reasonable force to restrain a pupil – for example, to break up a fight in order to protect teachers and other pupils. Wherever possible, restraint and restrictive intervention should be avoided; and proactive, preventative, non-restrictive approaches adopted in respect of behaviour that challenges.

In June 2019, the Department for Health & Social Care and Department for Education jointly published non-statutory guidance on reducing restraint and restrictive intervention in health and social care services and special education settings. This guidance aims to help settings adopt a preventative approach to supporting children and young people with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum conditions and mental health difficulties.

## ■ Sex and Relationship Education

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:** [\[5499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will (a) ensure that the implementation guidance on Relationships and Sex Education is clear that the inclusiveness of such education is essential to its high quality and (b) support schools to develop inclusive practice.

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:** [\[5500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether all plans are in place for schools to teach high-quality Relationships and Sex Education from September 2020.

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:** [\[5501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that schools have adequate resources to teach Relationships and Sex Education from September 2020.

**Nick Gibb:**

The new subjects of relationships education (for primary age pupils), relationships and sex education (for secondary age pupils) and health education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) will become compulsory in September 2020. Many schools are already teaching aspects of these subjects as part of their sex and relationship education provision or personal, social, health and economic education programme. Schools have flexibility to determine how to deliver the new content in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Department is investing in a central programme of support for the new subjects, which is planned to be available to all teachers from spring 2020. The programme will focus on tools that improve schools' practice and will offer opportunities for teachers to improve subject knowledge, build confidence and share best practice. The



Department's internal budgets for 2020-21, including supporting the implementation of the new subjects, have not yet been set and this will be confirmed in due course.

This support will be accessed through a new online service and will include an implementation guide, which will accompany the statutory guidance, case studies from early adopter schools, and innovative materials to support staff training.

We will ensure that all of the Department's materials supporting implementation of the new subjects are inclusive, and recognise fully the need to disseminate the good practice in teaching about LGBT relationships that is seen in large numbers of our schools as well as the importance of reflecting the needs of pupils with a special educational need or disability when planning the curriculum for these subjects.

## ■ Special Educational Needs

**Anne Marie Morris:**

**[5430]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that children with special educational needs are able to access support services close to home.

**Michelle Donelan:**

Most children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) are able to access support locally. Local authorities must publish a Local Offer of services that they expect to be available in their area to meet the education, health and social care needs of children and young people who have SEND, which should be kept under review. In September 2019, we launched a major cross-government review of the SEND system, to look at how we can improve support for children and young people with SEND. We have announced major investment in education, including an additional £780 million for children and young people with the most complex needs, bringing total high needs funding to over £7 billion. In our recent manifesto we have committed to delivering more school places for children with complex SEND and have allocated £365 million capital funding to local authorities from 2018 to 2021 for them to increase number of places available locally and enhance facilities.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

**[5518]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policy on SEND funding of the recommendations of paragraph 15 of the Local Government Association's report entitled, Have we reached a 'tipping point'? Trends in spending for children and young people with SEND in England.

**Michelle Donelan:**

No child or young person should be held back from reaching their potential, including those with complex special needs. This is why we have announced £780 million of additional high needs funding next year (2020-21), an increase of 12% compared to this year, bringing the total amount for supporting those with the most complex needs to £7.2 billion. This will be the largest year-on-year increase since the high needs

funding block was created in 2013. Allocations for future years will be announced in due course.

Every local authority will see an increase in high needs funding, of at least 8% per head of population aged 2 to 18, with some seeing gains of up to 17% per head. This will provide valuable extra resources so that support is in place to make sure that no pupil or student is left behind.

However, the response to cost pressures cannot simply be about the amount of funding available. We have launched a review of the special educational needs and disabilities system to see what further improvements are necessary to make sure every child gets the education that is right for them.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Air Pollution

**Neil Coyle:**

[\[3765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to reduce air pollution levels (a) throughout the UK, (b) in inner city communities and (c) in the London Borough of Southwark.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Air quality is a key policy area for this Government and a great deal of work is being done to tackle air pollution. Implementing the commitments set out in the Clean Air Strategy (CAS), which was published last year, will help to clean up our air faster and more effectively in towns and cities.

The upcoming Environment Bill, which will shortly be reintroduced to Parliament, will deliver some key commitments in the CAS. This includes introducing a duty to set a legally binding target for fine particulate matter concentrations, the pollutant of most harm to health. The Bill will also ensure that local authorities have a clear framework for tackling air pollution, and are better able to tackle a key source of fine particulate matter emissions – domestic solid fuel burning. It will also provide the Government with new powers to enforce environmental standards for vehicles and machinery.

The Government's Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) is also working with a number of local authorities to deliver compliance with legal limits for nitrogen dioxide in the shortest possible time. JAQU provides these local authorities with guidance and support to develop local plans to identify and implement suitable measures to achieve this objective, supported by £572 million dedicated funding. In some instances local authorities will be implementing charging clean air zones to deliver these reductions, and the Government is working closely with these authorities to ensure the necessary IT systems are in place and ready to use.

Further, Defra's Air Quality Grant Programme provides funding to local authorities, funding projects in local communities to tackle air pollution and reduce emissions

affecting schools, businesses and residents. Defra has awarded over £60 million in funding to local authorities since the grant started in 1997.

These measures will improve air quality across the country, including in inner-city areas. For London, air quality is the responsibility of the Mayor of London.

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**

[\[5495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the World Health Organisation's air pollution limits on particulate matter; and what plans her Department has to adopt those targets.

**Rebecca Pow:**

In July 2019, the Government published a report assessing the progress that will be made towards World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines under a range of scenarios. The report concluded that while significant progress would be made, additional action would be required in large urban areas such as London. The analysis did not outline a pathway to achieve the WHO guideline level for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) across the country, and did not take into account full economic viability and practical deliverability.

The Environment Bill, which will be introduced shortly, will establish a legally binding duty to set a target for PM<sub>2.5</sub>, demonstrating our commitment to action on the air pollutant that has the most significant impact on human health. We are committed to setting challenging targets and following an evidence based process, seeking advice from a range of experts, in addition to giving consideration to the WHO's air quality guidelines. We need to ensure that the target is based on realistic pathways, robust science and full economic analysis to ensure that it is both ambitious and achievable, and focus on how the greatest public health benefits can be achieved.

## ■ Chemicals: Regulation

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[5410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the potential economic effect on the chemicals industry of regulatory divergence from the EU.

**Rebecca Pow:**

When we leave the EU we will bring Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) into UK law. This will mean that any decision we take as an independent regime will be consistent with the fundamental aims and principles of REACH and based on rigorous assessment of the scientific evidence. We will not change what REACH sets out to achieve, including a high level of protection of human health and the environment.

The Government published "EU Exit: Long-term economic impacts" in November 2018. This paper provides estimates of the economic impact of a range of future

trading relationships with the EU. One of the drivers of this estimate of impact is the cost of potential regulatory divergence.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Climate Change**

**Darren Jones:**

[R] [\[4458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the effect of climate change on the work of her Department; and what steps she is taking in response to that effect.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Tackling climate change is a priority for the whole of Government, which is why the Prime Minister is chairing a new Cabinet Committee on Climate Change to drive action across all sectors of the economy and demonstrate the UK's global leadership as we prepare to host the crucial COP26 talks in Glasgow in November. Defra is playing its part in achieving net zero, taking forward efforts to reduce emissions from agriculture, waste, land-use and fluorinated gases and to encourage sequestration through forestry.

Defra, as the lead department for domestic adaptation, is responsible for delivering adaptation duties set out in the Climate Change Act 2008. These include preparing, every five years, a UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA), followed by a National Adaptation Programme (NAP), which sets out actions to address the risks identified in the CCRA. The second, most recent, CCRA was published in 2017 and the second NAP was published in July 2018.

Adaptation is rightly integrated throughout the policies and programmes of Government. The NAP includes actions in a broad range of areas, including the natural environment, infrastructure, people and the built environment, business and industry, and local Government. It sets out the actions Government is taking to address the risks posed by a changing climate - including Government investment of £2.6 billion between 2015 and 2021 to better protect 300,000 homes from flooding and coastal erosion. We are also developing and implementing a Nature Recovery Network, which will create or restore 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat in England. Nature recovery can help us to mitigate and adapt to climate change, because our wetlands, forests and grasslands capture carbon and provide other environmental benefits, such as flood management and pollination. Marine Protected Areas (including the 41 new Marine Conservation Zones we designated last year) now cover 40% of English waters and will help enhance the resilience of ecosystems and wildlife to climate change.

Defra will work with other departments through the Cabinet Committee on Climate Change, chaired by the Prime Minister.

## ■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Families

**Steve Double:**

[\[4380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department has a single individual who is responsible for leading on the application of the Family Test.

**George Eustice:**

Each department has a function that leads on ensuring Family Test (FT) requirements are embedded, and is part of the Civil Service Family Test Network.

This Network is the central forum through which we have sought input and comments on the support departments need to help with FT implementation. Members feed improvements into existing guidance for officials in all departments on FT implementation.

Within Defra the Secondary Legislation Business Partner Team has responsibility for ensuring there is consistent application of the FT. All new policy development must include a FT assessment, which policy leads access via the Cabinet Office cleared guidance.

## ■ Floods

**Sir Greg Knight:**

[\[3677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to encourage the formation and adoption of a code of practice on flooding by (a) local authorities, (b) drainage boards, (c) home owners, (d) landowners and (e) other stakeholders to ensure that effective and consistent action is taken when flooding occurs; and if he will make a statement.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Environment Agency (EA) takes the lead role in managing flood risk in England under the Flood & Water Management Act (2010). They work with partners to reduce flood risk for people, property and the environment. Local authorities and internal drainage boards manage the smaller watercourses, and the EA manages the larger rivers.

The EA's 2011 National flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England set the direction for all risk management authorities. The EA will be finalising their new national strategy for managing flood and coastal erosion risk during 2020. This new strategy will outline how partner organisations can work better together to create climate resilient places; growth and infrastructure resilient to tomorrow's climate; and a nation of climate champions.

All risk management authorities and landowners have a role to play in planning for and responding to emergencies. The Civil Contingency Act (2004) sets out the roles and responsibilities of responders.

Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) come together to plan and prepare for localised incidents and catastrophic emergencies. They work to identify potential risks and

produce emergency plans to either prevent or mitigate the impact of any incident on their local communities (including homeowners).

It is recommended that each LRF has a Multi-Agency Flood Plan (MAFP) outlining the roles and expectations of all organisations involved at a local level in preparation for, and during a flood. In 2018, a review was carried out of the effectiveness and consistency of MAFPs across the country and government's response was published in 2019. To support that response, Defra has provided updated guidance for LRFs on what should be included within their MAFP.

## ■ Fly-tipping

**Dan Jarvis:**

**[5427]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what (a) guidance and (b) support her Department provides to local authorities to help tackle with fly-tipping.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Tackling fly-tipping is a Government priority. It blights local communities and the environment wherever it occurs and we are committed to tackling fly-tipping.

Guidance for local authorities can be found on the Gov.uk website. It includes information and links on local authority responsibilities, investigations, penalties and prosecutions, claiming costs, keeping records and preventing fly-tipping. The guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fly-tipping-council-responsibilities>

In August 2019 we published a research project on public awareness of and adherence to the household waste duty of care. We also published related publicity materials that have been provided to the Local Government Association to circulate to local authorities. They are available on the National Fly-Tipping Prevention Group's (NFTPG) website: <http://www.tacklingflytipping.com>

With the support of local authorities, the NFTPG, chaired by Defra, has published a Fly-tipping Partnership Framework outlining best practice for the prevention, reporting, investigation and clearance of fly-tipping. It has also published a series of fly-tipping prevention guides for householders, businesses and landowners.

We have also committed to the development of a fly-tipping toolkit, hosted by the NFTPG. This will be a web-based tool to help local authorities and others work in partnership to tackle fly-tipping. It will cover, for example, the use of new technology to report fly-tipping, sharing of intelligence within and between partnerships, dealing with unauthorised encampments and promoting the duty of care to individuals and businesses.

In addition to the above, we have given local authorities a range of powers available to tackle fly-tipping. These include the power to issue fixed penalty notices (FPNs) of up to £400 for fly-tipping offences, including to those caught fly-tipping and householders who pass their waste to a fly-tipper. Local authorities also have enhanced powers to search and seize vehicles of suspected fly-tippers. Powers to

issue FPNs provide local authorities with an efficient mechanism to hold fly-tipping perpetrators to account without having to go to court, which can be a time consuming, resource-intensive and expensive process. Additionally, the ability to issue FPNs can deter potential fly-tippers from fly-tipping in the first place.

#### ■ **Hunting Act 2004**

**Ian Lavery:** [\[4738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she has plans to bring forward legislative proposals in relation to the Hunting Act 2004.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Government will not amend the Hunting Act 2004.

#### ■ **Inland Waterways: Chesterfield**

**Mr Toby Perkins:** [\[3731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she has taken to support the regeneration plans being developed by the Chesterfield Canal trust.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Department has not taken any such steps. Responsibility for canals in England and Wales, including their operation, development or restoration rests with the bodies that own them and for which they are the navigation authority. The Canal and River Trust (CRT) owns the eastern section of the Chesterfield Canal from the M1 motorway at Norwood to the River Trent, while to the west of the M1 motorway from Norwood the canal is owned by local authorities. The CRT works closely with the Chesterfield Canal Trust and supports their canal regeneration plans.

#### ■ **River Hipper and River Rother: Flood Control**

**Mr Toby Perkins:** [\[3732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government (a) has taken and (b) proposes to take to reduce flooding from (i) the River Rother and (ii) the River Hipper.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Environment Agency (EA) has taken a number of steps to reduce flooding from the River Rother and the River Hipper in Chesterfield. In partnership with Chesterfield Council the EA delivered two Property Level Protection projects in Brampton & Hollis Lane in 2016 and one in St Augustines Road last year. These have cost a total of £567,000 and protected a total of 93 properties. The EA has also delivered the St Augustines Road Flood Alleviation Study to investigate the use of sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water and other sources of flood risk affecting St Augustines Road. This cost £15,000 and was completed in 2017. Finally in 2019, the Homes & Communities Agency, in partnership with the EA, has delivered the Avenue Flood Balancing Reservoir, with the EA contributing £2.9 million. This is a

flood storage reservoir designed to reduce flooding along the River Rother, better protecting 115 properties.

For ongoing work to reduce flooding in the future, a natural flood management (NFM) officer has been employed for two years using £69,000 of local levy funding to deliver NFM measures in the upper Rother Catchment, particularly benefitting Chesterfield and surrounding settlements. This proposal has been developed in partnership with Derbyshire County Council and the EA.

## ■ Solid Fuels: Heating

**Philip Davies:** [\[3710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will publish a revised impact assessment before the Government publishes its response to the consultation on cleaner domestic burning of solid fuels and wood; and if she will make a statement.

**Rebecca Pow:**

We intend that a revised impact assessment will be published alongside our response to the consultation on the cleaner burning of solid fuels and wood in the near future.

## ■ Weedkillers

**Mr Richard Holden:** [\[5571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her plans are for the future use of the Roundup 360 herbicide in the UK.

**George Eustice:**

Pesticides are subject to strict regulation and are only permitted for use where a comprehensive scientific assessment finds that this will not harm people or have unacceptable effects on the environment. The assessment first considers the active substance. If this is approved for use, each product containing that active substance is assessed and is only authorised, subject to any necessary conditions, if the risks are acceptably low. If necessary, specific conditions of authorisation are set and are communicated to users through the product label. Approvals and authorisations are reviewed regularly to make sure that pesticides continue to meet the latest safety standards.

Roundup is subject to this process. The active substance, glyphosate is approved until 15 December 2022 and Roundup products are authorised following scientific assessment by the Health and Safety Executive. When the approval of glyphosate and the product authorisations are reviewed, we will again consider our position based on a careful scientific assessment of the evidence and risks at that time.

Decision-making on the use of pesticides after the UK leaves the EU will continue to be based on careful scientific assessment of the risks. Our highest priority will continue to be the protection of people and the environment.



**EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION****■ Borders: Northern Ireland****Ruth Jones:****[3889]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether there will be checks and controls for (a) people and (b) goods entering the island of Ireland from Great Britain after the UK leaves the EU.

**James Duddridge:**

Regarding the movement of people, the UK and Irish governments have made firm commitments to protect Common Travel Area arrangements, including the associated rights of British and Irish citizens in each other's state. Article 3 of the revised Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland allows the UK and Ireland to continue these arrangements after EU Exit.

Northern Ireland remains part of the UK's single customs territory. The Prime Minister has been clear that, beyond the limited changes introduced by the Northern Ireland Protocol, there will be no changes to GB-NI trade in goods.

Under the terms of the Protocol no tariffs will be paid on goods moving within the United Kingdom unless they are destined to enter the EU via the Republic of Ireland.

Once we leave the EU, the UK will cease to be a Member State. Movements of goods from Great Britain to the Republic of Ireland will be subject to the arrangements concluded by the UK and the EU as part of the future relationship. We are aiming for an ambitious agreement with the EU with zero tariffs and quotas which could, depending on what is agreed, replace the Protocol.

In the Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration, both sides have committed to use their best endeavours to negotiate that agreement by the end of this year.

Most importantly, the special arrangements provided for in the Protocol are subject to the democratic consent of the people of Northern Ireland, ensuring that if they find the arrangements of the Protocol unsatisfactory for any reason they have the choice to bring those arrangements to an end.

**■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Pay****Chris Stephens:****[3816]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether his Department complies with the requirement set out in section 3.1.8 of the Civil Service Management Code that time off with pay for safety representatives will not be set against facility time allowed under existing arrangements.

**James Duddridge:**

Yes. DExEU complies with this requirement; any safety representative employed by the Department would be entitled to time off with pay, which would not be set against facility time.

Obligations to provide reasonable paid time off to trade union representatives to undertake trade union duties include paid time off for safety representatives, as set out in section 3.1.8 of the Civil Service Management Code.

■ **Department for Exiting the European Union: Trade Unions**

**Chris Stephens:**

[\[3815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation affects the right of recognised unions in his Department to bargaining information as set out in Section 181 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

**James Duddridge:**

GDPR has not affected the rights of unions in DExEU to bargaining information provided under section 181 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

## FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ **Bahrain: Overseas Aid**

**Chris Law:**

[\[5456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will publish the (a) names and (b) organisations (a) delivering and (b) benefiting from training funded through the Integrated Activity Fund to Bahrain in the financial years (i) 2018-19 and (ii) 2019-20.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The Integrated Activity Fund provides funding in support of a range of programmes across the Gulf Region. These include, but are not limited to, activities focusing on aquaculture, sport and culture, healthcare and institutional capacity building. All of our work is in line with international standards and aims to share the UK's expertise and experience.

**Dan Jarvis:**

[\[5583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the re-imposition of the death sentence for Bahraini prisoners, Mohammed Ramadhan and Husain Moosa, if he will publish details of the continued assistance being provided by the Government to (a) justice and (b) security bodies in the Bahraini Government.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

As I said on 8 January, we are deeply concerned about the death sentences given to Mohammed Ramadhan and Husain Moosa. The Government of Bahrain is fully aware that the UK is firmly opposed to the death penalty, in all circumstances. The UK has and will continue to monitor the cases closely and raise concerns with senior members of the Bahraini Government.

Assistance provided to Bahrain is kept under regular review. All of our work is provided in line with international standards, and fully complies with our domestic and international human rights obligations.

#### ■ **British National (Overseas): Detainees**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[3703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the number of detainees abroad who hold a British National (Overseas) passport who have been provided with consular assistance in the last 12 months.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

In the last 12 months the FCO has responded to 16 new requests for assistance from British Nationals (Overseas) who were arrested or detained. As of December 2019 the FCO was providing ongoing assistance to 44 British Nationals (Overseas) in detention. We provide tailored assistance upon request to all British national detainees abroad, including British nationals (overseas). This varies according to individual circumstances and local conditions but the types of consular support we can provide is set out in the online document 'Support for British nationals abroad: a guide', available on the GOV.UK website.

#### ■ **British Nationals Abroad: Detainees**

**Sir David Amess:**

[\[5317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to support UK citizens detained abroad who dispute the criminal charge against them.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

We offer impartial and non-judgmental help to British nationals detained overseas according to individual circumstances and local conditions. We provide a list of local English speaking lawyers and encourage detainees to consider legal representation in all cases. We continue to advocate for worldwide acceptance of, and adherence to, international human rights standards including the right to a fair trial, even when a state is not party to a particular human rights treaty. If British nationals are not treated in line with internationally-accepted standards, we will consider approaching local authorities.

#### ■ **Climate Change: International Cooperation**

**Alison McGovern:**

[\[5411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what diplomatic steps he is taking with his counterparts in the (a) Chinese Government, (b) US Administration and (c) EU on limiting global temperature increases.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

Climate change is one of the most urgent and pressing challenges facing the world today. No country can solve this problem alone and we are working with all partners to raise global ambition in this area. We will continue to intensify our engagement with China, the US and the EU in the run up to 2020 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), which as you know the British government bid and secured responsibility to host in Glasgow in November this year, in partnership with Italy. COP26 will be the major international moment for climate change in 2020, and there is no greater priority this year for the FCO. Our diplomatic network network will have a key role to play in driving up ambition and action.

**Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Climate Change****Darren Jones:****[R] [4449]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of climate change on the work of his Department; and what steps he is taking in response to that effect.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

Climate change is one of the most urgent and pressing challenges facing the world today. However, no country alone can solve this problem. That is why climate change is a top priority for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and why the British government bid and secured responsibility to host COP26 in Glasgow this year, in partnership with Italy. COP26 will be a major international moment in 2020, and the FCO network will have a key diplomatic role to play, along with other government departments, in efforts to raise global ambition in all countries to tackle climate change.

**Giulio Regeni and Shaimaa al-Sabbagh****Jonathan Edwards:****[5394]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will (a) attend the vigil marking the fourth anniversary of the disappearance of Giulio Regeni on 25 January 2020 and (b) make representations to his Egyptian counterpart on the case of Shaimaa al-Sabbagh on the forthcoming fifth anniversary of her death.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

We have the deepest sympathy for Giulio Regeni's family and their quest for justice for his appalling murder. We continue to follow the investigation into his death and to work closely with the Italian Government. We have raised with the Egyptian authorities at a senior level the need for a transparent and impartial investigation, in full co-operation with Italy, so that Mr Regeni's killers can be brought to justice.

In 2015 the then Foreign Secretary conveyed to his Egyptian counterpart our deep concern over the death of Shaimaa El-Sabbagh. We continue to raise human rights concerns with the Egyptian authorities, both privately and in forums such as the UN

Humans Rights Council. Most recently, we raised human rights with the Egyptian delegation at a senior level in the margins of the UK-Africa Investment Summit.

#### ■ Hong Kong: Police

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[3701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Chinese counterpart on reports of trespassing on the territory of the British Consulate in Hong Kong by Hong Kong Police.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The Foreign Secretary has not had a discussion with his Chinese counterpart about the reports of trespassing. An arrest took place on 11 January outside the British Consulate General on an area of land under lease by the British Government from the Hong Kong Government. This area of land is adjacent to the pavement, continuously open to the public, and does not carry any special status under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. A small static protest has been ongoing outside the British Consulate General in Hong Kong for a number of months. This is consistent with the UK's support for peaceful and lawful protest. We have repeatedly made clear that we support the right to peaceful and lawful protest. It is essential all arrests and police actions are made according to the law and conducted in a fair and transparent manner.

#### ■ Hong Kong: Politics and Government

**Paul Girvan:** [\[4469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Hong Kong counterparts on democratic rights in Hong Kong.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The Foreign Secretary has set out our concerns about the situation in Hong Kong directly with both the Hong Kong Chief Executive, Carrie Lam and to the Chinese Foreign Minister, State Councillor Wang Yi. The Foreign Secretary made clear that meaningful political dialogue is the only way to resolve the situation. Senior officials have remained in regular contact with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the authorities in Beijing. The leadership in China and Hong Kong is in no doubt about the strength of UK concern over the current situation in Hong Kong, and our commitment to seeing the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Joint Declaration upheld.

#### ■ Indonesia: Military Aid

**Anneliese Dodds:** [\[5584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Government has provided any support to the Indonesia Government for (a) military

training, (b) internal security training and (c) public order training since January 2015; and if he will make a statement.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The UK supports counter-terrorism training for the Indonesian National Police, through the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC). This includes a broad range of counter terrorism investigation and analytical skills, essential equipment to enhance Indonesia's forensic, surveillance and IT capabilities; training on the post-terrorist incident response, including first aid training. The British Armed Forces have provided the Indonesian military a number of professional educational courses for officers, and training in specific areas of capability, including maritime security. The UK does not provide Indonesia with any public order training.

■ **Iran: Conflict Prevention**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[3696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what diplomatic steps he is taking to help prevent an escalation of conflict in Iran.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The strategic aim for the UK, and our international partners, remains as it has always been: to de-escalate tensions, to hold Iran to account for its nefarious activities, and to keep the diplomatic door open for the regime to negotiate a peaceful way forwards. As we have emphasised in the House in recent days, we are in close contact with all sides to encourage de-escalation and to support peace and stability.

The Prime Minister has spoken to President Trump, President Macron, Chancellor Merkel, Prime Minister Abdulmehdi of Iraq and President Rouhani of Iran to send a clear and consistent message on the need for de-escalation and to find a diplomatic way forward. We continue to raise this matter with international partners. The Foreign Secretary has been in constant contact with leaders and foreign ministers from across the globe and we have taken steps to increase the security of our personnel and interests in the region. The E3 (the UK, France and Germany) have jointly taken action to hold Iran to account for its systematic non-compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. We have formally triggered the Dispute Resolution Mechanism, thereby referring Iran to the Joint Commission.

■ **Nuclear Weapons: Proliferation**

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

[\[4389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he plans to make an assessment of the current effectiveness of the Budapest Memorandum.

**Christopher Pincher:**

In the Budapest Memorandum, in return for Ukraine giving up its nuclear weapons, Russia joined the United Kingdom and the United States in reaffirming their obligation to "refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against

Ukraine except in self-defence or otherwise in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations." Russia is in clear breach of those commitments as well as a number of other international obligations and commitments, including under the UN Charter and the OSCE Helsinki Final Act.

The United Kingdom remains willing to engage on the basis of the Budapest Memorandum and in March 2014 the then Foreign Secretary took part in a Budapest format ministerial meeting. Russia refused to take part in that meeting, and has continued to refuse to engage despite the Budapest Memorandum committing them to such talks.

We remain strong and active supporters of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. This includes building the resilience and capacity of the Ukrainian armed forces through Operation Orbital, and playing a leading role in maintaining sanctions against Russia.

## ■ Overseas Aid

**Chris Law:** [\[5454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how much money from the public purse was allocated to the Integrated Activity Fund in the financial year 2018-19; and how much did that fund allocate to Bahrain in 2018-19.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Overall spend from the Integrated Activity Fund (IAF) in 2018/19 financial year was £17.08 million. The IAF funded activity in all six Gulf Cooperation Council states: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman. Many of the projects and programme activities were delivered regionally, so it is not possible to provide a breakdown by beneficiary state.

**Chris Law:** [\[5455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the Integrated Activity Fund's (a) allocated budget and (b) projected spending is for the financial year 2019-20.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The allocated budget for the Integrated Activity Fund for the 2019/20 financial year is £20 million. Final spend is projected to be £13.9 million.

**Chris Law:** [\[5457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the planned (a) duration and (b) budget is for the Integrated Activity Fund after financial year 2019-20.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The Integrated Activity Fund will have a budget of £20 million for the financial year 2020/21. Budget allocations beyond 2020/21 will be agreed as part of the forthcoming Spending Review.

## ■ Persecution of Christians across the Globe Independent Review

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[3702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when the Cabinet plans to consider the recommendations of the Bishop of Truro's Independent Review for the Foreign Secretary of FCO Support for Persecuted Christians.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The persecution of Christians, and indeed individuals of all faiths or beliefs, remains of profound concern to us. The scale of this persecution prompted the former Foreign Secretary to ask the Bishop of Truro to examine how the British Government could better respond to the plight of persecuted Christians around the world. The Bishop of Truro published a hard-hitting report with 22 ambitious recommendations. We have accepted the recommendations in full and work is ongoing to implement them in a way that will bring real improvements in the lives of those persecuted because of their faith or belief, Mr Rehman Chishti MP. This work is being overseen by the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief.

## ■ Tanzania: Diplomatic Relations

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[3687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the strength of the UK's diplomatic relations with Tanzania.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

The UK has had a positive and close diplomatic relationship with Tanzania over many decades, especially in the areas of trade and investment. We are the largest foreign investor in Tanzania in a range of industries including agriculture, energy and hospitality. Tanzania receives a large amount of British Overseas Development Aid, with £152m spent in 2018-19. UK aid has supported efforts to tackle organised crime; improved education access and quality especially for girls; created jobs and trade by investing in infrastructure and agriculture; and shared the expertise of Britain's democratic values and traditions to strengthen Tanzania's judiciary and parliament.

As a close friend and partner, we are honest about the challenges facing British investors, and the progressive erosion of freedom of speech that infringes civil and political rights. In our engagements with the Government of Tanzania, we raise our concerns and urge it to meet its obligations towards democratic governance and due process. We also raise our concerns regarding the business environment which has led to productive dialogue between the British business community and key authorities. Tanzania is a committed member of the Commonwealth and valued partner on climate change.



**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE****■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Standards**

**Ben Lake:** [\[5506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has for replacement for the four-hour A&E target time to improve the efficiency of (a) health services and (b) patient care.

**Edward Argar:**

At the Government's request, NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with clinical leaders across the system to review our standards as part of the clinically-led review of access standards. The recommendations of the review will be carefully studied, and any recommended changes will be based on clinical evidence to ensure the best outcome for patients. We will update on this in due course.

**■ Cancer: Drugs**

**Mr Clive Betts:** [\[R\] \[5324\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that the proposed Innovative Medicines Fund does not adversely affect funding available for cancer drugs.

**Mr Clive Betts:** [\[R\] \[5325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to consult on his proposed reforms to the Cancer Drugs Fund.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Cancer Drugs Fund will be extended to create a new Innovative Medicines Fund so that doctors can use the most advanced, life-saving treatments for conditions such as autoimmune disease or cancer, or for children with other rare diseases.

Detailed proposals for the new Innovative Medicines Fund are in development and will be consulted on in due course. They will extend the successes of the reformed Cancer Drugs Fund into other areas.

**■ Cannabis: Medical Treatments**

**Ronnie Cowan:** [\[3830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many prescriptions for medical cannabis were issued by the NHS in 2019.

**Jo Churchill:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement is using extant systems to monitor the use of unlicensed cannabis-based products for medicinal use in England. In England, these systems monitor the number of items dispensed and associated costs in primary care and the volume of products used and associated cost in secondary care. NHS England and NHS Improvement Controlled Drug Accountable Officers are also

collecting local intelligence in both the National Health Service and independent sector.

The NHS Business Services Authority is only able to provide information on prescriptions for cannabis-based medicines that have been prescribed and submitted to it. The NHS Business Services Authority does not hold information on prescriptions for cannabis-based medicines which have been issued but not fulfilled.

The following table shows the number of items for Nabilone, Sativex and Epidyolex (licensed cannabis-based medicines) and unlicensed cannabis-based medicines that were prescribed on an NHS prescription, dispensed in the community and submitted to the NHS Business Services Authority for reimbursement between January and October 2019 (October 2019 is the most recent dispensing data held by the NHS Business Services Authority).

MONTH	LICENSED CANNABIS-BASED MEDICINES			UNLICENSED CANNABIS-BASED MEDICINES
	NABILONE	SATIVEX	EPIDYOLEX *	
January 2019	44	167		2
February 2019	36	159		1
March 2019	51	171		2
April 2019	49	156		2
May 2019	59	176		2
June 2019	47	187		2
July 2019	54	158		2
August 2019	46	174		1
September 2019	58	179	0	1
October 2019	46	173	0	1
Total	490	1,700	0	16
Grand Total	2,206			

Note:

\*Epidyolex was unlicensed prior to September 2019; no NHS prescriptions for Epidyolex have been submitted at the time this data was produced. In addition to the above, approximately 185 patients have accessed Epidyolex through the

manufacturer's (GW Pharma) early access programmes, ahead of a licensing decision by the European Medicines Agency.

### ■ Carers: Young People

**Grahame Morris:** [\[5406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many GP practices in (a) Easington constituency, (b) County Durham and (c) the North East have adopted the care for young carers package launched by NHS England.

**Caroline Dinenge:**

The information requested is not held centrally.

### ■ Degarelix

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[3751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure the continued supply of Degarelix for the treatment of patients with advanced prostate cancer.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Department fully understands that maintaining access to degarelix (Firmagon) injection is vitally important to many people in this country.

We are currently not aware of any supply issues with degarelix injection from Ferring Pharmaceuticals Ltd and supplies are currently available.

We continue to work closely with industry and partners in the health system to help prevent shortages and to ensure that the risks to patients are minimised when supply issues do arise.

### ■ Department of Health and Social Care: Brexit

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[3836\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much his Department has allocated to preparation for leaving the EU without a deal (a) since 2016 and (b) since March 2019.

**Edward Argar:**

Since 2016, £6.3 billion has been made available for Government wide preparations, of which the Department has been allocated £355 million. This includes allocations of £334 million for financial year 2019-20.

Due to the nature of European Union exit spend, we do not hold the information to be able to determine specific 'no deal' spend from wider EU exit spend.

**■ Doctors: Pensions****Tonia Antoniazzi:** [\[5504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of reducing the annual allowance for pension growth on senior doctors and consultants in the NHS retiring early.

**Tonia Antoniazzi:** [\[5505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what representations he has received from senior doctors and consultants on changes to the NHS Pension Scheme.

**Edward Argar:**

The Department recognises that the annual allowance may contribute to decisions from National Health Service consultants to retire early or limit their NHS commitment. The Government is listening carefully to concerns raised by senior doctors and NHS employers about the tapered annual allowance.

In September 2019 guidance was issued by NHS Employers informing employers of the short-term approaches that they could take to mitigate the effect of pension tax on their workforce this tax year. The NHS has also implemented an immediate measure to preserve clinical capacity amid the increased pressure on services during the winter period. This will compensate NHS clinicians for the effect on their pensions of annual allowance charged incurred in 2019-20.

The Department has consulted on introducing flexibility within the NHS Pension Scheme from 2019/20 to allow clinicians affected by annual allowance tax charges to reduce their pension accrual in deciles in order to manage any potential annual allowance tax charges.

As part of a wider drive to ensure the NHS has the staff it needs to meet demand and transform care, the Government is carrying out an urgent review of the pensions annual allowance taper problem that has caused some doctors to turn down extra shifts for fear of high tax bills. On 13 January, Ministers held a roundtable with the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, the British Medical Association and other representative organisations as part of this review to find a long-term solution.

The review will consider the findings from the Department's consultation on pension flexibility and will report at the Budget on 11 March.

**■ Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome: Health Services****Dan Jarvis:** [\[5426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support his Department provides to sufferers of Ehlers-Danlos syndrome; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

Ehlers Danlos syndrome (EDS) comprises a group of rare inherited conditions affecting connective tissue. There are several different types of EDS and patients

may be looked after by their general practitioners (GPs), in secondary care and in tertiary care.

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) commission secondary care services for patients who have EDS and NHS England commissions some specialist services for patients with EDS. A service for patients who have complex EDS is delivered by two centres in England (London North West University Healthcare Trust and Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust). The Complex EDS service provides diagnosis and advice to referrers on treatment and management of complex cases. Further information on EDS and the EDS Support Group can be found at the following link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/ehlers-danlos-syndromes/>

The United Kingdom implements an overarching strategy recognising and responding to the needs of all those affected by rare diseases. The UK Strategy for Rare Diseases is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rare-diseases-strategy>

## ■ Epilepsy: Drugs

**Cat Smith:** [5459]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reasons epilepsy is allocated one point in the General Medical Services Statement of Financial Entitlements (Amendment) Directions 2019; and what steps GPs take to ensure that women of child bearing age who are prescribed Valproate are enrolled in a pregnancy prevention programme.

**Cat Smith:** [5460]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reasons no points have been allocated to ongoing management for epilepsy medication in the General Medical Services contract Quality and Outcomes Framework.

**Jo Churchill:**

Changes to the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF)- including allocation of points- are agreed as part of wider amendments to the General Medical Services (GMS) Contract. These changes are negotiated by NHS England and the British Medical Association's (BMA) General Practitioners Committee England. Guidance on the 2019/20 GMS Contract concerning the QOF was published by the BMA and NHS England in April 2019. This guidance includes an epilepsy indicator which states that 'the contractor establishes and maintains a register of patients aged 18 or over receiving drug treatment for epilepsy'. QOF points are generally weighted to the estimated workload associated with an indicator. Registers generally incur a lower workload than other indicators and therefore tend to attract a lower points value than other types of indicators.

Care of patients with long term conditions in general practice is described in the essential services element of the contract and funded through the global sum payment. Patients should expect to receive high quality care irrespective of whether

or not their condition is included in the QOF. The QOF indicators will continued to be reviewed going forward.

It is a Care Quality Commission regulatory requirement for general practitioners (GPs) to follow the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA) guidance on valproate prescribing. The MHRA advises that 'Valproate medicines must no longer be used in women or girls of childbearing potential unless a Pregnancy Prevention Programme is in place'.

NHS England are also taking broader action to support implementation of the MHRA pregnancy prevention guidelines. In April 2019, they introduced a new Quality Improvement module on prescribing safety into the QOF. As part of this module they expect practices to audit three measures, one of which is that girls and women of childbearing potential currently being prescribed valproate have had an annual specialist medication review and are taking this in compliance with the pregnancy prevention programme as documented by a specialist in the annual risk acknowledgement form. It is the responsibility of every healthcare professional involved in the prescribing and dispensing of valproate medicines to make sure women are aware of the risks and are on the pregnancy prevention programme.

#### ■ **General Practitioners: Hertford and Stortford**

**Julie Marson:** [\[4495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many of the additional 50 million GP appointments outlined in the Queen's Speech will be in Hertford and Stortford constituency; and over what timescale.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Government has committed to providing an additional 50 million appointments a year in general practice within the next five years. Work is underway to deliver this commitment. However, data is not currently collected or held centrally on the number and location of additional appointments.

#### ■ **General Practitioners: Romford**

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[3690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to maintain the level of out-of-hours GP cover in Romford constituency.

**Jo Churchill:**

In Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge, several health services work together to ensure local people can access NHS services seven days a week and out of hours.

The Government is improving access to general practitioner (GP) services and everyone will soon be able to access routine GP appointments at evenings and weekends as part of our plan for a seven-day National Health Service.

Evening and weekend general practice appointments are routinely available across the country now to enable patients to find appointments at a time convenient to them, with millions of patients having already benefitted from this.

This also provides additional capacity to help to reduce some of the pressure on general practice and the wider system.

NHS England, working with stakeholders, is undertaking a national review of access to general practice services. The review's main objective is to improve patient access both in hours and at evenings and weekends and reduce unwarranted variation in experience.

Additionally, urgent treatment centres will provide access to walk-in minor illness and minor injury services, with new standards developed to ensure they offer a full range of services.

**Andrew Rosindell:**

**[3693]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many new GPs in Romford constituency have started work in the last five years.

**Jo Churchill:**

The data is not available in the format requested. NHS Digital publishes data on the overall growth in the general practice workforce. However, it is not possible to use this publication to identify doctors or other general practice staff that are new. Therefore the total number of full-time-equivalent doctors in general practice has been provided for each of the last five years in the attached table. Romford constituency does not align to a clinical commissioning group (CCG).

Data covering the number of doctors working in Havering CCG, which included the town of Romford, in each year since 2015 has been provided in the attached table. General practitioner (GP) locums are excluded as improvements have been made to GP locum recording methodology and figures are not comparable across the time series. Data is not included prior to 2015 as improvements were made to the methodology for recording all staff working in general practice in September 2015 and data prior to this is not comparable.

## ■ General Practitioners: Standards

**Andrew Rosindell:**

**[3689]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average waiting time was for a GP appointment in (a) the London Borough of Romford, (b) Greater London and (c) England in each of the last 12 months.

**Jo Churchill:**

Data on appointments in general practice have only been available since November 2017. The most recent data on the time between booking an appointment with a general practice and having the appointment (in days) for Havering Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), NHS London Region and England are presented in the

attached table as the average over the 12 months from December 2018 to November 2019.

The data is taken from the NHS Digital publication 'Appointments in General Practice'. This is a new experimental data collection which is still being refined and improved. NHS Digital is unable to provide appointments in general practice data at parliamentary constituency level. Romford constituency does not align perfectly to a CCG; it has therefore provided data for Havering CCG, which includes the town of Romford.

It should be noted that the 'time from booking to appointment' refers only to the time elapsed between the successful booking of an appointment and the appointment taking place. The data does not take into consideration that many patients will be appropriately booking ahead as part of the continuity of care they receive for long-term conditions.

**Attachments:**

1. P3689 table [PQ3689 table formatted.docx]

## ■ **Hormone Replacement Therapy: Gender Recognition**

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[\[3753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of the effect of the nationwide HRT shortage on the health of the transgender community; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Department fully understands that maintaining access to hormone replacement therapy (HRT) medications is vitally important to many people, including transgender people in this country.

We are aware of ongoing supply issues with some HRT preparations due to a range of issues including manufacturing issues, regulatory issues and problems accessing the raw pharmaceutical ingredient as well as commercial decisions made by some companies to divest these products.

We have been working closely with all suppliers of HRT preparations to maintain overall supply to patients. Although some HRT products are affected by supply issues, supplies of alternative HRT preparations have remained available.

## ■ **Hormone Replacement Therapy: Shortages**

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[\[3752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to tackle delays in the supply of HRT medications.



**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[\[3754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of the number of women affected by shortages of HRT; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

We are aware of ongoing supply issues with some HRT preparations due to a range of issues including manufacturing issues, regulatory issues and problems accessing the raw pharmaceutical ingredient as well as commercial decisions made by some companies to divest these products.

We have been working closely with all suppliers of HRT preparations to maintain overall supply to patients. We have shared relevant information about the supply situation and availability of HRT products with the NHS and are in regular discussions with organisations such as the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare and the British Menopausal Society. We continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure relevant information about the HRT products affected by supply issues and the products that remain available is shared across the NHS on a regular basis. On 4 October, we also added HRT products to the list of medicines that cannot be parallel exported from the United Kingdom market.

The Department does not hold data about the number of women who have been unable to receive HRT because of recent shortages. However, although some HRT products are affected by supply issues, supplies of other alternative HRT products have remained available.

We will continue to work closely with all suppliers and anticipate the supply situation to improve from February 2020.

## ■ Irlen Syndrome

**Mike Amesbury:**

[\[3887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to improve recognition of Irlen Syndrome within the NHS.

**Mike Amesbury:**

[\[3888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to fund prescription lenses for people with Meares-Irlen Syndrome.

**Jo Churchill:**

There continues to be a lack of consensus amongst medical professionals as to the existence and nature of Meares-Irlen syndrome as a distinct syndrome.

Any individuals experiencing visual symptoms should consult an optometrist to ensure that the possibility of refractive error or eye disease is not overlooked.

If after a sight test (and glasses if necessary) an individual is still experiencing difficulties, then a wider assessment may be necessary. Optometrists are able to arrange an onward referral to the appropriate discipline, if required.

In the case of a child, a wider assessment would involve collaboration across education, health and other professionals to identify the best response for the individual concerned.

Help with the cost of prescription glasses, through National Health Service optical vouchers, is currently available for eligible groups, including children, to help correct a defect in sight, identified during an NHS sight test. There are no plans to change the criteria for NHS optical vouchers.

### ■ **Joint Replacements: Waiting Lists**

**Tracey Crouch:** [4330]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to meet the NHS's 18-week maximum waiting time for planned hip and knee joint replacement surgery.

**Edward Argar:**

The NHS Long Term Plan sets out our plans for transformation and improvement across the National Health Service. In the shorter term, the NHS Accountability Framework for 2019-20 outlines how NHS England and NHS Improvement will continue ongoing service development, including for hip and knee surgery, so that performance is maintained and improved, including with the commencement of the redesign of outpatient services. The 2019-20 framework is available via the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/803114/accountability-framework-to-nhse-and-nhsi-2019-to-2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803114/accountability-framework-to-nhse-and-nhsi-2019-to-2020.pdf)

Further to this, at the Government's request, NHS England and NHS Improvement are also working with clinical leaders across the system to review our performance standards and will update on this in due course.

### ■ **Learning Disabilities Mortality Review Programme**

**Barbara Keeley:** [5377]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his policy is on the future of the Learning Disability Mortality Review programme LeDeR.

**Barbara Keeley:** [5378]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to tackle the backlog of cases for review under the LeDeR programme.

**Barbara Keeley:**

**[5379]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how cases currently being reviewed under the Learning Disability Mortality Review Programme will be handled after the University of Bristol's contract to administer that programme ends in May 2020.

**Caroline Dinenge:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement are committed to the Learning Disabilities Mortality Review Programme, as set out in the NHS Long Term Plan, and will continue to use the existing methodology and an internet based platform going forward.

Additional resources and support have been given to clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), which includes entering into a contract with a Commissioning Support Unit, to complete historic reviews on behalf of CCGs.

## ■ Loneliness: Older People

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[3837]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to tackle social isolation in relation to elderly residents in (a) the City of York and (b) the UK.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Government recognises that loneliness and social isolation can have a significant impact on the physical and mental health of older people.

The Government's Loneliness Strategy 'A connected society: A Strategy for tackling loneliness – laying the foundations for change', published on 15 October 2018, acknowledged that tackling loneliness is complex and a long-term challenge, requiring action across many fronts. It brought together the Government, local government, public services, the voluntary and community sector and businesses to identify opportunities to tackle loneliness and build more integrated and resilient communities. The Loneliness Annual Report 2020, published on 20 January 2020, provides a progress update on the Loneliness Strategy.

Work in other areas can also help to tackle loneliness and social isolation. For example, the £11.5 million Building Connections Fund will see the Government working with a number of charitable trusts (these include several organisations in Yorkshire and The Humber), foundations, and others to support projects that are able to prevent or reduce loneliness amongst older people as well as other age groups. The full list of projects can be found at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/767845/GRANTEE\\_LIST.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/767845/GRANTEE_LIST.pdf)

Similarly, through the Ageing Society Grand Challenge, the Government will harness innovative products and services to help people remain healthy and independent for longer, continue to participate through work and within their communities, and stay connected to others.

The Government remains fully committed to working with others to combat loneliness and social isolation.

#### ■ NHS: Pensions

**Dan Jarvis:** [R] [5429]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to devolve increased employer pension contributions to local clinical commissioning groups.

**Edward Argar:**

We intend in due course to devolve funding for the increased employer contribution rate in the NHS Pension Scheme although a date has not yet been set. For 2019/20, the Department, NHS England and NHS Improvement and the NHS Business Services Authority agreed a transitional arrangement to distribute the pensions revaluation funding following an increase to the employer contribution rate from 14.38% (inclusive of the 0.08% administration levy) to 20.68% from 1 April 2019.

The employer contribution cost arrangements for 2020/21 will be confirmed in the 2020/21 Operational Planning Guidance document which will be released towards the end of January 2020.

#### ■ Primary Health Care: Homelessness

**Rachael Maskell:** [3847]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that homeless people have access to primary health care.

**Rachael Maskell:** [3848]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that homeless people have access to primary dental care.

**Jo Churchill:**

NHS England has issued guidance making clear that lack of identification or proof of address is not grounds for refusing National Health Service primary care treatment, including general practitioner (GP), dental and eye care services. In these circumstances, individuals can use the primary care services' address or an address of a hostel, where appropriate. Where this guidance is not being followed, cases should be brought to NHS England's attention, as the commissioner should be able to reinforce the guidance locally. Ultimately, the commissioner can issue a remedial notice and can terminate a contract or practice that still does not abide by its obligations.

To help improve the commissioning of dental services for vulnerable people, including homeless patients, NHS England is developing a Commissioning Standard, which will consider options, such as looking at commissioning 'time' rather than treatments (measured through 'units of dental activity') to help incentivise high street practices to treat patients expected to need a greater investment of time, including homeless people.

NHS England will also be producing Primary Care Access Cards in early 2020. These will provide simple and clear information on how Gypsies Roma Travellers, refugees, asylum seekers and homeless patients can access services and their entitlements and address some of the key questions that are currently causing confusion with patients and in primary care. NHS England is also working with stakeholders to undertake a national review of access to general practice services. The review's main objective is to improve patient access both in hours and at evenings and weekends and reduce unwarranted variation in experience.

The Government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018 at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-rough-sleeping-strategy>

The Department is working to deliver the health and social care commitments in the Strategy, with a focus on mental health and substance misuse services, as well as physical health services. We are providing £1.9 million to councils to test ways to improve access to health services for people with co-occurring mental ill-health and substance misuse problems who are currently, or at risk of returning to, sleeping rough. As a part of the NHS Long Term Plan, NHS England has committed to spending up to £30 million over five years on mental health services for rough sleepers.

Community pharmacy is also uniquely placed to help people who find it more difficult to access a GP or other NHS services and provides easy access to walk-in services without the need for an appointment. The Communing Pharmacy Contractual Framework for 2019/24 is at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/community-pharmacy-contractual-framework-for-2019-20-to-2023-24/>

This will transform the role of community pharmacy, embedding them as the first port of call for minor illness and health advice in England. Over the five-year period in which it will run, patients with minor illness will be referred from all entry points to the NHS to community pharmacy for advice, reassurance and any necessary over-the-counter treatments.

## ■ Prostate Cancer

**Paul Girvan:**

**[4467]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reduce the prevalence of prostate cancer.

**Jo Churchill:**

It is not known exactly what causes prostate cancer, although a number of things can increase the risk of developing the condition. These include age, ethnic group, family history, obesity and diet.

There are no interventions that can reduce the prevalence of prostate cancer for the first three risk factors, although the Government does have strategies in place to reduce obesity and improve diets, such as Change4Life.

#### ■ Social Services: EU Nationals

**Barbara Keeley:** [\[5380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether EU nationals living in the UK will be eligible to receive social care services after the UK leaves the EU.

**Caroline Dinage:**

European Union nationals living in the United Kingdom at the point of the UK leaving the EU, will be able to access social care services, as they do now. Where they do not already have citizenship they will be able to access adult social care services either by applying to the EU Settlement Scheme or where they have not already done so applying for citizenship.

### HOME OFFICE

#### ■ Counter-terrorism

**Nick Thomas-Symonds:** [\[5479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is the timeframe is for the appointment of a new independent reviewer of Prevent; and what steps he is taking to ensure that the report on that review will be published by the statutory deadline of August 2020.

**Brandon Lewis:**

We are currently considering the next steps for the review and these will update the House in due course.

#### ■ Immigration

**Afzal Khan:** [\[5539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will implement all of the recommendations of the 13 January 2020 Law Commission publication entitled Simplification of the Immigration Rules: Report.

**Kevin Foster:**

We are carefully considering the Law Commission's report and recommendations. We will be providing a response to the report in due course, including whether we agree or disagree with each recommendation.

## ■ UK-Africa Investment Summit

**Wendy Chamberlain:** [\[5575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she has made of the number of (a) Ministers and (b) representatives from African countries that had their application for a visa denied ahead of the UK-Africa Investment Summit 2020.

**Wendy Chamberlain:** [\[5576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she has made of the number of representatives from African countries who had their application for a visa refused in advance of the UK-Africa Investment Summit 2020.

**Kevin Foster:**

All UK Visa applications are considered on their individual merits and in line with the UK Immigration Rules: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-v-visitor-rules>, which set out the requirements to visit the UK. These requirements apply to all visitors to the UK and the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that they satisfy the immigration rules.

Information on the number and proportion of grants and refusals of visitor visas is published in the Home Office's quarterly Immigration Statistics, at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-september-2019>.

## HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Building Regulations

**John Healey:** [\[5326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much additional funding his Department plans to allocate to the Health and Safety Executive for the establishment of the new Building Safety Regulator.

**Esther McVey:**

The Building Safety Regulator will receive the funding it needs to deliver its functions and my Department is working with the Health and Safety Executive to determine set-up and running costs. We intend to give the regulator the ability to recover some costs from those it regulates, as recommended by Dame Judith Hackitt's independent review.

### ■ Buildings: Fire Prevention

**John Healey:** [\[5328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of buildings that are operating (a) waking watch and (b) other interim fire safety measures; and what the average cost is of the operation of those measures.

**Esther McVey:**

The Government has worked closely with local authorities and Fire and Rescue Services to ensure that interim safety measures are in place, where necessary, in all high-rise residential buildings with unsafe ACM cladding, until the cladding is replaced. Details of these buildings can be found in the Building Safety Programme monthly data release here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-safety-programme-monthly-data-release-december-2019>

The Department does not hold information on costs or other types of buildings with interim safety measures.

**■ Buildings: Insulation**

**Steve Reed:** [5437]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has met with any leaseholders facing bills for the remediation of combustible non Aluminium-Composite Material cladding on the buildings in which they live.

**Esther McVey:**

I and my Department have engaged with a number of leaseholders living in buildings with unsafe cladding, and as the Secretary of State said in Parliament on 20 January (Official report, volume 670, column 24). We are aware of the concerns of leaseholders about meeting the cost of remediation. The Government is considering options to support leaseholders and will set out details in due course.

**■ Buildings: Safety**

**John Healey:** [5331]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when he plans to publish the Building Safety Bill.

**Esther McVey:**

The Government is committed to bringing forward a Building Safety Bill that delivers meaningful and lasting change as soon as practicable. Resident safety is paramount and we owe it to them to get this right.

The Government will also introduce a Fire Safety Bill in the coming weeks to put beyond doubt that building owners and managers of multi-occupied residential premises of any height are required to fully consider and mitigate the risks of any external wall systems and front doors to individual flats.

**■ Flats: Standards**

**Stephen Doughty:** [5434]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent discussions he has had with the devolved Administrations on the (a) fire safety, (b)



building quality and (c) integrity of apartment complexes constructed in the UK since 1995.

**Esther McVey:**

The Department is in regular contact with the devolved administration on the subject of Building Regulations including fire safety and building quality.

The devolved administrations are routinely invited and regularly attend meetings of the Building Regulation Advisory Committee where matters in relating to the Building Regulations in England and the United Kingdom are discussed.

■ **High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention**

**Steve Reed:**

[\[5436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether fire risk assessments were carried out on the Cube building in Bolton that caught fire in 2019.

**Esther McVey:**

The Department is aware of a review of the fire performance of building cladding and fire strategy undertaken in February 2018 and April 2018 respectively on the Cube (phase 1 and 2) by the building owners.

**Steve Reed:**

[\[5440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what information his Department holds on whether any remedial fire safety work was carried out on the Cube building in Bolton prior to that building catching fire in 2019.

**Esther McVey:**

The Department commissioned BRE to investigate the fire at the Cube alongside the formal fire and rescue and police investigations. This work was done as part of our ongoing contract to investigate fires. BRE stated in their report that fire and rescue services informed them that intumescent cavity barriers were retrofitted to the Phase 2 block in 2017.

We are also aware of a review of the fire performance of building cladding undertaken in February 2018.

■ **High Rise Flats: Insulation**

**Steve Reed:**

[\[5438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what the classification was of the (a) cladding and (b) insulation on the Cube student halls building in Bolton which caught fire in November 2019.

**Esther McVey:**

The insulation was 90mm thick polyisocyanurate (PIR), we do not have information on the reaction to fire classification of either the cladding and insulation.

## ■ Homelessness

**Stephen McPartland:**

**[5412]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of homeless people in (a) the UK, (b) England, (c) Hertfordshire and (d) Stevenage constituency; and if he will make a statement.

**Luke Hall:**

Homelessness is a devolved matter in the UK and statistics are produced by each UK country separately. MHCLG therefore holds data for England only. The Government Statistical Service Harmonisation Team have developed an interactive tool providing guidance on comparing statistics across UK countries and shows how each country's statistics are collected. The tool is available here:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/tools/GSS-Homelessness-Interactive-Tool/>

Following the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, homeless households are owed a 56 day relief duty before a main duty decision is made. In England between April to June 2019, 32,220 households who presented themselves to their local authority were initially assessed as homeless and therefore owed a relief duty. During the same period, 8,360 households in England were assessed as owed a main homelessness duty. In Hertfordshire, 536 households were owed a relief duty and 223 were owed a main homelessness duty in April to June 2019. In Stevenage, 72 households were owed a relief duty and 13 were owed a main homelessness duty.

In December 2019 we announced the allocation of £263 million in funding for 2020/21 to local authorities designed to support them to deliver services to tackle homelessness. The purpose of this funding is to give local authorities more control and flexibility in managing homelessness pressures and supporting those who are at risk of homelessness, including providing them with temporary accommodation.

**Table 1: Number of households owed relief duties and main duties, April to June 2019**

	RELIEF DUTIES OWED	MAIN DUTY ACCEPTANCES
England	32,220	8,360
Hertfordshire	536	223
Stevenage	72	13

Source: Homelessness statistics (HCLIC), MHCLG

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT****■ Department for International Development: Climate Change****Darren Jones:****[R] [4445]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment he has made of the effect of climate change on the work of his Department; and what steps he is taking in response to that effect.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

My department has long recognised that climate change puts development and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals at risk. We contribute to the development of science and analysis on climate change to help improve global understanding of the challenge, as well as building the evidence of effective approaches to tackle it. Since 2011, our International Climate Finance has supported 57 million people to cope with the effects of climate change and given 26 million people improved access to clean energy.

It is clear that more global action is urgently needed to avoid dangerous climate change and environmental degradation. The Government is working hard to ensure the international climate negotiations in Glasgow in November are a success. Last year, the Prime Minister committed to double our International Climate Finance to at least £11.6 billion from 2021/22 to 2025/26, and we have also committed to align all UK aid with the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement. This means that we will be investing more in helping countries to build their capability to manage the impact of climate change already locked in and to support lower carbon development, with an increasing focus on nature-based solutions such as investing in sustainable forestry.

**■ Developing Countries: Coal****Dan Carden:****[5520]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much his Department has spent on supporting (a) coal-mining and (b) coal-fired power stations in developing countries in each of the last five years.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

DFID does not provide ODA bilateral assistance for coal and has not done so since 2012.

In the Multilateral Development Banks (MDB) we do not support coal projects except in rare circumstances and only for the poorest countries where there is no economical alternative. The Prime Minister's announcement means DFID Ministers will now review all coal and other fossil fuel projects that are presented to the Boards of the MDBs and make a decision on each case.

**Dan Carden:****[5521]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, which (a) coal-mining projects and (b) countries will be affected by the policy announced on 20 January 2020

by the Prime Minister that all UK aid-funded support for coal-mining and coal-fuelled power stations in developing countries will cease.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The UK is one of the first countries to commit to ending unabated coal generation. We have cut emissions by more than 40 per cent since 1990, while our economy has grown by two thirds. In May, the UK went without running coal power generation for over two weeks – the longest coal-free period in the country since the 1880s.

The UK and Canada are leading on initiatives to help countries build commitments to move away from unabated coal, such as the Powering Past Coal Alliance which now has 97 members, with growing membership from financial institutions.

In the Multilateral Development Banks (MDB) we do not support coal projects except in rare circumstances and only for the poorest countries where there is no economical alternative. The Prime Minister's announcement means DFID Ministers will now review all coal and other fossil fuel projects that are presented to the Boards of the MDBs and make a decision on each case.

■ **Developing Countries: Education**

**Harriett Baldwin:**

[\[3741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much funding has been allocated from the public purse to support the fulfilment of the UN sustainable development goal of education for all girls and boys; and in which countries that funding was spent.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

1. The Prime Minister has publicly stated that education, particularly standing up for the right of every girl in the world to have 12 years of quality education, is a priority for the UK. Between 2009 and 2018, the Government spent £7.08 billion bilaterally from the public purse to support the fulfilment of the UN sustainable development goal on education. This does not include all multilateral spend. Between 2015 and 2019 DFID supported 14.8 million children to gain a decent education, of which at least 5.8 million were girls. UKAid is spent in the countries that need it the most. From 2015 to 2018, the largest number of children supported by DFID education programmes was in Africa, where the majority of out of school children live. Most of the children supported by DFID's education programmes live in fragile states.

■ **Developing Countries: Fossil Fuels**

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[5384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much the UK has allocated from the public purse in Official Development Assistance to projects for mining, transporting or generating electricity from (a) coal, (b) oil and (c) gas in each of the last five years.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

Many developing countries need to increase their energy supplies to accelerate economic growth, deliver critical services, and improve the lives of poor people. When we invest in energy, including in oil and gas, we do that to support development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

DFID does not provide ODA bilateral assistance for coal and has not done so since 2012. It is not possible to provide separate figures for assistance for oil and for gas.

In the Multilateral Development Banks (MDB) we do not support coal projects except in rare circumstances and only for the poorest countries where there is no economical alternative. The Prime Minister's announcement means DFID Ministers will now review all coal and other fossil fuel projects that are presented to the Boards of the MDBs and make a decision on each case.

**■ Developing Countries: Overseas Investment****Jonathan Edwards:****[5389]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of (a) CDC and (b) other organisations' investment decisions.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

DFID undertakes a review every year of CDC's performance against agreed objectives. These Annual Reviews are available via DFID's online Development Tracker [www.devtracker.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.devtracker.dfid.gov.uk)

In addition, in 2019, the Independent Commission on Aid Impact, carried out a major independent review of CDC's investments in low income countries. Their report and DFID and CDC's joint response are available on [www.icaei.independent.gov.uk/report/cdc](http://www.icaei.independent.gov.uk/report/cdc)

DFID similarly undertakes a review every year of the performance against objectives of each multilateral organisation that we provide funding to. These Annual Reviews are also available on [www.devtracker.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.devtracker.dfid.gov.uk).

We consider the capability and strategy of each organisation when deciding whether to provide funding that the organisation will then allocate and manage .

**■ Developing Countries: Overseas Trade****Henry Smith:****[4332]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for International Trade on improving bilateral trade with developing countries.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The Department for International Development and the Department for International Trade are working together to ensure development and global prosperity are at the heart of UK trade and investment policy.

Once we leave the EU, the UK will be able to offer an integrated trade and development package, encompassing preferential trade arrangements for developing countries and aid that facilitates trade and promotes investment.

At the UK-Africa Investment Summit, we announced plans to establish an import promotion service, Trade Connect, to help developing countries make the most of preferential trade access to the UK, and increase their presence in international markets. We also announced an extension to our SheTrades Commonwealth programme so that it can continue to help female entrepreneurs to access trading opportunities.

### ■ Marie Stopes International: Expenditure

**Sir Edward Leigh:** [\[4294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much funding from the public purse has been allocated to Marie Stopes International in each of the last two years.

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

The Department for International Development gave Marie Stopes International £57.1million in 2017-18 and £54.9million in 2018-19.

This data comes from DFID's supplier analysis portal and funding comes from 12 programmes located in Africa and Asia working on the full range of sexual and reproductive health. It reflects actual spend rather than the value of programmes awarded in these years.

### ■ Somaliland: Elections

**Stephen Doughty:** [\[5435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what (a) financial and (b) other support his Department has provided in the last three months to enable parliamentary elections in Somaliland to take place.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

The UK is leading high level political engagement for the international community on Somaliland's overdue parliamentary elections calling on all political actors to ensure they are held well before the end of 2020. Over the last three months, we have continued diplomatic efforts in addition to work through the Conflict Security and Stability Fund to provide ongoing support to mediation efforts, technical expertise for the National Electoral Commission secretariat and the engagement of marginalised groups, including women and minorities, in the electoral process.

### ■ UK-Africa Investment Summit

**Dan Carden:** [\[5519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what members of African civil society attended the UK-Africa investment summit.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

The Summit brought together, amongst others, hundreds of UK and African business representatives and representatives from Civil Society Organisations. Forty entrepreneurs from Africa, owning smaller businesses, participated. The Government has also organised more than ten events in the lead-up to, and as follow-up to, the Summit to gather views from a range of stakeholders, including African Civil Society Organisations.

**Wendy Chamberlain:**[\[5573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much and what proportion of his departmental budget was allocated to funding accommodation for attendees of the UK-Africa investment summit 2020.

**Wendy Chamberlain:**[\[5574\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much and what proportion of his Department's budget was allocated to food costs for the UK-Africa investment summit 2020.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

As with all such Government events, the full costing will be available in due course. 2020 UK ODA spend, including for this Summit, will be reported in Statistics on International Development, published by DFID in Autumn 2021.

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]****Fay Jones:**[\[900354\]](#)

What discussions she has had with the Welsh Government on opportunities to promote Welsh produce abroad.

**Conor Burns:**

My counterpart in the Welsh Government, the Noble Baroness Morgan of Ely, the Minister for International Relations and the Welsh Language, recently wrote to me that 'For a small nation, Wales enjoys a reputation which stretches far beyond its borders'. She is right. Wales was my second visit as a Minister as we see the opportunities to help promote Wales abroad. Indeed I recall pushing the cause of Welsh Lamb quite recently in Vietnam. I hope we may continue those conversations today when I Chair the inaugural Ministerial Forum for Trade with Ministers from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

**Alun Cairns:**[\[900355\]](#)

What assessment she has made of the potential economic opportunities for the UK of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

**Elizabeth Truss:**

The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) is an ambitious regional trade agreement covering 11 countries across four continents.

Joining would provide us with the opportunity to deepen our trading links with some of the world's most diverse, growing economies, and will allow us to expand our influence in the world and strengthen the rules-based international system.

No doubt CPTPP countries will be a valuable market for Aston Martin's new DBX SUVs, which will be exported from the factory in my Rt Hon Friend for Vale of Glamorgan's constituency.

**Angela Richardson:**[\[900358\]](#)

For what reasons her Department is prioritising trade deals with the US, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

**Conor Burns:**

As we prepare to leave the EU our priority has been the roll over of existing EU trade agreements.

As we prepare to have our own independent trade policy for the first time in over four decades our ambition for our country is to secure free trade agreements (FTA) with countries covering 80% of UK trade within three years of leaving the EU.

The United States, Australia, New Zealand and Japan are highly developed and likeminded economies. They are free market democracies and allies. Each has made clear they welcome the prospect of reaching a FTA with us making them natural lead partners in this endeavour.

**Gareth Johnson:**[\[900360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps her Department is taking to promote global free trade.

**Conor Burns:**

As we leave the EU, we will be a liberalising force for trade in the world. We aim to secure agreements with countries accounting for 80% of UK trade within three years of leaving the EU.

As we take up our independent seat at the WTO we will be a champion of global free trade.

**■ Department for International Trade: Pay****Chris Stephens:**[\[3820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department complies with the requirement set out in section 3.1.8 of the Civil Service Management Code that time off with pay for safety representatives will not be set against facility time allowed under existing arrangements.



**Conor Burns:**

The Government recognises there are significant benefits to both employers and employees when organisations and unions work together effectively to deliver high quality public services, but facility time within the public sector must be accountable and represent value for money.

The Department for International Trade (DIT) has an obligation to provide reasonable paid time off to recognised trade union representatives to undertake trade union duties. This includes paid time off for safety representatives as set out in section 3.1.8 of the Civil Service Management Code. This is also referenced in the internal Industrial Relations Policy, which is accessible to staff.

DIT also publishes information relating to facility time for recognised trade union representatives at Gov.uk.

**■ Department for International Trade: Recruitment****Stewart Hosie:**[\[5362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many trade experts have been (a) recruited and (b) trained by her Department since its establishment.

**Conor Burns:**

The Department has a strong core of trade policy officials which has grown significantly since July 2016 (from 45 to approximately 575 currently) and is continuing to grow. Trade Policy Group is also supported by around 70 lawyers and 90 analysts.

The number of negotiators and the training they require is dependent on how many trade agreements are ongoing at any given time, the specific chapters in that negotiation and the complexity of that chapter. Negotiating teams will differ in sizes, with expertise relevant to the specific chapters of sectors.

**■ Department for International Trade: Staff****Stewart Hosie:**[\[5363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many staff in her Department have more than (a) one (b) three and (c) five years experience in negotiating trade deals.

**Conor Burns:**

Our people are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds and have a corresponding range of experience of international trade negotiations, trade remedies and trade defence working on EU trade negotiations such as Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and multilateral agreements in the WTO.

To build the trade policy and negotiating experience in the Department for International Trade (DIT), over the 24 months to end-March 2020, around 350 places will have been taken by people in DIT on Expert Level training in technical areas of

trade policy and around a further 350 places taken on Expert Level Free Trade Agreement negotiations training.

■ **Department for International Trade: Trade Unions**

**Chris Stephens:** [\[3819\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation affects the right of recognised unions in her Department to bargaining information as set out in Section 181 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

**Conor Burns:**

The Department for International Trade (DIT) works closely with our recognised Trade Unions and values the benefit of these effective working relationships in delivering the department's objectives.

General Data Protection Regulation has not affected the rights of unions in DIT to bargaining information provided under section 181 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

■ **Department for International Trade: Training**

**Stewart Hosie:** [\[5364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many of his Department's staff have been trained as trade negotiators by the Diplomatic Academy; and what his timescale is for that Academy achieving its goal of training 240 trade negotiators before the UK leaves the EU.

**Conor Burns:**

I refer the Hon Member for Dundee East to the answers I gave today, UIN: 5362 and 5363.

■ **Fossil Fuels: Export Credit Guarantees**

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[5385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the value was of export credits awarded to projects relating to mining, transporting or generating electricity from (a) coal, (b) oil and (c) gas in each of the last five years.

**Conor Burns:**

UK Export Finance (UKEF) has provided the following amount of support for projects relating to mining, midstream activities (including transporting of oil and gas) and power plants, in respect of coal, oil and gas over the last five financial years (figures reflect UKEF's maximum liability in each financial year).

	COAL	OIL & GAS
2014/15	0	£128m
2015/16	0	£186m
2016/17	£23m	£172m
2017/18	0	£175m
2018/19	0	£878m

The figures for oil and gas have been combined as it is not always possible to separate these out for specific projects.

The main reason for the difference in figures between 2017/18 and 2018/19 is support for a single, high-value project in the region of £700m.

#### ■ Overseas Trade: Commonwealth

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

[\[900350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps her Department is taking to increase trade and inward investment with Commonwealth partners.

**Graham Stuart:**

The UK is working with Commonwealth partners to deliver the 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) ambition of boosting intra-Commonwealth trade to beyond \$2 trillion by 2030.

In October 2019 my Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade chaired the sixth Commonwealth Trade Ministers Meeting, which reaffirmed the Commonwealth's support for free trade and discussed the Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda for Trade and Investment.

We will continue to increase cooperation ahead of the next CHOGM in June 2020.

## JUSTICE

#### ■ Administration of Justice: Czechia

**Sir David Amess:**

[\[5318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions he has had with his Czech Republic counterpart on the criminal justice system in that country.

**Chris Philp:**

Whilst the Lord Chancellor and UK Justice Ministers regularly meet counterparts from around the world, there has been no recent bilateral meeting or discussion with the Czech Republic Justice Ministers.

## ■ Crime: Retail Trade

**Alex Norris:**

**[3302]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of offenders issued with (a) a fixed penalty notice and (b) an out of court disposal for a crime committed on a retail premises was a repeat offender.

**Chris Philp:**

The Ministry of Justice publishes information on prosecutions and convictions in England and Wales. However, the data does not identify the context or specific location of offences for example, those carried out on shop workers or retail premises.

---

THE HOME OFFICE COLLATES AND PUBLISHES INFORMATION ON FIXED PENALTY NOTICES.

---

THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE HAS PUBLISHED INFORMATION ON OUT OF COURT DISPOSALS INCLUDING PENALTY NOTICES FOR DISORDER (PND) AND CAUTIONS UP TO DECEMBER 2018. THIS INFORMATION, RELATING TO SPECIFIC OFFENCES, CAN BE FOUND USING THE OUT OF COURT DISPOSALS DATA TOOL.

---

[HTTPS://ASSETS.PUBLISHING.SERVICE.GOV.UK/GOVERNMENT/UPLOADS/SYSTEM/UPLOADS/ATTACHMENT\\_DATA/FILE/802305/OUT-OF-COURT-DISPOSAL-TOOL-2018.XLSX](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/802305/out-of-court-disposal-tool-2018.xlsx)

---

## ■ Crown Courts

**Richard Burgon:**

**[4764]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many Crown court sitting days there were in each of the last 10 years.

**Chris Philp:**

The table below is comprised of unpublished management information sourced from internal reports belonging to Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunal Service (HMCTS) and provides the number of *Crown Court sitting days* there were in each of the last available 10 financial years:

FINANCIAL YEAR	HMCTS "CROWN COURT SITTING DAYS"
2009/10	108,536
2010/11	109,263
2011/12	106,739
2012/13	103,181

FINANCIAL YEAR	HMCTS “CROWN COURT SITTING DAYS”
2013/14	101,724
2014/15	106,583
2015/16	109,321
2016/17	107,863
2017/18	102,818
2018/19	97,293

Sitting days are based on the number of cases we expect the court to hear and, with fewer cases making it to the Crown Court, were reduced to allow judges to carry out work in the civil and family courts, where demand is higher. This approach has enabled us to reduce the number of outstanding Crown Court cases by almost 40% since 2014.

We keep sitting days under constant review and in November allocated an extra 700 days to the Crown Court for this financial year, in response to an increase in cases coming to court.

**Notes:**

- The above data covers the number of days in which a Crown Court room was sat by any number of judges.
- In some circumstances, judges will ‘share’ a courtroom to conduct judicial business; in most instances this will involve a returning judge for sentencing purposes only. These figures may therefore differ from the number of judicial sitting days at Crown Court as published in MoJ official statistics (which can, for example, also include days sat in chambers).

■ **HM Courts and Tribunals Service and Ministry of Justice: Public Relations**

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

[\[3719\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much was spent on communications and public relations by (a) his Department and (b) HM Courts & Tribunals Service in 2019.

**Chris Philp:**

In the financial year 2018/19 the departments communications budget was £7.94m. This delivered:

- A 24 hour, 7 days per week media relations operation for MOJ, HMPPS, HMCTS, LAA, OPG and CICA.
- A strategic communication and campaigns function, delivering campaigns for MOJ and HMG priority policy areas.

- A digital communications function to support key MOJ announcements, policies and campaigns and to help increase citizen engagement.
- A corporate communications function, delivering internal campaigns to increase staff engagement and productivity in MOJ, OPG and LAA.
- An HMPPS communications function, supporting over 49,000 prison and probation staff.
- Services from the cross-government D102 design agency.

Regarding HMCTS expenditure, I refer you to the previous answer for PQ6328 answered on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019, in which HM Courts and Tribunals Service expenditure for last three financial years was provided.

## ■ Justice and Security Act 2013

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [\[4313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Answer of 11 April 2019 to Question 240976 on the Justice and Security Act 2013, whether he has appointed a reviewer to undertake the review of the operation of Sections 6 to 11 of the Justice and Security Act 2013.

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [\[4314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Answer of 11 April 2019 to Question 240976 on the Justice and Security Act 2013, when he plans to announce the review of the operation of sections 6 to 11 of the Justice and Security Act 2013.

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [\[4315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Answer of 11 April 2019 to Question 240976 on the Justice and Security Act 2013, how he plans to determine the terms of reference for the review of the operation of sections 6 to 11 of the Justice and Security Act 2013; and whether he will consult civil society and the legal profession on the nature and scope of that review.

**Chris Philp:**

Further to the answer provided by Minister of State Lucy Frazer MP QC to the Honourable Member's questions in April of last year on the Justice and Security Act 2013, I can advise discussions are ongoing and an announcement will be made in due course

## ■ Legal Aid Scheme

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[4412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much has been spent on (a) civil and (b) criminal legal aid in (i) cash and (ii) real terms in (A) England and (B) York in each year since 2010; and how many and what proportion of people with cases before (a) civil and (b) criminal courts received legal aid in (i) England and (ii) York in each year since 2010.

**Wendy Morton:**

Information on national cash and real term expenditure is published as part of the Legal Aid Agency's statistical releases, the most recent of which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/legal-aid-statistics-quarterly-july-to-september-2019>. It is not possible to produce information in these terms for the areas of England and York only. Information on the value of claims paid each year to providers in these areas (on a 'closed case' basis) may however be viewed via the above link.

Information on the proportion of people and cases receiving legal aid could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ **Legal Aid Scheme: York**

**Rachael Maskell:****[3843]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people (a) applied for and (b) were granted civil legal aid in York in (a) 2009-10 and (b) each subsequent year.

**Wendy Morton:**

The Legal Aid Agency monitors the number of applications for public funding, as opposed to the number of discrete individuals who have received legal aid; one person may apply for legal aid on more than one occasion.

The figures below show the number of applications received and those subsequently granted for Civil Representation by providers located within the York Local Authority area. Please note that location data is based upon the solicitor's office, rather than the address of the applicant. Individuals who reside within York may choose to access legal aid at a firm based in another location, and vice versa.

Where an application is 'not granted', this may be for a variety of reasons, including administrative (e.g. where information is missing or forms are not signed), or where the applicant does not meet the legal or financial tests to be eligible for public funding.

Solicitors are responsible for decisions on whether to grant funding under the 'Legal Help' scheme of civil legal aid, and therefore data on unsuccessful applications for this type of public funding are not available. Information on those cases opened under 'Legal Help' is published at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/853445/legal-aid-statistics-civil-starts-provider-location-data-to-sep-2019.csv](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/853445/legal-aid-statistics-civil-starts-provider-location-data-to-sep-2019.csv)

FINANCIAL YEAR	GRANTED	NOT GRANTED	TOTAL APPLICATIONS
2009-2010	775	174	949
2010-2011	694	201	895
2011-2012	659	99	758

FINANCIAL YEAR	GRANTED	NOT GRANTED	TOTAL APPLICATIONS
2012-2013	593	112	705
2013-2014	428	51	479
2014-2015	440	36	476
2015-2016	450	30	480
2016-2017	462	16	478
2017-2018	535	34	569
2018-2019	616	21	637

### ■ Ministry of Justice: Climate Change

**Darren Jones:**

[R] [\[4454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the effect of climate change on the work of his Department; and what steps he is taking in response to that effect.

**Chris Philp:**

Achieving net zero is a priority for the whole of government, which is why the Prime Minister is chairing a new Cabinet Committee on Climate Change to drive action across all sectors of the economy and demonstrate the UK's global leadership as we prepare to host the crucial COP26 talks in Glasgow in November.

The Ministry of Justice takes climate change very seriously and is committed to tackling the impact of this on its operations by collaborating across government to adapt and be resilient to the inevitable effects of climate change on its work.

As the second largest central government contributor of greenhouse gas emissions, we are very clear that reducing our emissions is a key priority. We have already reduced our emissions by 38% since 2009/10 and reduced our energy bill by £12m/year since 2014-15, enabling more funding for frontline services. The department is also currently discussing a new emissions reduction target for 2020 to 2025 with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

The Ministry of Justice is developing its Climate Change Adaptation Strategy to prepare for the risks associated with, and impacts, of climate change on our estate, people, and operations.

### ■ Ministry of Justice: Families

**Steve Double:**

[\[4387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department has a single individual who is responsible for leading on his Department's application of the Family Test.



**Wendy Morton:**

Each department has a Family Test lead who is part of our Family Test Network. This Network is the central forum through which we have sought input and comments on the support departments need to help with Family Test implementation.

This includes Network members feeding into improvements to the existing guidance for officials in all departments on Family Test implementation.

**Ministry of Justice: Iron and Steel****Jessica Morden:**[\[5368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of steel procured by his Department was produced in the UK, in each of the last five years.

**Chris Philp:**

This Government remains committed to supporting the UK steel industry.

MoJ collates information about steel spend for projects with the largest steel requirements, including origin where known. This information is published annually on gov.uk at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/steel-public-procurement>

The data was first published in January 2019, with the next iteration due to be published shortly.

**Prison Sentences: York****Rachael Maskell:**[\[4411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many custodial sentences were handed down at (a) York Magistrates' court and (b) York Crown court in each year since 2010.

**Chris Philp:**

The number of custodial sentences imposed at a) York Magistrates' court and b) York Crown Court from 2010 – 2018 can be found in the accompanying table.

**Attachments:**

1. Table [PQ4411 Response Table.xlsx]

**Prisoners: Disability and Older People****Liz Saville Roberts:**[\[5485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he has taken to ensure that facilities in prisons in (a) Wales and (b) England are accessible to (i) elderly people, (ii) elderly disabled people and (iii) disabled people.

**Lucy Frazer:**

We recognise that prisoner mobility is a challenge and all prisons have individual needs based on its circumstances and population. Governors are required to identify improvements that may be needed in their sites to enable improved access to

facilities for elderly or disabled prisoners. Where building work is required as part of this work, it is carried out through facilities maintenance contracts.

Additionally, every prison in England and Wales must adhere to the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons. Support is also provided for all prisoners with a disability in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

In April 2018, the 'Model for Operational Delivery for Older Prisoners' was published to support the development of all policies, approaches and plans focussed on older people in prisons. This is currently being reviewed by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

## LEADER OF THE HOUSE

### ■ House of Commons: Bullying

**Michael Fabricant:**

[3665]

To ask the Leader of the House, if he will open an inquiry into historical charges of bullying in the House of Commons; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:**

This Government has made clear that there is no place for bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment in Parliament and by working cross party, we will ensure everyone working in Parliament is treated with dignity and respect. An independent inquiry into bullying and harassment of House of Commons staff was carried out by Dame Laura Cox and her report was published in 2018. Following on from this, Gemma White QC carried out an independent inquiry on bullying and harassment of past and present staff of Members of Parliament, as well as Members themselves, and her report was published in 2019. A key recommendation of both reports was that the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme should be amended, so as to ensure that those employees with complaints involving historical allegations can access the Scheme. As a result, in July 2019, the House of Commons approved the steps to make the necessary changes to extend the scheme to include historical allegations and that came into effect on 21 October 2019. An 18-month review of the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme is due in June 2020.

## SCOTLAND

### ■ Scotland Office: Climate Change

**Darren Jones:**

[R] [4456]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what assessment he has made of the effect of climate change on the work of his Department; and what steps he is taking in response to that effect.

**Mr Alister Jack:**

We are delighted that the UK Government is hosting COP26 in Glasgow in November. This will be a great opportunity for the UK government to continue to show great leadership on this vital issue, having already become the first major economy to pass new laws to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050.

Achieving net zero is a priority for the whole of government, which is why the Prime Minister is chairing a new Cabinet Committee on Climate Change to drive action across all sectors of the economy and demonstrate the UK's global leadership as we prepare to host the crucial COP26 talks in Glasgow.

The Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland has put in place a number of measures necessary to adapt to future climate change including contributing to the overall reduction in the size of the UK Government estate and the amount of carbon emissions for which the UK Government as a whole is responsible; reducing unnecessary travel and utilising public transport; minimising paper use and eliminating the purchase of single use plastics.

The UK Government will set out further plans to deliver net zero throughout 2020 ahead of COP26, including plans on energy and heat in buildings.

**■ Stronger Towns Fund: Scotland****Christine Jardine:**[\[5513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what progress he has made on to ensuring Scotland benefits from the Stronger Towns Fund launched in March 2019.

**Mr Alister Jack:**

The Towns Fund is an ambitious package of support for towns in England, expanding existing funding programmes. The Barnett formula will be applied in the normal way to this investment for England, and as a result the Scottish Government will receive a share of funding. This is because responsibility for the activities the Towns Fund is supporting is devolved. In addition, we will discuss with the Scottish Government how we can work together, using our powers and funding, to support towns in Scotland.

**TRANSPORT****■ A1: Newark****Sir Greg Knight:**[\[3679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the northbound carriageway of the A1 south of Newark was last inspected for potholes and other surface imperfections; and when that stretch of road is next scheduled to be resurfaced.

**George Freeman:**

The A1 south of Newark was last inspected for potholes on 14/01/2020 northbound and on 15/01/20 southbound.

Highways England currently has no plans to resurface the A1 south of Newark this year, however, the A1 will be considered for future schemes as Highways England develops its programme of works for the second Road Investment Strategy (RIS2).

## ■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

**Sir Greg Knight:**

[\[3678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to improve the electric vehicle charging infrastructure on motorways; and if he will make a statement.

**George Freeman:**

In July 2019 work commenced to determine a vision for a core rapid charger network on England's strategic road network. This will report in Spring 2020. Government and industry have supported the installation of over 17,000 devices providing over 24,000 publicly available chargepoints. This includes over 2,400 rapid chargepoints – one of the largest networks in Europe. We want all new public rapid chargepoints to offer 'pay as you go' card payments from spring 2020.

Highways England has committed £15m to ensure there are chargepoints rapid where possible every 20 miles on 95% of the Strategic Road Network by 2020.

Alongside the private sector, the Government plans to invest £1 billion in charging infrastructure – making sure that everyone is within 30 miles of a rapid charging station for electric vehicles.

## ■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

[\[4323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding from the public purse has been allocated to High Speed Two to date; and what the total cost of that project is estimated to be by 2021.

**Paul Maynard:**

£7.4bn (excl. construction VAT) has been spent on delivering the HS2 project up to 31 March 2019. Expenditure in relation to the 2020/21 financial year, will be released as part of HS2 Ltd's and the Department's annual accounts publication. These are subject to audit processes to ensure accuracy. The Oakervee Review has been tasked with rigorously examining HS2 Ltd's costs and schedule. The Review findings and Government's assessment of the likely costs of High Speed 2 will be published shortly.

## ■ Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation

**Gavin Newlands:**

[\[4366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the EU on the continued implementation of the provisions of the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation Order 2007 as amended after the UK leaves the EU.

**Gavin Newlands:** [\[4367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 23 May 2019 to Question 292315 on Biofuels, what progress his Department has made in publishing its response to the consultation, entitled E10 petrol, consumer protection and fuel pump labelling, on the introduction of E10 fuels to the UK market.

**Gavin Newlands:** [\[4368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the Scottish Government on the introduction of E10 petrol to the UK market.

**George Freeman:**

The Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) has been successful in promoting a market for sustainable renewable fuels. Building on that success, the Government nearly doubled targets for supply from 2018 to 2020 and set further targets out to 2032, providing investment certainty. Reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from low carbon fuels supplied in transport under the RTFO are important in the delivery of savings required to meet UK carbon budgets. The trade of low carbon fuels and feedstocks is global and we will continue to engage with counterparts internationally, including with our colleagues in the EU.

The Government has made significant progress in relation to policy on E10 and we will publish our response to the call for evidence on E10, as well as next steps, as soon as possible. The Department has been in regular consultation with officials from the Scottish Government in developing this policy, which could benefit the whole of the United Kingdom.

**■ South Western Rail Franchise****Munira Wilson:** [\[5557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent (a) discussions and (b) meetings (a) ministers and (b) officials in his Department has had with representatives of (i) First Group and (ii) MTR Crossrail on the (A) financial viability and (B) performance of the South Western Railways rail franchise; and if he will publish the names of the attendees of those members.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

South Western Railway is owned by First Group and MTR Europe.

The Department holds regular meetings with all franchise owning groups. These cover a wide range of topics, including financial and performance matters. These meetings involve officials at all levels from within the Department.

**■ South Western Railway****Munira Wilson:** [\[5559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 7 January 2020 to Question 352 on South Western Railway, who was in attendance at those meetings.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

These meetings involve officials at all levels from within the Department.

■ **South Western Railway: Strikes****Munira Wilson:**[\[5558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 7 January 2020 to Question 352 on South Western Railway, what aspects of the 27 days of industrial action between South Western Railway and the RMT union were discussed at the most recent meeting.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

SWR provided an update of the discussions with the RMT at ACAS and their position on the matter in dispute, information about which directors were leading operations during the strike, and a discussion on passenger compensation.

**Munira Wilson:**[\[5560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with representatives from South Western Railway on the potential for future strikes following the 27-day period of industrial action by the RMT Union.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The RMT's mandate for official industrial action expires on 23 January 2020 and it is currently balloting its members for a renewed mandate. I would not wish to speculate about potential for further strikes. I would like to see the union and SWR bring an end to this dispute with an agreement that puts the long-term interests of passengers first.

**Munira Wilson:**[\[5561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the economic effect on local businesses of the 27-day period of industrial action by the RMT Union on South Western Railway.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

As set out in our manifesto, we are concerned about the impact of strike action on passengers and local businesses. We intend to implement Minimum Service Level legislation to ensure that the right to strike is in future balanced proportionately with the rights of those parties and persons, whose rights are being disproportionately adversely impacted by strikes.

**TREASURY**■ **Air Passenger Duty****Paul Girvan:**[\[4465\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of Air Passenger Duty on inter-regional trade outside London.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

As announced on 14 January, HM Treasury is undertaking a review of Air Passenger Duty to ensure regional connectivity is strengthened while meeting the UK's climate change commitments to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

**Capital Investment: Northern Ireland**

**Ben Lake:** [\[5509\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with the (a) Welsh Government and (b) Scottish Government on the £1 billion of new resource and capital spending announced for Northern Ireland on 15 January 2020.

**Ben Lake:** [\[5510\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the announcement of £1 billion of new resource and capital spending for Northern Ireland, what assessment he has made of the need for new capital spending in Wales.

**Rishi Sunak:**

I and my officials engage on a regular basis with the Scottish and Welsh Governments on their funding settlements. The New Decade, New Approach financial agreement recognises the unique circumstances faced in Northern Ireland. The Scottish and Welsh Governments will both benefit from Barnett consequential as a result of the decisions that Chancellor will take on devolved matters in England at the Budget and Comprehensive Spending Review.

**Child Benefit: Adoption**

**Alex Chalk:** [\[3852\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans the Government has to review support for adopters who have been affected by the High Income Child Benefit Charge.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government introduced the High Income Child Benefit Charge (HICBC) from January 2013 to ensure that support is targeted at those who need it most. It applies to anyone with an individual income over £50,000, who claims Child Benefit or whose partner claims it, regardless of the make-up of their household.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) continue to improve their communications to raise awareness of HICBC. This includes information shared via social media, through third parties such as websites aimed at parents or families, and on GOV.UK. The front page of the Child Benefit application form includes a prominent message about HICBC to help families make a decision on whether they should claim and be paid Child Benefit and the importance of claiming even if they opt not to receive payments.

**■ Cider: Excise Duties****Harriett Baldwin:** [4338]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much duty is paid by cider makers.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

Annually, Cider Duty accounts for between 2-3% of overall Alcohol Duty revenue received by HM Revenue and Customs. Historic Cider Duty revenue is found within the 'T4' tab of the tables which accompany the 'UK Alcohol Duty Statistics' publication, found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/alcohol-bulletin>

**■ Coastal Erosion: Fairbourne****Liz Saville Roberts:** [5489]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with the representatives from (a) Crown Estate Commissioners and (b) Natural Resources Wales on the responsibility for land exposed to coastal erosion in Fairbourne, Gwynedd.

**Rishi Sunak:**

Treasury Ministers and officials have regular discussions with all of the devolved administrations on matters of importance to the economy across the UK, including Environment policy. Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management policy is devolved. It is for the devolved administrations to set their own priorities and determine the allocation of funds as they choose.

**■ Financial Services: Wales****Jonathan Edwards:** [5387]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to (a) ensure the sustainability and (b) increase the export opportunities of the financial services sector in Wales.

**John Glen:**

A strong financial services sector in Wales and the rest of the UK is important to achieve strong and sustainable economic growth and ensure consumers and businesses can access the financial services they need.

In order to sustain and promote the sector in Wales, HM Treasury announced the appointment of Richard Theo, CEO and Co-Founder of Wealthify, as fintech envoy for Wales in May 2018. The government is committed to ensuring that the whole country, including Wales, benefits from fintech, and supporting regional fintech hubs to thrive. The Fintech Envoy for Wales plays an important role in supporting the Welsh fintech sector and provides a valuable source of information and intelligence to support policy-making to achieve this objective.

Wales exported an estimated £2.9m in financial and related professional services in 2017. The government is committed to maintaining the global appeal of the UK's financial services sector to continue to support exports and the whole economy.



## ■ Funerals: Pre-payment

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** [\[3808\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to publish the results of his Department's consultation entitled, Regulation of pre-paid funeral plans: consultation on a policy proposal, that closed on 25 August 2019.

**John Glen:**

The government launched a call for evidence on the regulation of pre-paid funeral plans in June 2018 which found that the market is not operating as it should. The government found evidence of harm to consumers and found that there is broad support among funeral plan providers for the voluntary system of regulation to be replaced by a compulsory regulatory regime for the sector.

Under the previous government we committed to ensuring that customers of pre-paid funeral plans are properly protected and consulted on a new legislative framework to bring the pre-paid funeral plan market within the remit of the Financial Conduct Authority. The consultation closed on 25 August and a response to the consultation will be published in due course.

## ■ Housing: Foreign Nationals

**Lucy Powell:** [\[4343\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to introduce a surcharge on purchases of property in the UK for overseas buyers.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government is committed to introducing a new Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) surcharge on non-UK residents purchasing residential property in England and Northern Ireland. The surcharge will help control house price growth and therefore help those residents in the UK to get on to the housing ladder. The revenue raised by the surcharge will be used to tackle rough sleeping.

The Government will announce further updates on all tax measures at the Budget, which the Chancellor has announced will be held on 11 March.

## ■ Housing: Repairs and Maintenance

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[4406\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of reducing the rate of VAT for retrofitting costs of residential housing.

**Jesse Norman:**

Applying the reduced rate of VAT on the retrofitting of residential buildings would come at a significant cost to the Exchequer. The Government keeps all taxes under review and assesses them against a range of fiscal and environmental considerations. Any future decisions on VAT will continue to be taken in line with the normal Budget process.

**■ Motorhomes: Excise Duties****Paul Girvan:**[\[4464\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his Department will publish an assessment of the potential effect on the hospitality and tourism sectors of the introduction of vehicle excise duty on motorhomes.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

This Government is committed to supporting the tourism and leisure industries in the United Kingdom.

However, we are also committed to achieving our climate change targets. Road transport is responsible for almost a quarter of UK domestic greenhouse gas emissions. As such, the Government believes it is right that road vehicles are taxed in accordance with their environmental impact.

I have met with representatives of the industry and I am sensitive to their concerns. As with all taxes, the Government keeps the VED treatment of motorhomes under review. Any changes will be considered by the Chancellor and announced at fiscal events.

**■ National Insurance :Contributions****Harriett Baldwin:**[\[4337\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the potential contribution to the public purse if National Insurance was payable by individuals over the state pension age.

**Jesse Norman:**

The 'Estimated Costs of Tax Reliefs' publication sets out an estimate of the cost of the exemption from National Insurance contributions for those over state pension age. It is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/minor-tax-expenditures-and-structural-reliefs>

This publication estimates the latest cost of this exemption in 2019-20 at around £1billion. The figures can be found in the 'Estimated costs of structural tax reliefs' table:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/837775/Structural\\_FINAL.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/837775/Structural_FINAL.xlsx)

As noted in the publication, the estimated costs do not represent the yield if the exemption were to be abolished. In practice if a relief was withdrawn, taxpayers' behaviour would often alter so that the actual yield would be very different from, and often smaller than, that shown in the tables.

## ■ Occupational Health: Taxation

**Dr Lisa Cameron:** [\[4354\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with the Prime Minister on the Treasury and the NHS working together to review the tax treatment of workplace occupational health services.

**Dr Lisa Cameron:** [\[4355\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of preferential tax treatment for companies that look after the mental health of employees in work; and if he will make a statement.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government recognises the valuable work that many employers do in providing for the health of their staff. Keeping more people in work is good for the economy and reduces spending on out-of-work benefits, and potentially demand on the NHS. For employers, investing in employee health and wellbeing can lead to increased workforce productivity and help retain key talent in an organisation.

Improving people's mental health and putting services on an equal footing with those for physical health remains a priority for this Government. Last year, the Government published a consultation on options to reduce ill health-related job loss. This consultation included potential incentives to encourage more employers to access occupational health services, driving earlier supportive employer action and encourage best practice. However, it also noted that there is limited evidence that making the tax treatment more generous is the most effective lever to incentivise more employers to start offering occupational health provision, if the initial cost is the main barrier for them.

The Government will use the evidence and views gathered during this consultation to develop its proposals further, considering an approach which offers the best value for money and is affordable in the context of the next Spending Review.

## ■ Sanitary Protection: VAT

**Paul Girvan:** [\[4463\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make VAT on female sanitary products zero-rated.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government will replace the 5% reduced VAT rate with a zero rate as soon as it is legally able to do so. Until then, a £15 million annual Tampon Tax Fund has been put in place to support women's charities. This provides funding equivalent to the VAT raised on women's sanitary products.

**■ Treasury: Climate Change****Darren Jones:****[R] [4450]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of climate change on the work of his Department; and what steps he is taking in response to that effect.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

HM Treasury takes its environmental responsibilities very seriously. As you would expect, we are considering what further fiscal and other policy measures are needed to meet our 2050 net zero target.

HM Treasury's Net Zero Review is looking into how the transition to a net zero economy will be funded, and where the costs will fall. The review will publish its findings in Autumn 2020.

**■ Treasury: Families****Steve Double:****[4383]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has a single individual who is responsible for leading on his Department's application of the Family Test.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

Each department has a Family Test lead official who is part of DWP's Family Test Network. This Network is the central forum through which DWP have sought input and comments on the support departments need to help with Family Test implementation.

This includes Network members feeding into improvements to the existing guidance on Family Test implementation issued to officials in all departments.

**WALES****■ Capital Investment: Northern Ireland****Ben Lake:****[5507]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the £1 billion of new resource and capital spending announced for Northern Ireland on 15 January 2020.

**Simon Hart:**

The New Decade, New Approach financial agreement reflects the unique circumstances faced by Northern Ireland and supports the incoming Executive to tackle these. The UK Government is committed to supporting all parts of the UK, including delivering increased funding for Wales, and will continue to do so. The 2019 Spending Round provided the biggest day-to-day funding settlement for Wales in a decade with over £17bn in 2020-21 for the Welsh Government, an increase of over £600m. The UK Government's infrastructure revolution combined with increased

funding for areas like the NHS in England will deliver significant increases to the budgets of the Scottish and Welsh Governments.

## ■ Overseas Trade

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[5391]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether he has been invited to attend the Department for International Trade's Ministerial Forum for Trade with the devolved administrations planned for January 2020.

**Simon Hart:**

DIT is establishing the Ministerial Forum for Trade to ensure that the views of the Devolved Administrations are taken into consideration as we establish our independent trade policy. Territorial Office Ministers will be invited to meetings of the Forum by the Chair, as appropriate, including the inaugural meeting. The Secretary of State for Wales attends a wide range of events and meetings to ensure that UKG policy delivers for Wales, including trade policy.

## ■ Wales Office: Climate Change

**Darren Jones:**

[R] [4457]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what assessment he has made of the effect of climate change on the work of his Department; and what steps he is taking in response to that effect.

**David T C Davies:**

Achieving net zero is a priority for the whole of government, which is why the Prime Minister is chairing a new Cabinet Committee on Climate Change to drive action across all sectors of the economy and demonstrates the UK's global leadership as we prepare to host the crucial COP26 talks in Glasgow in November.

The Office of the Secretary of State for Wales (OSSW) is committed to tackling climate change and delivering our world-leading net zero target. We are focused on reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and report our progress in doing so in the Office's Annual Report and Accounts. We are committed to working with other government departments in delivering on the Greening Government Commitments.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Children: Maintenance

**Marion Fellows:**

[3241]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many cases the Child Maintenance Service has handled under (a) direct pay and (b) collect and pay in each year since 2013.

**Mims Davies:**

*[Holding answer 20 January 2020]:* Please find attached data on the number of child maintenance arrangements. We are unable to provide information back to 2013 as data is only available since 2015.

**THE NUMBER OF CHILD MAINTENANCE  
ARRANGEMENTS**


---

*The number of child maintenance arrangements managed by the Child Maintenance Service, split by service type*

Quarter Ending	Child Maintenance Arrangements	
	Direct Pay	C&P total
Mar-15	79,100	37,200
Mar-16	141,900	61,900
Mar-17	220,600	95,400
Mar-18	272,100	137,600
Mar-19	307,600	165,700

**■ Department for Work and Pensions: Climate Change**
**Darren Jones:****[R] [4447]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effect of climate change on the work of her Department; and what steps she is taking in response to that effect.

**Mims Davies:**

The Department for Work and Pensions assesses climate change as a potential risk to its operational responsibilities.

The UK Government recognises climate change as a material risk to most if not all pension schemes. Therefore, we have clarified trustees' investment duties in legislation to consider all financially material considerations – including climate change. Trustees have to document a policy on how they take account of climate change. Defined contribution and hybrid benefit schemes are required to publish their policy and defined benefit schemes will be required to publish from 1 October.

With respect to its own operations, the Department applies criteria that considers the effect of climate change, such as flood risk, when deciding on future site strategy.

The Department also undertakes regular reviews of their location specific emergency planning, disaster recovery and business continuity plans.

The Department's estate supply chain is undertaking site visits which include an assessment of climate change risk with recommendations on investment. Investment in the Departmental estate is focused upon its core assets, with the level of criticality of those assets a key measure. This helps to ensure that its buildings are as resilient as possible. By using data, asset management principles and specialist knowledge we are able to identify assets most at risk of failure and to mitigate accordingly.

The DWP has a dedicated Estates Sustainability and Environment Team. Their purpose is to oversee that from an estate perspective: -

- Our effects on sustainability and the environment from appropriately managed and
- That risks from the environment are proportionately managed.

In terms of sustainability, the Department is committed to tackling climate change and delivering against the Government's sustainability targets. We are currently exceeding our carbon reduction targets under the Greening Government Commitments (GGC). The GGC requires the Department to reduce carbon emissions by 51% by 2020 against a 2009/10 baseline. As of June 2019, we are currently at a 56% reduction.

## ■ Food Banks: Greater Manchester

**Barbara Keeley:**

[\[5376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the number of food parcels distributed by food banks in (a) Salford and (b) Worsley and Eccles South in 2018-19.

**Will Quince:**

The Government does not collect data on the number of food parcels distributed by food banks and there is no official data on food bank use in the UK.

In order to develop a better understanding of the drivers of food insecurity and identify which groups are most at risk we have introduced a new set of food security questions in the Family Resources Survey questionnaire from April 2019 onwards.

## ■ Local Housing Allowance

**Helen Hayes:**

[\[4428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Written Statement of 13 January 2020, HCWS29 on Welfare, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the freeze in local housing allowance on claimants in (a) London and (b) England.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 21 January 2020]:* As I announced on the 13 th January, Local Housing Allowance(LHA) rates will be increased by CPI from April 2020 delivering on the manifesto commitment to end the benefit freeze.

For individuals who may require more support, Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are available. Since 2011 the Government has provided over £1 billion in DHP funding to local authorities (LAs) to protect the most vulnerable claimants and support households affected by the Housing Benefit reforms.

Further, we also announced in the Spending Round 2019 an additional £40 million for DHPs, in England and Wales, for 2020/21.

**Maternity Allowance****Steve McCabe:****[5323]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 4 November 2019 to Question 1893 on Maternity Allowance, by what date she plans for her Department to meet its target of clearing Maternity Allowance claims within 24 working days.

**Mims Davies:**

As of 23<sup>rd</sup> January our outstanding work volumes are below the aspirational target of 24 days. We continue to monitor progress on a weekly basis.

**Social Security Benefits: Poverty****Ruth Jones:****[4487]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the freeze in working-age social security benefits on levels of poverty.

**Will Quince:**

The Benefit Freeze was designed to put welfare on a sustainable footing, incentivising work and making welfare fairer.

The Government conducted a number of assessments of the impact of the benefit freeze as set out in the analysis of the measures in the Welfare Reform and Work Act, published at the time of the Summer Budget 2015.

<https://www.parliament.uk/documents/impact-assessments/IA15-006C.pdf>

30% of households were then estimated to be affected by this policy, and no one faced a cash loss as a result of the freeze.

The benefit freeze will come to an end in April 2020.



## ■ Universal Credit

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [3828]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will amend the universal credit (a) application form and (b) online journal to enable applicants to consent to their data being used to automatically register eligible children in their household for free school meals.

**Will Quince:**

The Universal Credit system is structured around an online personal account which contains all the information relevant to the claim. This includes claimant's bank account details, savings, capital, medical history, family relationships and address information. We need to ensure a high level of security and protection is maintained to combat unscrupulous individuals and organisations who try to access the information we hold and seek to impersonate genuine advisers. We take all reasonable steps to protect the position of claimants and their data.

Claimants may currently be entitled to a number of other benefits because they are in receipt of Universal Credit. These are known as passported benefits and include free school meals and free prescriptions. The eligibility criteria for each passported benefit remain the responsibility of the departments and devolved administrations that own them. In Scotland and Wales, eligibility criteria for free school meals is a matter for the devolved administrations.

The Department for Education provides an electronic eligibility checking service to all local authorities in England, which is used to confirm eligibility for free school meals.

**Ruth Jones:**

[4486]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that the monthly assessment period for universal credit takes into account a claimant's fluctuating income.

**Will Quince:**

Universal Credit takes earnings into account in a way that is fair and transparent. The amount paid reflects, as closely as possible, the actual circumstances of a household during each monthly assessment period. This includes any earnings reported by an employer or claimant during the assessment period, regardless of when they were paid, or which month they relate to.

Assessment periods allow for Universal Credit awards to be adjusted on a monthly basis, ensuring that if claimants' incomes fall, they do not have to wait several months for a rise in their Universal Credit award.

Information is available for claimants about earnings patterns and how they may affect award of Universal Credit and is published on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-different-earning-patterns-and-your-payments/universal-credit-different-earning-patterns-and-your-payments-payment-cycles>

Claimants can discuss queries with their case manager or work coach, who can signpost to services appropriate to individual circumstances, including those delivered through the Money and Pensions Service.

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [\[5464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the number of universal credit claimants who have had a (a) waiver and (b) reduction in deductions to their monthly payments on the grounds of hardship in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Will Quince:**

The Department has an obligation to ensure that public funds are administered responsibly and to abide by the principles set out in Her Majesty's Treasury's guidance on Managing Public Money. Waiver applications have to be considered in line with this guidance. Debts can only be waived if recovery is causing substantial medical and/or financial hardship to a claimant or their immediate family.

In 2019/20 (up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019), there were 10 Universal Credit claimants who had their debts waived.

We understand the impact that debt can have on the wellbeing of claimants and we endeavour to ensure that the recovery of any overpayment is managed in a way that takes account of the claimant's individual circumstances. Where a person says they cannot afford the proposed rate of recovery, a reduction in their rate of repayment may be agreed.

In 2019/20 (up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019), 159,000 Universal Credit claimants had the rate at which they were repaying a benefit overpayment reduced.

*\*The figures provided in this response have been sourced from internal management information and were not intended for public release. They should therefore not be compared to any other similar figures subsequently released by the Department. The figure relating to the number of debts waived has been rounded to the nearest 10, and the figure relating to reductions in repayment rates has been rounded to the nearest 1,000. It is important to note that debts waived may not all relate to Universal Credit.*

**Chris Stephens:**

[\[5466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the value of universal credit deductions made to repay administrative errors in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Will Quince:**

As a Department, we understand the impact that debt can have on the wellbeing of claimants and we endeavour to ensure that the recovery of any overpayment is managed in a way that takes account of the claimant's individual circumstances. Where a person says they cannot afford the proposed rate of recovery, a reduction in their rate of repayment may be agreed.

Section 105 of The Welfare Reform Act 2012 amended the Social Security Act 1992, such that for Universal Credit, New Style JSA and New Style ESA, any payment in excess of the entitlement is recoverable, regardless of how the overpayment of entitlement occurred. This policy was brought in to reflect the need for a better value for money welfare system and to reinforce the overarching aim that Universal Credit mirrors work.

In 2018/19, working with local authorities, the Department recovered £1.1bn in overpayments. Of this, £19.3m related to Universal Credit overpayments arising as a result of Departmental errors.

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [5467]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will place in the Library the (a) code of practice and (b) decision-making process governing universal credit deductions.

**Will Quince:**

The Department's deductions policy strikes a fair balance between a claimant's need to meet their obligations and their ability to ensure they can meet their day-to-day needs. From October 2019, Universal Credit deductions have been reduced to 30% of a claimant's standard allowance down from 40% to better achieve these objectives.

Deductions are made following the priority order, which determines the order in which items should be deducted. 'Last resort' deductions, such as rent or fuel costs, are at the top of the priority order, ensuring that claimant welfare is prioritised, followed by social obligation deductions, such as child maintenance, and finally benefit debt, such as Social Fund loans and benefit overpayments.

The Department collects and analyses data on Universal Credit regularly, including on the rate of deductions. Alongside this, the Department is always building our understanding on the impact deductions can have on claimants, and has heard evidence from external organisations on this issue. We have to balance these impacts with the need for claimants to meet their obligations.

The Code of Practice 'What happens if you are overpaid Universal Credit, Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance?' was deposited in the Library 6 May 2014. Deposit reference 'DEP2014-0790' refers.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/business-papers/commons/deposited-papers/>

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [5468]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of universal credit deductions were made to repay over-payments made in error in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Will Quince:**

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Offshore Wind Energy Infrastructure Projects

**Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth (Kwasi Kwarteng):**  
[\[HCWS57\]](#)

This Statement concerns applications made by Orsted Hornsea Project Three (UK) Limited, Norfolk Vanguard Limited and Vattenfall Wind Power Limited for development consent for the installation, operation and maintenance of the proposed Hornsea Project Three, Norfolk Vanguard and Thanet Extension offshore wind farms respectively, their related offshore infrastructure off the coast of Norfolk and Kent and their related onshore electrical connections within those counties.

Under section 107(1) of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State must make a decision on an application within three months of the receipt of the Examining Authority's report unless exercising the power under section 107(3) of the Planning Act 2008 to set a new deadline. Where a new deadline is set, the Secretary of State must make a Statement to Parliament to announce it.

The statutory decision deadline for the Hornsea Project Three offshore wind farm application was re-set by Written Ministerial Statement on 8 October 2019. However, following a request by Orsted Hornsea Project Three (UK) Limited on 12 December 2019 for an extension of the period of six weeks by which to provide additional information to the Secretary of State, to 14 February 2020, the Secretary of State has decided to re-set the decision deadline to 1 June 2020 to allow that information to be received and assessed including any further consultation required.

The deadline for the decision on the Norfolk Vanguard offshore wind farm was 10 December 2019 and the deadline for the Thanet Extension offshore wind farm was 11 December 2019. The Secretary of State has decided to set a new deadline of 1 June 2020 for deciding these two applications to allow further information to be provided and assessed including any further consultation required.

The decision to set the new deadlines for these three applications is without prejudice to the decisions on whether to grant or refuse development consents for them.

### CABINET OFFICE

#### ■ Advance from the Contingencies Fund

**Paymaster General and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Oliver Dowden):**  
[\[HCWS58\]](#)

The Cabinet Office has sought a repayable cash advance from the Contingencies Fund of £19,740,000.

This routine requirement arises each year because the Cabinet Office receives a relatively high proportion of its voted funding at Supplementary Estimate, and as a consequence may only draw the related cash from the Consolidated Fund after the Supply and Appropriation Act has received Royal Assent in March 2020.

The cash advance will pay for programmes which will generate Government-wide benefits or savings and are urgent in the public interest, including advancing EU Exit objectives, public inquiries, security and the efficient management of Government property.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £19,094,000 and capital of £646,000 will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for the Cabinet Office. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £19,740,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

## ■ Government Transparency and Accountability

**Minister for the Constitution (Chloe Smith):**

**[HCWS59]**

Since 2010, the Government has been at the forefront of opening up data to allow Parliament, the public and the media to hold public bodies to account. Such online transparency is crucial to delivering value for money, cutting waste and inefficiency, and to ensuring every pound of taxpayers' money is spent in the best possible way.

The Government is today publishing a number of documents as part of its ongoing commitment to transparency and accountability.

The following subject areas include documents and data that the Government is due to publish, or which have recently been made available.

### **Ministerial transparency**

Departments are publishing the routine quarterly Ministerial data on external meetings, gifts, hospitality and overseas travel.

The Government is also making available the agenda and the meeting notes of the July 2019 Coordination Committee meeting between the Government and the DUP.

Further transparency documents relating to Ministers were published on 20 December 2019.

### **Transparency in the Civil Service**

Departments are publishing reports on the median gender pay gap. Across the Civil Service, this encouragingly states that the median gender pay gap has narrowed to 11.1%. This demonstrates progress to date, but shows there is still further to go.

Departments are also publishing routine spend and prompt payment data, demonstrating our continued commitment to supporting businesses by ensuring they are paid on time.

### **Transparency of senior officials and special advisers**

Alongside quarterly data on the travel, expenses and meetings of senior officials, the Government is also publishing the annual list of salary details for senior public officials in

departments and arms' length bodies earning £150,000 and above, reflecting the enhanced scrutiny we have put in place for these most senior posts. Though the Government recognises the need to attract the brightest and the best to deliver on the peoples' priorities and save taxpayers' money, very high salaries must be justified and publishing this data allows them to be scrutinised.

Departments are also publishing routine returns from special advisers.

Departments are also publishing routine quarterly data summarising decisions made by departments about outside appointments or employment taken up by former members of the Civil Service at SCS1 and SCS2 level and equivalents (including special advisers of equivalent standing).

These documents will be published on GOV.UK.

## DEFENCE

### ■ Gifting of Royal Navy Historic Flight Aircraft

**Minister for Defence Procurement, Ministry of Defence (James Heappey):**

[\[HCWS55\]](#)

I have today laid before Parliament a Departmental Minute describing a gift which the Ministry of Defence (MOD) intends to make to the Fly Navy Heritage Trust Limited.

Since 1960, the Royal Navy has operated a collection of MOD-owned historically important naval heritage aircraft with the Royal Navy Historic Flight (RNHF). Five military-registered aircraft formed part of the Royal Navy Historic Flight, all of which have been maintained at some expense on the military register by the MOD. In January 2018 it was determined that, to allow greater freedoms in operation at reduced cost to MOD, the Royal Navy Historic Flight should be disbanded, with its aircraft transferred to a civilian owner operator.

The gift comprises four of the former Royal Navy Historic Flight aircraft:

1. a Swordfish (W5856) torpedo bomber aircraft, famous for Taranto and operations throughout World War II.
1. a Sea Fury (VR930), famous for operations in Korea and the only propeller aircraft to have shot down a jet.
1. a Sea Hawk (WV908), a pioneering carrier jet aircraft and the first Hawker aircraft company jet.
1. a Chipmunk (WK608) is required to transfer with the heritage aircraft on the basis that it provides pilot continuity and generates income.
1. their associated spares and support equipment.

The total value of this gift is in the region of £1,810,000.

The future of a fifth aircraft, Swordfish (LS326), is currently under consideration.

The RNHF has been supported in its activity by the Fly Navy Heritage Trust, a charity operating under the umbrella of 'Navy Wings', that has promoted the culture and heritage conservation of the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm since its formation in the early Nineties. The Trust has provided significant financial support to the renovation, repair and maintenance of the MOD-owned heritage aircraft, whilst also operating their own naval heritage aircraft in direct support of Naval Service engagement aims alongside the Royal Navy Historic Flight aircraft or when Royal Navy aircraft are unavailable.

The gifting of four of the former Royal Navy Historic Flight aircraft to the Fly Navy Heritage Trust will allow these historically important aircraft to continue to be used in support of commemorative and educational aims in support of the Royal Navy and Fleet Air Arm for many years to come.

The transfer of ownership is expected to be undertaken over the coming weeks, subject to completion of the Departmental Minute process.

## DUCHY OF LANCASTER

### ■ Update on the EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill

**Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Michael Gove):**

[\[HCWS60\]](#)

This Government was elected with a clear mandate to deliver the result of the 2016 Referendum, and to ensure that the UK ratifies the deal reached by the Prime Minister, before the UK leaves the European Union on the 31 January.

The Government has sought, in line with the Sewel Convention, legislative consent from the devolved legislatures of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland for the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill.

It is important to note that despite the argument of some, the devolved legislatures have not been asked to consent to Brexit overall. In line with the devolution settlements, they have been asked to consent to the specific parts of the Bill that fall within devolved competence, or otherwise engage the legislative consent process.

It is therefore disappointing that the three devolved legislatures have refused to agree a legislative consent motion (LCM) for the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill.

We recognise that taking the Bill to Royal Assent without the consent of the devolved legislatures is a significant decision and it is one that we have not taken lightly. However, it is in line with the Sewel Convention. It is also necessary in order to ensure that all parts of the UK have the powers required to meet our obligations in the Withdrawal Agreement. These include important protections for EU and UK citizens' rights as we leave the EU.

The Sewel Convention - to which the Government remains committed - states that the UK Parliament 'will not normally legislate with regard to devolved matters without the consent' of the relevant devolved legislatures. The circumstances of our departure from the EU, following the 2016 referendum, are not normal – they are unique.



At every stage of the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill, the UK Government has demonstrated its enduring commitment and respect for the Sewel Convention and the principles that underpin our constitutional arrangements.

The practices and procedures that have developed to deliver the Sewel Convention encourage the UK Government to consult with the devolved administrations on legislation at an early stage to ensure their views are taken into account.

Through extensive consultation and engagement it has respected the spirit and the letter of the devolution settlement. Changes have been made to recognise the valid concerns of our partners in the Scottish and Welsh Governments. We have also, during the absence of the Executive, worked closely with the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

Despite the Government's efforts, it is unfortunate that common ground could not be found on all elements.

We will continue to respect and uphold the Sewel Convention and the devolution settlements going forward.

We will also continue to engage with the Scottish and Welsh Governments, as well as the newly formed Northern Ireland Executive, as we negotiate our future relationship with the EU.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Correction

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families (Michelle Donelan):**

[\[HCWS53\]](#)

Information supplied by the Careers and Basic Skills Division of the Department for Education has been identified as containing incorrect information in the response provided by Kemi Badenoch MP to the Parliamentary Question from the Honourable Member for Newcastle Upon Tyne North concerning the number of careers advisers employed by schools (PQ286227).

In response to PQ286227, the correct answer is that information on roles of staff employed in schools is collected via the School Workforce Census. Information on the role(s) a staff member is employed to carry out is collected for all staff who have a contract lasting 28 days or more. As at November 2018 (the latest data available), there are 264 schools where a member of staff has been recorded with the role of careers adviser. There may be other staff in schools who fulfil this role but have not been recorded as such; they may have a contract of 28 days or less or, because schools may record up to three roles per member of staff, the school may have allocated them to other roles.

**HOME OFFICE****■ College of Policing Limited Annual Report and Accounts 2018 – 2019**

**Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service (Kit Malthouse):** [\[HCWS54\]](#)

I am today publishing the 2018-19 annual report and accounts for the College of Policing Limited (HC 48). This will be laid before the House and published on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). The report will also be available in the Vote Office.

**TRANSPORT****■ Annual accounts for the Dartford - Thurrock Crossing and Severn River Crossing**

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (George Freeman):**

[\[HCWS56\]](#)

My Noble Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Baroness Vere of Norbiton) has made the following Ministerial Statement

Under Section 3 (1) (d) of the Trunk Road Charging Schemes (Bridges and Tunnels) (Keeping of Accounts) (England) Regulations 2003, annual accounts for the Dartford – Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme and the Severn River Crossing Charging Scheme are published today.

In addition, annual accounts for the now-abolished Severn River Crossing toll are released today under Section 28 of the Severn Bridges Act 1992. Since there are no longer tolls or charges on the Severn River Crossings these accounts will not be produced in the future.

The accounts relate to financial year 2018-19 or 2018 and will be placed in the House Library.

**Attachments:**

1. Dartford Accounts [200123 - Dartford - Thurrock River Crossing Charging Scheme 2018 - 2019.pdf]
2. Severn River Crossing Charging Scheme Accounts [200123 - Severn River Crossing Charging Scheme Accounts.PDF]