



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 22 May 2020 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:35 P.M., 22 May 2020). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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**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

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Agriculture: Migrant Workers

**Rushanara Ali:**

[46661]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it is his policy that workers from Romania brought to the UK by the Government to work in food production will be guaranteed the minimum wage.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government is committed to fair pay by ensuring workers are paid at least the National Minimum Wage (NMW).

Migrant workers who work in the UK are entitled to the NMW rate relevant to their age. Anyone concerned about underpayment of the NMW should call [Acas's](https://www.acas.org.uk) confidential helpline on 0300 123 1100 or visit <http://www.acas.org.uk/nmw>. HMRC will look into every complaint it receives.

#### ■ Bounce Back Loan Scheme and Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[47410]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that banks are providing fair advice in the interests of small businesses on whether they should apply for financial support through the (a) Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme or (b) Bounce Back Loan Scheme.

**Paul Scully:**

Accredited lenders are responsible for providing loans under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs). Businesses should approach accredited lenders in the first instance, providing information about the type and amount of finance they need to access. The lender will determine the right type of finance for a business's needs. A full list of accredited lenders can be found on the British Business Bank website.

The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) allows business with a turnover of less than £45 million to access working capital (including loans, overdrafts, invoice finance and asset finance) of up to £5 million for up to six years.

The Bounce Back Loan Scheme helps small and medium-sized businesses to borrow between £2,000 and up to 25% of their turnover. The maximum loan available is £50,000.

Full details of both the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs) can be found on GOV.UK and the British Business Bank websites.

Decision-making on whether a business is eligible to access the CBILS or the BBLs is fully delegated to the accredited lenders, and individual lending decisions remain at the discretion of these lenders.

The Government continues to work closely with lenders to help SMEs access the finance they need.

## ■ **Businesses: Government Assistance**

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[46121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Prime Minister's statement of 10 May 2020, what support the Government plans to provide to businesses in the event that measures to ease the covid-19 lockdown are reversed to control local covid-19 outbreaks; and what the planned timeframe for providing that support is.

**Paul Scully:**

Thanks to the effort of the British public we are now at the stage where we can take the first steps to modifying the restrictions on social distancing including encouraging those who cannot work from home to go back to work. We will be monitoring the situation locally, regionally, and nationally and if there are outbreaks, we will not hesitate to put on the brakes.

We have published guidance for several work environments to help ensure workplaces are as safe as possible and have set out practical steps employers can take to enable staff to work safely. We will be keeping the guidance under review as and when we move through the steps my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister set out on 10 May. We continue to work with stakeholders on developing sensible guidance for businesses that will give UK workers the utmost confidence on their return to work.

My Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced unprecedented support for business and workers, including a Bounce Back Loans scheme and the extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to allow business to plan for the coming months with certainty.

## ■ **Carbon Emissions**

**Paul Maynard:**

[\[46029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what low carbon energy projects the Government is assessing to meet its net zero 2050 target.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

Since 2010, over £94bn has been invested in clean energy in the UK and the Government has spent a total of £30.7bn on renewable electricity through the Renewable Obligations, Feed-in-Tariffs and Contracts for Difference (CfD) schemes. We recently set out ambitious plans at the Budget including investing £270m new funding for heat networks and £100m for heat pumps and biomass.

The Contracts for Difference (CfD) scheme is the government's main mechanism for supporting new large-scale renewable electricity generation projects in Great Britain. We are continuing to improve the route to market for renewables by making up to £557 million available for CfD schemes. In the latest CfD allocation round, contracts were awarded to 12 renewable projects with the potential for nearly 6GW of new renewable capacity – enough to power over 7 million homes.

Our sustained support for clean energy has led to dramatic falls in the costs of some renewable technologies. The auction prices of offshore wind reduced by around two-thirds between the 2015 and 2019. The new projects and lower prices are another step towards decarbonising our energy system as we work toward net zero emissions by 2050, creating jobs and economic opportunities across the UK.

In addition, we are investing over £3 billion in low-carbon innovation through to 2021 – going beyond the £2.5 billion we committed to in the Clean Growth Strategy – and this investment will help to grow our low carbon economy. We are focusing our innovation spend where this can bring down the systems costs of delivering our climate targets and where the UK has expertise, building on our strengths in sectors such as advanced manufacturing, automotive, aerospace and nuclear.

We will be focusing on continuing to develop our net zero strategy in advance of COP26 – including through strengthening our plans for decarbonisation in key sectors. We published the first phase of our transport decarbonisation plan on 26 March 2020, and will be setting out further plans including our forthcoming Energy White Paper later this year.

## ■ Climate Change

**Alan Brown:**

[\[47349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish the proposed Nationally Determined Contribution for the UK; and if he will make a statement.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

As part of our incoming COP Presidency, in partnership with Italy, we are urging all countries to come forward with ambitious new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) which represent their highest possible ambition. The UK will play its part and we are preparing to come forward with an enhanced NDC well ahead of COP26.

**Alan Brown:**

[\[47350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, for what reasons the Government did not publish the proposed Nationally Determined Contribution for the UK in February 2020 in line with the timeframe agreed at COP21; and if he will make a statement.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

As part of our incoming COP Presidency, in partnership with Italy, we are urging all countries to come forward with ambitious new NDCs which represent their highest

possible ambition. The UK will play its part and we are preparing to come forward with an enhanced NDC well ahead of COP26. It is our top priority in doing so to contribute to the greatest possible momentum and ambition ahead of COP26.

## ■ **Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme**

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

**[46111]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps the Government has taken to ensure that banks provide loans under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme.

**Paul Scully:**

The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) is part of a comprehensive package of measures designed to support businesses facing difficulties in this period.

Accredited lenders are responsible for providing loans under the CBILS. Decision-making on whether a business is eligible to access the CBILS is fully delegated to the accredited lenders, and individual lending decisions remain at the discretion of these lenders.

Since the CBILS launched, Government has listened to feedback from stakeholders and made changes to ensure that loans are processed as quickly as possible. These changes include:

- Extending the scheme so that all viable small businesses affected by Covid-19 are eligible;
- Removing previous restrictions on the following groups to enable them to access the CBILS, subject to other eligibility criteria being met: Employer, professional, religious or political membership organisations and trade unions;
- Removing the ability for lenders to ask for personal guarantees for loans under £250,000, and reducing the personal guarantee for loans over £250,000 to 20% of the outstanding balance after recoveries;
- Introducing technical changes to ensure that applications will be processed faster;
- Removing the forward-looking viability test; and
- Removing the per lender portfolio cap.

The Government continues to work with banks and other finance providers to help SMEs access the finance they need.

## ■ **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Pregnancy**

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[46598]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 5 May to Question 39769, which paragraph of the Government guidance on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme specifies that pregnant employees can be

furloughed under that Scheme (a) if they and their employer agree and (b) they meet the normal eligibility requirements.

**Paul Scully:**

The Job Retention Scheme has been designed to help employers retain staff during the coronavirus outbreak. The guidance explains that anyone who meets the eligibility requirements can be considered for the Scheme - where the employee and employer agree. That includes pregnant women. The limited number of exclusions are explicitly set out in the guidance.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Carbon Emissions**

**Damien Moore:**

[\[46792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the financial effect on his Department of moving to net zero carbon emissions; and if he will make a statement.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The Department is committed to becoming net zero by 2050 at the latest and work is in progress to meet that target. It is too early to give an estimate of the financial effect on the department.

The Department undertook an energy audit in 2019 and we are currently undertaking a range of works, including installation of LED lighting, to reduce our energy consumption. We have established a sustainability board to oversee our planning on net zero. Since 2010 we have:

- Reduced carbon emissions by 65%
- Reduced waste production by 72%
- Eradicated the majority of single-use plastics, including preventing 120,000 single use coffee cups from going to landfill in 2019.

**Damien Moore:**

[\[46793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the non-financial effect on his Department of changes required for his Department to move to net zero carbon emissions; and if he will make a statement.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The Department is committed to becoming net zero by 2050 at the latest and work is in progress to meet that target. It is too early to give an assessment of the non-financial effect on the Department.

The Department undertook an energy audit in 2019 and we are currently undertaking a range of works, including installation of LED lighting, to reduce our energy consumption. We have established a sustainability board to oversee our planning on net zero. Since 2010 we have:

- Reduced carbon emissions by 65%

- Reduced waste production by 72%
- Eradicated the majority of single-use plastics, including preventing 120,000 single use coffee cups from going to landfill in 2019.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Iron and Steel**

**Nick Smith:**

**[47239]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 23 January 2020 to Question 5366, when his Department plans to update its publications entitled (a) Steel procurement pipeline and (b) Steel Public Procurement: Compliance with the steel procurement guidance.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

*[Holding answer 20 May 2020]:* The data used for the publication of the steel procurement pipeline, and the compliance data on the steel procurement guidance, has been shared with UK Steel and the steel producers. These stakeholders have helped to quality assure the information prior to publication, which we intend to publish soon.

Data on steel procurement in the UK, including the origin, as well as information on infrastructure projects with significant steel content, is published annually at:

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

The next iteration of this data will be published in due course.

■ **Employment: Disability**

**Mhairi Black:**

**[46096]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what guidance his Department is issuing to employers to prevent them from requiring disabled staff who are at a higher risk to covid-19 virus to go to work.

**Paul Scully:**

Government worked with a wide range of businesses, unions and representative organisations to draft the guidance on safe return to work, as well as Public Health England and the Health and Safety Executive. The guidance sets out clearly that the Government advice on vulnerable and shielded groups continues to apply, and that equalities matters should still be taken into account.

Clinically vulnerable people who are at higher risk from COVID-19 have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing. Employers should help these individuals work from home if possible. The guidance sets out that employers should consider whether workers with a disability are exposed to any specific risks, including those who are classed as either “clinically extremely vulnerable” or “clinically vulnerable” to COVID-19. If so, they should take the steps needed to protect those individuals.

The guidance does not replace health and safety or equalities legislation; it provides information to employers on how best to meet these responsibilities in the context of COVID-19.

#### ■ Future Fund: Subsidiary Companies

**Chi Onwurah:** [46650]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how UK startups who have a US parent company as a requirement of US accelerator programmes can access the UK's Future Fund initiative.

**Paul Scully:**

The Future Fund opened for applications on 20 May. The Future Fund will provide UK-based companies with convertible loans, investing between £125k and £5m, on the condition that third-party investors at least match the Future Fund's commitment.

The eligibility criteria for the scheme states that a business must be a UK incorporated limited company and if the company is a member of a corporate group, only the parent company is eligible.

#### ■ Hospitality Industry

**Afzal Khan:** [46158]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the wedding industry.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government recognises the significant impacts that the current COVID-19 outbreak is having on the whole of the hospitality sector and is therefore providing a range of support measures to help businesses across this sector. These measures include grants and business rates relief, VAT deferral, business interruption and bounce back loans, as well as job retention and self-employed income support. Full details of all the measures have been published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/financial-support-for-businesses-during-coronavirus-covid-19>.

#### ■ Hospitality Industry: South Asia

**Afzal Khan:** [46156]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the South Asian wedding industry in the UK.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government recognises the significant impacts that the current COVID-19 outbreak is having on the whole of the hospitality sector and is therefore providing a range of support measures to help businesses across this sector. These measures

include grants and business rates relief, VAT deferral, business interruption and bounce back loans, as well as job retention and self-employed income support. Full details of all the measures have been published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/financial-support-for-businesses-during-coronavirus-covid-19>.

## ■ Hydrogen: Technology

**Alan Brown:**

[47347]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support the development of hydrogen technology to help decarbonise (a) transport, (b) heating and (c) heavy industry.

**Alan Brown:**

[47348]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of hydrogen technology to help decarbonise (a) transport, (b) heating and (c) heavy industry.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

Hydrogen is a potential decarbonisation option across multiple economic sectors, including transport, heat, industry and power. Our independent advisors the Committee on Climate Change have suggested that a major increase in hydrogen production is required in order to meet our 2050 net zero target, with a complete switch to low carbon production methods[1].

The Government is committed to exploring the option of hydrogen as a strategic decarbonised energy carrier, alongside electricity. In line with this we are investing up to £121m in hydrogen innovation, supporting a range of projects exploring the potential of low carbon hydrogen across the value chain. This includes the:

- £23m Hydrogen for Transport Programme - to increase the uptake of fuel cell electric vehicles and grow the number of publicly accessible hydrogen refuelling stations
- £25m Hy4Heat programme - to explore the safety and feasibility of using 100% hydrogen for heat in the home, including product development and core safety assessment.
- £20m Industrial Fuel Switching Competition - to test the potential for switching to hydrogen (and other low carbon fuels) in industrial sectors like cement and glass manufacture.
- £33m Low Carbon Hydrogen Supply Competition – to support the development of bulk low carbon hydrogen production technologies

Alongside our innovation activity, we are building sustainable policy frameworks to support investment in low carbon hydrogen production, including through progressing a business model to enable this.

[1] Net Zero – Technical Report, Committee on Climate Change, May 2019 - <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-technical-report/>

## ■ Industrial Health and Safety: Coronavirus

**Ian Lavery:**

**[46070]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, in the event that businesses are unable to ensure the safety of their workers during the covid-19 outbreak, what steps the Government plans to take to support those businesses and their workers until they are able to reopen safely.

**Paul Scully:**

Every business is unique, and each employer will need to consider what COVID-19 means for their organisation. In order to help businesses consider this, we have provided guidance on how to carry out risk assessments to work safely in a number of different working environments, such as offices, factories, and working outdoors, so that employers can use the guidance which is most relevant to them. If a business does not reopen following a risk assessment, then that is its own choice.

We have announced unprecedented support for business and workers including the Bounce Bank Loans scheme. My Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer has also extended the Job Retention Scheme to the end of October. Future decisions on the scheme will have to take into account the wider context of the economic conditions, social distancing and the public health response, the affordability of the scheme, and the need to provide certainty to employers and employees.

## ■ Merchant Shipping: Coronavirus

**Karl Turner:**

**[46625]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that major employers of UK seafarers do not make staff redundant due to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Paul Scully:**

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is designed to help employers whose operations have been severely affected by coronavirus (COVID-19) to retain their employees and protect the UK economy. The scheme will help businesses to retain staff and reduce the need for redundancies.

Any entity with a UK payroll can apply to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme as long as they have: (1) created and started a PAYE payroll scheme on or before 19 March 2020, (2) enrolled for PAYE online and (3) a UK bank account. This applies to any employer, including those employing seafarers.

My Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer has now announced that the scheme will be extended, in full, until the end of July. After July, we will introduce more flexibility to the furlough scheme so that we move out of it in a measured way that protects people's incomes and helps support furloughed employees as they

return to work. This will run for three months from August through to the end of October.

## ■ **Postal Services: Coronavirus**

**Alexander Stafford:**

**[47503]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the Royal Mail's compliance with the Universal Service Obligation as the Royal Mail has announced the temporary ending of Saturday deliveries during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Paul Scully:**

The Universal Service Obligation is set out in the Postal Services Act 2011.

Ministers have no role in temporary changes to the service level. The regulatory conditions that require Royal Mail to deliver letters 6 days a week as part of the universal postal service also provide that Royal Mail is not required to sustain these services without interruption, suspension or restriction in the event of an emergency. Ofcom has acknowledged in this context that the COVID-19 pandemic is an emergency.

There is a clear and transparent process for how longer-term changes to service standards would be considered and any changes would need to be made through secondary legislation and agreed by Parliament.

## ■ **Remote Working: Recruitment**

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

**[46701]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to ensure that wherever possible jobs are advertised as flexible for homeworking in increase the participation of marginalised employees.

**Paul Scully:**

This Government is clear about the benefits of flexible working for employers and for their employees. In our manifesto we said that, subject to consultation, we would introduce measures to make flexible working the default.

We consulted last year on proposals to require large employers to publish flexible working policies and to advertise jobs as suitable for flexible working.

We are considering next steps.

Currently, we are seeing an increase in flexible working with many businesses rapidly adapting to remote working, using new technology and finding new ways of working. As we move beyond the current situation, and the economy begins to reopen, we are very keen to do more to promote flexible working in all its forms.

**■ Research: Publishing****Chi Onwurah:**[\[46651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress has been made with the UK Research and Innovation consultation on the Open Access policy.

**Amanda Solloway:**

As part of its Open Access Review, UKRI issued a consultation in February to seek views and evidence on its proposed policy, inviting responses from any organisation, group or individual with an interest in research and innovation. Originally closing on 17 April, the consultation has been extended to 29 May 2020 in response to the COVID-19 disruption.

Further work is being undertaken to gather evidence alongside the consultation, including independent analysis to help assess the possible implications for stakeholders, such as direct costs and benefits, and wider social and economic implications.

The review originally aimed to report in 2020, however, with changing circumstances related to COVID-19, it is likely to report later. UKRI continue to review the situation and will communicate a clear timetable once this is more certain.

**■ Retail Trade: China****Scott Benton:**[\[47468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to (a) ensure the quality of online retail products sold to UK consumers from China and (b) enforce appropriate UK quality standards on online retail websites.

**Paul Scully:**

When foreign companies and traders sell goods online and target UK consumers, they must comply with UK consumer protection laws. It is the responsibility of traders to ensure the products they are selling to UK consumers comply with UK law requiring that all products are safe, of satisfactory quality, fit for purpose and as described.

**■ Small Business Grants Fund: Operating Costs****Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[46765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 11 May 2020 to Question 43723 on Small Business Grants Fund: Coronavirus, what the (a) timeframe and (b) conditions are for the allocation of that additional funding to local authorities to meet the administrative costs of delivering business grants.

**Paul Scully:**

We are committed to meeting the administrative costs incurred by local authorities through the delivery of the Small Business Grants Fund, the Retail Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund and the Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund. We are working closely with a group of local authorities to understand these costs and to determine a fair and reasonable process for meeting these. We will be in touch with all local authorities with further details of this in due course.

**■ Small Businesses: Government Assistance****Thangam Debbonaire:****[46099]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when Bristol City Council will receive guidance on the top up to local business grants scheme announced on 2 May 2020.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government has announced that up to £617 million is being made available to Local Authorities in England to allow them to provide discretionary grants as part of the suite of Business Support grants supporting businesses and local economies across England. Guidance, intended to support Local Authorities in administering the Discretionary Grants Fund, was published 13<sup>th</sup> May.

Guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-business-support-grant-funding>

This will not replace existing guidance for the Small Business Grant Fund (SBGF) or the Retail Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF).

Guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-business-support-grant-funding-guidance-for-businesses>

The additional Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund is aimed at small businesses with ongoing fixed property-related costs but not liable for business rates or rates reliefs. We are asking local authorities to prioritise businesses in shared spaces, regular market traders, small charity properties that would meet the criteria for Small Business Rates Relief, and bed and breakfasts that pay council tax rather than business rates.

Local Authorities are responsible for defining precise eligibility for this fund and may choose to make payments to other businesses based on local economic need, subject to those businesses meeting the specific eligibility criteria. Businesses seeking information should refer to their Local Authority for further information on their discretionary scheme. Businesses already in receipt of the SBGF, RHLGF or Self-employed Income Support Scheme are not eligible.

## ■ Social Rented Housing: Construction

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[46644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing smart homes as part of development of social housing stock.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The Government is working closely with Ofgem and industry to support the transition to a smarter, more flexible energy system. Our Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan sets out a suite of actions to facilitate the deployment of smart technologies in homes and businesses. Smart technologies drive decarbonisation, can help consumers save money, and improve the efficiency of our energy system – saving the UK an estimated £17-40bn by 2050.

There were around 19.3 million smart meters installed in homes across Great Britain by the end of 2019, enabling households to track and manage their energy use and prepayment customers to top-up credit without leaving home. The half-hourly consumption and price data recorded by smart meters is enabling innovative products such as smart tariffs, which allow consumers to save money by using energy away from peak times and technologies such as electric vehicles and smart appliances to be cost-effectively integrated with renewable energy sources.

## ■ Summertime

**Daniel Zeichner:** [\[46086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the UK remaining on British Summer Time to (a) encourage active travel, (b) extend the tourist season and (c) reduce energy usage as part of the recovery plan from the covid-19 outbreak.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government believes that the current daylight-saving arrangements represent the optimal use of the available daylight across the UK. We do not believe there is sufficient evidence to support changing the current system of clock changes, including for travel, tourism and energy usage.

## ■ Tidal Lagoons Independent Review

**Paul Maynard:** [\[46026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish the Government's response to the Hendry Review into tidal lagoon power; and if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of the Tidal Lagoon Swansea Bay project being an electricity rather than a hybrid project.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

My Rt. Hon. Friend the former Secretary of State made a statement to the House on Monday 25 June 2018 setting out our position on the support for the proposed Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project.

The Department published its summary value for money assessment in June 2018. A copy can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/swansea-bay-tidal-lagoon-value-for-money-assessment>

The Department's analysis of the proposal considered the energy generation from the proposed project and follow-on programme of lagoons but also took account of potential wider economic benefits which might arise from it. The analysis concluded that it did not represent value for money. This remains the Department's position.

**Paul Maynard:****[46027]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the Hendry Review recommendation to enter a timely final-stage negotiation to explore robust and satisfactory terms that might be acceptable to both the developer and the Government.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

My Rt. Hon. Friend the former Secretary of State made a statement to the House on Monday 25 June 2018 setting out our position on the support for the proposed Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project.

The Department's analysis of the proposal to generate electricity from the lagoon and the proposed follow-on programme of lagoons was that it did not represent value for money. This remains the Department's position.

**Paul Maynard:****[46028]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Hendry Review into tidal lagoon power, whether the Government plans to announce a programme to bring forward additional tidal projects.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

My Rt. Hon. Friend the then Secretary of State made a statement to the House on Monday 25 June 2018 setting out our position on the support for the proposed Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project. The Department's analysis of the project and the proposed follow-on programme of lagoons was that it did not represent value for money.

The Government has said it is open to considering well developed, privately developed tidal range projects. However they must be able to demonstrate credibly that they would represent value for money.

**■ Travel Agents: Repayments****Darren Jones:** [\[46130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that holidaymakers whose holiday was cancelled as a result of a change in Foreign Office travel advice are able to receive the refund to which they are entitled.

**Paul Scully:**

Package travel agencies are required to comply with The Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018, which protect consumers who have bought package holidays. Consumers are entitled to a refund if forced to cancel a package holiday due to unavoidable and extraordinary circumstances, which should be issued within 14 days, depending on the nature of the contract in place. Further information on the rights and responsibilities of consumers and businesses was published on 30 April by the Competition and Markets Authority who have also set up a covid-19 taskforce for consumers to register complaints.

**■ Wind Power: Welsh Government****Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[47386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions has he had with ministers in the Welsh Government on the deployment of wooden wind turbines.

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[47387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to promote the development of wooden wind turbines.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

*[Holding answer 20 May 2020]:* No discussions have taken place with the Welsh Government on the deployment or promotion of wooden wind turbines. We welcome innovation in this area, provided the appropriate construction and safety standards are met.

**DEFENCE****■ Animal Experiments: Porton Down****Kenny MacAskill:** [\[46803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, further to Answer of 13 May 2020 to Question 43761, on Animal Experiments: Porton Down, for what reasons infant marmosets are not reared on site prior to re-homing.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Infant marmosets are reared on site within their family group where the family are able to do this successfully. In captivity, larger litter sizes (for example triplets) are

more frequent and some marmoset families are not able to successfully rear triplets. Optimal family group welfare is maintained, where appropriate, by euthanasia of some infants to reduce litter size down to a number that the family can rear. The decision to reduce litter size is made on a case by case basis, under veterinary supervision. It would not be appropriate to hand rear marmoset infants away from their families (on site or anywhere else) as their physical and psychological welfare needs could not be met in these circumstances.

#### ■ **Armed Forces: Charities**

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [48313]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish his Department's plan to support armed forces charities during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [48314]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when armed forces charities will receive Government funding during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Johnny Mercer:**

Armed Forces charities play a significant role in supporting our serving personnel, veterans and their families, no more so than at this time. That is why I announced a £6 Million COVID-19 Impact Fund for the Armed Forces Charity Sector on 12 May 2020 (Official Report: Column 127). This Fund is being administered by the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund, on behalf of the Ministry of Defence and the Office for Veterans' Affairs within the Cabinet Office. Applications to it are now open with decisions on awards expected to be made on 15 June 2020.

Details on how to apply to the fund and the full eligibility criteria can be found on the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund website:

<https://covenantfund.org.uk/2020/05/12/emergency-funding-for-frontline-armed-forces-charities-working-with-armed-forces-communities/>.

In addition, Armed Forces charities are also able to apply to the £370 Million National Lottery Community Fund announced by the Chancellor on 8 April 2020 and utilise other COVID-19 financial support mechanisms including the Job Retention (Furlough) Scheme.

#### ■ **Armed Forces: Coronavirus**

**John Healey:** [46547]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to ensure that military personnel that are critical for national security are tested for covid-19.

**James Heappey:**

The Ministry of Defence is using a range of measures, including testing, to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 to its personnel and staff.

Defence personnel are included within the national testing programme established by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the National Health Service. Testing has also been incorporated into Defence's wider strategy of risk-reduction measures, collectively minimising the potential risk to personnel operating at home and overseas.

Defence has continued to maintain its critical operational outputs throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, in addition to supporting wider Government, the NHS and Devolved Administrations in their response to COVID-19 and will continue doing so wherever it is required.

**John Healey:** **[46548]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the level of capacity for covid-19 testing of military personnel that are required to maintain full military capabilities.

**James Heappey:**

Defence personnel are included within the national testing programme established and led by the Department for Health and Social Care and the National Health Service.

There is sufficient capacity and testing has been incorporated into Defence's wider strategy of risk-reduction measures to minimise the potential risk to personnel operating at home and overseas.

Defence has continued to maintain its operational output throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, in addition to supporting wider Government, the NHS and Devolved Administrations in their response to COVID-19 and will continue doing so wherever it is required.

**John Healey:** **[46549]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the testing of the crew of HMS Queen Elizabeth for covid-19, if he will provide details of the other groups of military personnel that have been tested for that disease.

**James Heappey:**

Testing has been incorporated into Defence's wider strategy of risk-reduction measures to minimise the potential risk to personnel deploying overseas.

Defence has continued to maintain its critical operational outputs throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, and carefully monitors the risk to all Defence personnel.

Figures for Armed Forces personnel who have been tested positive for COVID-19, or have been hospitalised, are included within the overall Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) figures. The Ministry of Defence does not routinely publish the number of tests administered to Defence personnel, nor the number of positive or negative cases of COVID-19.

## ■ Ministry of Defence: Chief Scientific Advisers

**Greg Clark:**

[\[48358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many meetings he had with his Department's Chief Scientific Adviser (a) from 1 September to 30 November 2019 and (b) from 1 December 2019 to 29 February 2020.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Between 1 September 2019 and 29 February 2020, one bilateral meeting was held between the Secretary of State for Defence and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Chief Scientific Adviser. Additionally the Secretary of State for Defence and the MOD Chief Scientific Adviser meet regularly in group briefings.

## ■ Sentinel Aircraft

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

[\[47167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, in which (a) conventional and (b) counterinsurgency campaigns Sentinel aircraft have seen action since their entry into service; what the original design life of each Sentinel aircraft is, and by how much this can practicably be increased by a life extension project; whether the UK possesses alternative systems that can provide (i) strategic and (ii) tactical surveillance coverage over land equivalent to that currently provided by Sentinel; and how future land campaigns will adequately be conducted if a capability gap is created by the retirement of the Sentinel fleet.

**Jeremy Quin:**

*[Holding answer 20 May 2020]:* The Sentinel R1 has been operationally deployed in support of a number of operations. Some operations are considered to be both conventional and counter-insurgency; for example operations in Afghanistan (Op HERRICK) and Iraq (Op SHADER). It has also been deployed on operations in Libya (Op ELLAMY), Nigeria (Op TURUS) and Mali (Op NEWCOMBE), all considered conventional operations.

Sentinel was introduced in 2008 in the knowledge that a significant equipment upgrade would be required in the mid 2010's.

The Defence Review in 2010 cancelled this expected upgrade bringing forward the likely out of service date.

The SDSR 2015 determined that Sentinel should be retained for a further period and set a new out of service date of March 2021. While some work was conducted on the on-board equipment this fell well short of a full system upgrade.

The radar and mission system are now increasingly obsolescent and will face increasing reliability issues as time progresses.

Retaining the capability would have required significant upgrade expenditure and the March 2021 out of service date has been retained.

No identical capability is operated by the UK (though similar capabilities exist in the NATO inventory).

The UK does however have a number of other intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities that collect different types of intelligence information, including long-range strategic assets (Sentry, Rivet Joint and Poseidon) and shorter-range more tactically-focused assets (including Shadow, Reaper and Watchkeeper).

## ■ Veterans: Suicide

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [47221]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what information his Department holds on the number of veterans who have died from suicide in the (a) most recent year for which information is available and (b) last five years.

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [47222]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when his Department plans to publish the preliminary findings of the study into causes of death of military personnel who were deployed to conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014.

**Johnny Mercer:**

The Government takes the welfare of Service personnel and veterans very seriously. Whilst we recognise that suicide affects wider society, not just the Armed Forces, any such death is one too many and a tragedy for all concerned.

Suicide data for veterans of the UK Armed Forces is not currently captured by the Government. However, the Ministry of Defence (MOD), alongside the Office for Veterans Affairs within the Cabinet Office, are working to improve data collection of the veteran community, as envisioned by the 'Strategy for our Veterans'.

The MOD has commissioned a new study to investigate causes of death, including suicide, amongst all those who served in the UK Armed Forces between 2001 and 2014, covering combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, encompassing veterans and those still serving:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-study-into-iraq-and-afghanistan-veterans-launched>. MOD officials are continuing to work with colleagues in NHS Digital, the Health Research Authority and National Records Scotland to overcome challenges and are hopeful that the initial report will be published later this year.

The MOD also publishes studies on the causes of death, including suicide, of veterans from the 1982 Falklands war: (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/causes-of-deaths-among-the-uk-armed-forces-veterans-of-the-1982-falklands-campaign>) and from the 1990/91 Gulf war: (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/causes-of-deaths-that-occurred-among-the-uk-veterans-of-the-199091-gulf-conflict>). Both studies show that the suicide rates amongst veterans were lower than comparative rates in the civilian population.

**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT****■ Coronavirus: Government Assistance****Jeff Smith:****[43686]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Government support packages made available for charities, the tech sector and rugby league, whether the Government plans to provide additional sector-specific support packages during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

The Government has announced unprecedented support for business and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency including almost £300 billion of guarantees – equivalent to 15% of UK GDP. Businesses and workers may benefit from the range of support measures including:

- The Coronavirus Job Retention (Furlough) Scheme to support employers with 80% of workers' salaries up to £2,500 a month.
- The Self-Employed Income Support Scheme which provides eligible freelance workers with up to £2,500 per month in grants for at least three months.
- The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and the Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme provide significant access to cash for eligible businesses in need.
- The Bounce Back Loan Scheme is a fast-track finance scheme designed to support small businesses.

The Business Support website provides further information about how businesses can access the support that has been made available, who is eligible, when the schemes open and how to apply: <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support>

In addition to the support packages highlighted, DCMS has also worked with its arms-length bodies on a range of measures to help our sectors:

- Arts Council England is making £160 million of emergency funding available.
- Sport England have launched an economic package of £210m to support the grassroots and community sport sector.
- The National Lottery Heritage Fund announced a £50m Heritage Emergency Fund.
- Historic England have announced a £2million programme of grants to support smaller, specialist organisations and projects.
- Releasing emergency funding to help community radio stations continue to provide programming and outreach projects for the communities they serve. Relevant stations were invited to bid for emergency grants to help meet their core costs through a process administered by Ofcom.

The Government's economic strategy will be closely coordinated with the public health strategy to ensure a safe return to economic activity. We will continue to monitor developments to understand the economic impacts of COVID-19, including on industries and sectors, and consider how the Government can best support their recovery.

## ■ Darts

**Karl McCartney:** [\[47258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent meetings he has had with representatives of darts organisations; and what the outcome was of those meetings.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

I am having regular discussions with sector and industry bodies to understand the full impact of COVID-19 on sport and how the government can best provide support. This includes a fortnightly meeting with sporting organisations including national governing bodies.

## ■ Economic Situation: Coronavirus

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[46736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what additional financial support he plans to provide in response to the covid-19 outbreak to support local economies that depend on (a) tourism, (b) the hospitality sector and (c) the heritage sector.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

We will continue to engage with stakeholders to assess how we can most effectively support local economies by helping these key sectors through this crisis.

We have announced unprecedented support for business and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency. For example, we recently announced a Bounce Back Loan scheme to support small businesses, and have extended the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

We have also allocated additional funding to Local Authorities in England in the form of a discretionary grant fund of up to £617m. This is aimed at certain small businesses who were not eligible for the existing business grants fund schemes.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and Historic England (HE), DCMS ALBs, have made emergency funding available for the heritage sector. The NLHF £50 million Heritage Emergency Fund and HE's £2 million Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund extend a safety net to small heritage organisations struggling with financial losses

## ■ Football: Gambling

**Ronnie Cowan:**

[\[43689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he has had recent discussions with football authorities on the involvement of gambling companies in the streaming of future football matches.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

My predecessor met with Mark Bullingham, CEO of the Football Association, to discuss this matter in January.

The FA confirmed that no FA Cup matches will be exclusively streamed through gambling operators from this year's fourth round, through to the changes in its current domestic broadcast contract in 2021.

## ■ Gambling: Coronavirus

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[46127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to tackle the increase in gambling on online casino games since the covid-19 lockdown.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

We have made clear that it expects operators to be aware of the potential for increased risk of gambling harm during lockdown and to ensure that they act responsibly to protect customers. On 12 May the Gambling Commission published data which indicated that, while the majority of people are gambling the same amount or less than they did previously, there was an increase in the number of people playing certain online gambling products, including casino games (13%), when figures for March 2019 were compared to those for March 2020. We can not yet be sure how much of this growth is directly attributable to lockdown or is substitution from land-based gambling products.

Online gambling operators must comply with the existing strict requirements for the protection of children and vulnerable people. These have been further strengthened over the past year, with a ban on credit card gambling online (including via e-wallets) and compulsory integration of online operators to GAMSTOP, the online self exclusion scheme. The Gambling Commission has now issued COVID-19 specific guidance for operators aimed at strengthening protections for vulnerable people even further during the lockdown period. This includes requirements to prevent customers reversing withdrawals from their account, to cease offering bonuses or promotions to customers who are displaying indicators of gambling harms, to interact with customers who have been playing continually for an hour, and to monitor customer activities and compare these to pre-lockdown play to identify those who may be at risk. The Commission will take action against operators who fail to act responsibly and we will continue to monitor the situation closely.

**■ Gun Sports: Coronavirus****Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:****[46529]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to enable the early resumption of (a) clay shooting and (b) target rifle shooting after the covid-19 outbreak.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

It is vital that people continue to be active during the Covid-19 outbreak to support their physical and mental health.

On 11 May, Government published updated guidance on lockdown measures, including updates on how people can remain active. Since Wednesday 13 May, people have been allowed to go outside more than once a day for exercise as long as they are following social distancing guidelines, alone, with members of their household, or with one person from outside of their household. People must still only exercise in groups of no more than two people, unless they are exercising with their household.

All outdoor sports and physical activities are now permitted, without time limit, including outdoor shooting, with the exception of swimming in an open-air swimming pool. This does not apply to individuals' private swimming pools within their own homes.

**■ Leisure and Sports: Coronavirus****Ben Bradley:****[47438]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions his Department has had on extending financial support to self-employed workers in the sport and recreation sector during the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

It is vital that the sport and physical activity sector is supported to come through this difficult period and it has a crucial role in supporting the nation back into activity once the pandemic has abated.

The Government has announced a comprehensive package of measures to support businesses and the self-employed. This includes the Self-employment Income Support Scheme which allows those that are self-employed to claim a taxable grant worth 80% of their trading profits up to a maximum of £2,500 a month.

The Government is having regular discussions with sector and industry bodies to understand the impact of COVID-19 on sport and physical activity and to discuss what additional support might be needed.

## ■ Leisure: Coronavirus

**Alexander Stafford:** [47485]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will issue guidance to miniature wargaming clubs on operating safely during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Alexander Stafford:** [47486]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will make an assessment of what guidance can be issued to enable (a) miniature war-gaming matches and (b) other tabletop games to take place (i) safely and (ii) outdoors during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The Government has published guidance on GOV.UK allowing the phased return of recreational activities in line with the latest medical guidance. This guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation>

The Government does not plan to publish recreation-specific guidance.

## ■ Musicians: Economic Situation

**Hilary Benn:** [46561]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential economic effect on UK musicians of leaving the transitional period without an agreement with the EU.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

The UK's creative industries deliver around 12 per cent of the UK's total exports in services, and have grown rapidly in recent years. The government is committed to ensuring this growth continues.

DCMS has engaged extensively with union bodies, artists and cultural organisations to help understand the needs of the creative and cultural sector, including UK musicians who make up a significant proportion of people in these sectors. We understand the diverse circumstances of companies, organisations and individual practitioners and how they may need to adapt as we leave the EU.

We want a relationship with the EU based on friendly cooperation, centred on free trade on the lines of the free trade agreement the EU has with Canada. On temporary entry for business purposes (mode 4), a reciprocal agreement based on best precedent will mean that UK citizens will be able to undertake some paid business activities in the EU without a work permit, on a short-term basis. The precise details, including range of activities, documentation needed, and the time limit, will be negotiated. We are confident that such an agreement based on friendly cooperation can be achieved. However, in the event that such a comprehensive free trade agreement cannot be agreed, the transition period will end and the UK will operate

under the deal agreed with the EU in 2019 and an arrangement similar to that between Australia and the EU.

In all circumstances, we expect UK musicians' work to continue to be an export that is highly valued in the EU as it is across the world.

#### ■ Newcastle United Football Club

**Karl McCartney:** [\[47260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what meetings he has had on the proposed purchase of Newcastle United Football Club by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund; what the outcome was of those meetings; and if he will make a statement.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

There have been no formal discussions on the potential sale of Newcastle United Football Club. Any such sale is a matter for the parties concerned, and for the Premier League to assess under its Owners' and Directors' Test.

#### ■ Social Media: Members

**Dr Lisa Cameron:** [\[46702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate his Department has made of the number of incidences of abuse directed at hon. Members on social media from (a) anonymous and (b) pseudo-anonymous accounts.

**Dr Lisa Cameron:** [\[46703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment he has made of the role of (a) anonymous and (b) pseudo-anonymous social media accounts in spreading disinformation about the covid-19 pandemic.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

We are working closely with technology companies, civil society and academia to support users to understand and manage the risks and benefits of being online during this period. The Cross-Whitehall Counter-Disinformation Unit was stood up on 5 March 2020 to provide a comprehensive picture of the extent, scope and impact of disinformation and misinformation on Covid-19, and is working with partners to ensure appropriate action is taken. On April 23rd DCMS published new guidance for all users on staying safe online during the Covid-19 pandemic. It includes detailed advice on privacy settings, cyber security and disinformation.

The Government is committed to making the UK the safest place to be online. We expect companies to take responsibility for tackling abusive behaviour on their services such as taking steps to limit anonymised users abusing their services, including harassing others. We are continuing work to develop the final policy position on the new online harms regulatory framework and intend to publish a full government response later this year.

## ■ Sports: Video Games

**Karl McCartney:**

[\[47256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent meetings he has had with representatives of esports; and what the outcome was of those meetings.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The government recognises the value of esports which has the potential to develop as an area of real national strength in the UK, building on our world-class video games, entertainment and sports sectors. Esports has also come to the fore during the Covid-19 lockdown, offering entertainment and a way to connect with others.

Ministers have met frequently with the creative industries, including meetings with the Creative Industries Council and weekly roundtable meetings during the current Covid-19 crisis which were attended by organisations such as UKIE that represent businesses in the esports sector. There has also been frequent discussion recently between officials and individual esports businesses and organisations.

## ■ Visual Arts: Coronavirus

**Kevin Brennan:**

[\[46565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the effect of covid-19 outbreak on the income of self-employed visual artists.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

In order to support the sustainability of the Arts sector, including arts companies and arts venues, DCMS has worked closely with Arts Council England (ACE) to provide a tailored package of financial support. In March, ACE announced a £160m emergency response package to complement the financial measures already announced by the Government and to ensure immediate resilience of this vital sector.

This includes £20 million of financial support for individuals, including visual artists, so they can better sustain themselves, and their work, in the coming months. The Arts Council have received 10,293 applications from individuals for this fund and will be publishing the details of how they have awarded this funding at the beginning of June, once all the decisions have been made and applicants notified.

The Secretary of State, myself and officials continue to consult the Art sector extensively to ensure we fully understand the financial impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on the sector.

On the basis of that engagement, DCMS and ACE are continuing to work closely to consider the additional measures that are needed to ensure the long-term recovery and growth of the cultural sector, including self-employed artists.

**EDUCATION****■ Children: Coronavirus****John McDonnell:****[46521]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether parents who are concerned that their children returning to school in May, June or July will be at risk from covid-19 and associated conditions will be able to keep them at home and away from school at least until the commencement of the September term.

**Hilary Benn:****[46558]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether parents who do not let their child return to school as covid-19 lockdown measures are eased will face fines for their child's non-attendance.

**Nick Gibb:**

From the week commencing 1 June, at the earliest, we will be asking primary schools to welcome back children in nursery, reception, year 1 and year 6, alongside priority groups (vulnerable children and children of critical workers). We will only do this provided that the five key tests set by government justify the changes at the time.

By returning pupils gradually, settings can initially reduce the number of children and young people in classrooms compared to usual and put protective measures in place to reduce risks.

Eligible children – including priority groups - are strongly encouraged to attend their education setting, unless they are self-isolating or they are clinically vulnerable. Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time and schools will not be held to account for attendance levels.

Further guidance for parents and carers can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>.

**Tulip Siddiq:****[46755]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many times (a) he and (b) Minister and officials of his Department have met (i) children in care and (ii) children identified as being in need in the last six months.

**Tulip Siddiq:****[46756]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to publish guidance to local safeguarding partnerships on how to respond to covid-19.

**Tulip Siddiq:****[46757]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) referrals made to children's services and (b) social care placements since the beginning of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Tulip Siddiq:** [46758]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions officials in his Department have had with (a) Public Health England and (b) officials in other Government departments on the effect on children's services of changes to health visiting during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Tulip Siddiq:** [46759]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions his Department has had with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on (a) changes to the operation of the Troubled Families programme during the covid-19 outbreak and (b) the effect of those changes on children's services.

**Vicky Ford:**

As both my right hon. Friends, the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer have made clear, the government will do whatever it takes to support people affected by COVID-19.

Our latest guidance on vulnerable children is set out below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>.

These are rapidly developing circumstances; we continue to keep the situation under review and will keep Parliament updated accordingly.

Ministers and officials meet regularly with children in care and their representatives, as well as with those that represent children in need.

Officials and ministers are also in regular contact with colleagues from other departments. These departments, including the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and associated agencies, have provided a range of guidance for relevant staff and practitioners and continue to provide updates as needed.

The department, along with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, has put out a communication to safeguarding partnerships and officials from the department, the Home Office and DHSC are in weekly contact with representatives from the safeguarding partnerships to work with them during the pandemic.

The department has recently launched a new local authority data collection to capture up-to-date information on both the number of referrals to children's social care and children starting to be looked after. We are currently reviewing the responses to the survey and analysing the data. The findings will inform the department's on-going support to local authorities in meeting the needs of vulnerable children and families.

Following temporary amendments to The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations, the department has published comprehensive guidance for children's social care services. This is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-childrens-social-care-services>.

**Alexander Stafford:**

**[46826]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that children's mental health and wellbeing will be supported when they return to school as the covid-19 lockdown measures are eased.

**Vicky Ford:**

The government remains committed to promoting and supporting the mental health of children and young people. Access to mental health support is more important than ever during COVID-19. NHS services remain open, leading mental health charities are being supported to deliver additional services through the £5 million Coronavirus Mental Health Response Fund. The NHS has set up 24/7 open access telephone lines for urgent mental health support for people of all ages.

The Department for Education has established a dedicated helpline and webpages covering advice for the education sector, as well as advice for parents and carers supporting children. The GOV.UK web pages include information about how education settings, and parents and carers, can support children and young people who may be struggling with mental health during this difficult time. This includes educational provision for vulnerable children and children of key workers; safeguarding, including keeping children safe from online harms; and advice on mental health and behaviour. Within the online education resources, there are resources to support mental wellbeing, physical activity, and special educational needs and disabilities.

This guidance is available at the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people> ;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers> ;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools-2> ; and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education>.

The return to school will in itself be part of supporting mental health and wellbeing of pupils as attendance enables social interaction with peers, carers and teachers which benefits wellbeing. Pupil wellbeing is highlighted in curriculum considerations for school leaders to consider in our guidance on actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020, which is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>. It is also included as specific a theme in the planning framework that the department has issued, which is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and->

[childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/opening-schools-for-more-children-and-young-people-initial-planning-framework-for-schools-in-england](#). We will continue to work with school and health partners on how to make further resources and support available to schools as children and young people return.

## ■ Children: Finance

**Kate Osamor:**

[46114]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he place in the Library the Government guidance issued to schools on what support schools must provide to children who come from families without recourse to public funds.

**Vicky Ford:**

Guidance for schools regarding the temporary provision of free school meals for children from certain groups of families with no recourse to public funds is currently available online here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/guidance-for-the-temporary-extension-of-free-school-meals-eligibility-to-nrpf-groups>.

We will place the guidance in the Libraries of both Houses.

## ■ Coronavirus: Disease Control

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[46124]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what meetings he held with the National Education Union on the proposals outlined in the Prime Minister's statement of 10 May 2020 prior to that statement being made.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department has worked closely with the sector, including unions such as the National Educational Union (NEU), and will continue to do so over the coming weeks to support the wider opening of schools, colleges and childcare settings. Throughout this process, the Department has hugely valued the dialogue we are having with unions and school leaders to inform our decisions, and we need to maintain this dialogue.

Details of engagement with NEU:

- Weekly meetings with senior policy officials and key stakeholders including main teaching unions, governance, social care, school trusts and local government;
- A weekly meeting with wider stakeholders including support staff, further education and school business organisations;
- A weekly meeting between my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, and the main teaching unions and stakeholder groups; and
- Ad hoc additional stakeholder meetings to address key issues as and when they arise.

## ■ Educational: Standards

**Mr Stephen Morgan:**

**[47426]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment has he made of the potential merits of respite care for families with vulnerable children on the educational development of those children.

**Vicky Ford:**

Short breaks for carers of disabled children (or 'respite care') are funded opportunities, ranging from a few hours to a few days, that allow for disabled children to be cared for away from the family home. Short breaks provide a wide variety of experiences which support children and young people in developing social interaction and communication skills and also promote physical and mental health and develop independence.

Since 2011, local authorities have been under a duty to provide a range of short breaks which must be provided regularly and reliably to meet families' needs. It is up to local authorities to determine how to deliver these services and it is right that they have the freedom to make decisions based on the needs of their local area.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, local authorities will work with their local providers of short breaks to offer as much flexibility as possible whilst adhering to the government's guidance to keep children and staff safe. The government has provided £3.2 billion of additional to support local authorities to address pressures they are facing during the COVID-19 outbreak, including in children's social care and for special educational needs and disabilities services. The government has also announced £750 million of funding to support frontline charities during the outbreak, including those supporting vulnerable children.

On 19 May 2020, we announced £37 million for the Family Fund in 2020-21, who will provide grants to families on low incomes with disabled and critically ill children. £10 million of that funding has been committed specifically due to the unique difficulties presented by the COVID-19 outbreak, helping parents to educate and look after children who are staying at home more than usual. Details of the announcement are at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/37-million-to-support-children-with-complex-needs>.

## ■ Free School Meals

**Kate Osamor:**

**[46113]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the Government plans to extend free school meal provision into the (a) spring half-term and (b) summer holidays.

**Vicky Ford:**

As both my right hon. Friends, the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, have made clear, the government will do whatever it takes to support people affected by COVID-19.

Our latest guidance for schools is set out below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>.

Provision for free school meals is ordinarily term time only. However, during the Easter holidays the department met the costs of offering free school meals to eligible pupils not attending school during term time weeks. This was in recognition of the unprecedented levels of disruption and uncertainty for schools during this time. Whether or not such a measure continues to be appropriate in future holiday periods will be confirmed in due course.

These are rapidly developing circumstances. We continue to keep the situation under review and will keep Parliament updated accordingly.

### ■ Free School Meals: Voucher Schemes

**Hilary Benn:**

[46556]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to reimburse schools that have bought school meal vouchers for pupils in cases where parents have been unable to access the Edenred voucher system.

**Vicky Ford:**

As both my right hon. Friends the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer have made clear, the government will do whatever it takes to support people affected by COVID-19.

We are committed to ensuring that no child should go hungry as a result of the measures introduced by government during this period. This is why we have introduced a number of immediate measures to ensure children who usually receive free school meals still have access to this provision while they are not attending school.

During this period, we are asking schools to support children who are eligible for and claiming benefits-related free school meals, by providing meals or food parcels through their existing food providers wherever possible. However, we recognise that food parcel arrangements may not always be possible, and so at the end of March we launched a national voucher scheme to provide schools with additional flexibility to decide what is best for families in their schools. This was an unprecedented intervention to support eligible children during this period.

Voucher codes are being processed through the national scheme and many thousands of families are redeeming them. Edenred has reported that over 17,000 schools have placed orders for the scheme and as of Wednesday 20 May, Edenred reported that more than £96 million worth of voucher codes have been redeemed into supermarket e-gift cards by schools and families. We have been working closely with Edenred to improve the scheme, and we thank schools using the system for their patience while it has been upgraded to meet increased demand.

We understand that alternative approaches, such as providing food parcels or purchasing vouchers for shops not in the national scheme, may mean that schools incur additional costs. We have published guidance on the financial support available for schools who incur these additional costs in this way here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-schools>.

Schools will be able to claim up to a certain limit, depending on their number of pupils, and where they are unable to meet these additional costs from their existing resources, or which they could only meet by drawing down on reserves and undermining their long-term financial sustainability. In exceptional instances where individual schools face additional costs that are higher than the grant's limits, schools will be able to apply to increase their limit.

Our latest guidance for schools on free school meals provision during this period is set out here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools>.

These are rapidly developing circumstances; we continue to keep the situation under review and will keep Parliament updated accordingly.

#### ■ GCE A-level: Assessments

**John McDonnell:**

[45952]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the covid-19 outbreak, what guidance his Department has issued to (a) schools and (b) colleges on assessing the grades of students that are due to resit A-level examinations.

**Nick Gibb:**

These are matters for Ofqual, the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation. I have asked its Chief Regulator, Sally Collier, to write the hon. Member and a copy of her reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

#### ■ Languages: Secondary Education

**Julian Sturdy:**

[46634]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of Key Stage Four students are studying a foreign language.

**Julian Sturdy:**

[46635]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of Key Stage Five students are studying a foreign language.

**Nick Gibb:**

The percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 entering a modern foreign language in state-funded schools in England is 46.7% for 2018/19.

The percentage of pupils between the ages 16 to 18, eligible for reporting in performance tables, who entered a modern foreign language for A level exams in

state-funded schools and colleges in England at the end of Key Stage 5 was 7.5% for 2018/19.

## ■ Pupils: Coronavirus

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[46206]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish guidance for parents on whether pupils that live in a household with a shielded person should return to school.

**Nick Gibb:**

Keeping people safe continues to be the Government's main priority. We have been clear that the re-opening of schools must be done in a way that is measured, reduces risk, is guided by science and ensures that safety remains the absolute priority.

That is why, on 11 May, we published guidance for parents and carers to help them prepare for the opening of schools and educational settings to more pupils from 1 June. This guidance is clear that children and young people who live in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should only attend school if stringent social distancing can be adhered to; and where the child or young person is able to understand and follow those instructions. The guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june#should-i-keep-my-child-at-home-if-they-have-an-underlying-health-condition-or-live-with-someone-in-a-clinically-vulnerable-group>.

If a child or young person lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, they can attend their education or childcare setting. The Department will continue to ensure parents and carers receive clear guidance based on the latest scientific advice.

## ■ Schools: Coronavirus

**Rachael Maskell:**

[46734]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will produce an equality impact assessment of his policy to reopen schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

When making decisions about asking school leaders to prepare to welcome back more children to schools, we have had due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and to advance equality of opportunities and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not as required by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

We are keeping our assessment of those matters under review in the lead up to 1 June.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[46742]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that transport for children to travel to school during the covid-19 outbreak is safe.

**Nick Gibb:**

Parents and children should consider walking and cycling to school where possible or driving if necessary. They should avoid the use of public transport where possible. The Department for Transport has published guidance on safer travel for the public. Parents and children may wish to refer to the guidance when planning their journeys, and to help them minimise risk where the use of public transport is unavoidable. The guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>.

Some children have their home to school transport arranged by their local authority or school. Local authorities and schools should put in place arrangements which fit local circumstances and minimise the risk of transmission, as far as is possible. This should include ensuring transport providers follow hygiene rules. They may wish to refer to the Department for Transport's guidance for transport operators, which is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators>.

The phased wider opening of schools will limit the number of children travelling on home to school transport in the initial phase. Where transport capacity allows, local authorities could consider substituting smaller vehicles with larger ones, or running 2 vehicles rather than one, to reduce the number of passengers per vehicle and help passengers keep their distance.

We are in contact with local authorities to help resolve issues as they arise.

## ■ Schools: Trade Unions

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[46816]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many meetings he has had since 16 March 2020 with school (a) leadership unions, (b) teaching unions and (c) support staff unions.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department has been engaging widely with a wide range of stakeholders at both official and ministerial level, including headteacher, teacher and support staff unions, including through meetings listed below.

Details of weekly engagement are set out below:

- Weekly meetings with senior policy officials and key stakeholders along with other main teaching unions, governance, social care, school trusts and local government;
- A weekly meeting with wider stakeholders including support staff, further education and school business organisations;

- Weekly calls for evidence from key stakeholders on key policy questions to inform decision making on reopening;
- Weekly meetings between my right hon. Friend, my right hon. Friend, Secretary of State for Education and the main teaching unions and stakeholder groups; and
- Ad hoc additional stakeholder meetings to address key issues as and when they arise.

## ■ Skilled Workers

**Sir John Hayes:**

[\[46531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help ensure that people have the skills they need for future roles; and what steps he is taking to re-skill people who do not have skills to meet the economic requirements of the UK.

**Gillian Keegan:**

We are delivering a long-term programme to reform the post-16 skills system to address national and local productivity challenges, ensuring that businesses and individuals have the skills they need to meet the needs of the new economy. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education has also announced that we are working on a White Paper that will deliver ambitious reform in our vital further education sector.

These reforms include involving employers in the design of new apprenticeship standards to ensure they are more responsive to their needs. 74% of new starts in 2019/20 so far are on standards (rather than frameworks) and the switch-off of frameworks is going ahead on the 31 July.

We are also introducing T-Levels from this September. Designed by employers, with longer teaching hours and meaningful industry placements, T-Levels will be excellent preparation for skilled work or further training. Despite the COVID-19 outbreak, we are continuing with introduction in September as planned. Additionally, the Adult Education Budget will fully fund or co-fund skills provision for eligible adults aged 19 and above from pre-entry to level 3 (including traineeships), to help them gain the skills they need for work, an apprenticeship or further learning. Over the course of this Parliament, we are providing £2.5 billion (£3 billion when including Barnett funding for devolved administrations) for a new National Skills Fund to help people learn new skills and prepare for the economy of the future.

## ■ Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[43870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the proposals by the National Education Union for provision of personal protective equipment to staff working in SEND settings where pupil behaviour poses a risk of airborne transmission of covid-19; and if he will make a statement.

**Vicky Ford:**

To prevent the spread of coronavirus, education, childcare and children's social care settings must use a range of protective measures to reduce the risk of transmission of infection. This includes:

- making sure that pupils do not attend if they or a member of their household has symptoms
- promoting high standards of hand and respiratory hygiene
- cleaning touched surfaces more frequently
- minimising contact and mixing as much as possible
- using (Personal Protective Equipment) PPE where appropriate

Where PPE is recommended, this means that:

- a facemask should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from someone with symptoms of coronavirus
- if contact is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a facemask should be worn
- if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of fluids entering the eye from, for example, coughing, spitting or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn

The majority of staff in education, childcare and children's social care settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain distance of 2 metres from others. Additional PPE is only needed if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from any child, young person or other learner displaying coronavirus symptoms.

There are a small number of medical procedures which increase the risk of transmission through aerosols (tiny droplets) being transferred from the patient to the care giver. These are known as aerosol generating procedures (AGPs). These are undertaken for a very small number of children with complex needs, such as those receiving tracheostomy care. Staff performing AGPs should follow Public Health England's personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance on aerosol generating procedures, and wear the correct PPE which is:

- a FFP 2/3 respirator
- gloves
- a long-sleeved fluid repellent gown
- eye protection

The respirator required for AGPs must be fitted correctly (known as 'fit testing') by an individual trained to do this. Staff in education and children's social care settings that need support with fit testing should contact the appropriate health lead for the child/young person. This could be either via the Designated Clinical Officer for special educational needs and disabilities for support from the local Clinical Commissioning

Group, or via the lead nursing team in the health provider. The full guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe#ppe-guidance-by-healthcare-context>.

The department has worked with Public Health England to develop further guidance on safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of PPE. This guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>.

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[46030]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of (a) local authorities and (b) health bodies are using the (i) statutory guidance set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 to meet SEND children's educational and health care and (b) reasonable endeavours duty set out in the Coronavirus Act 2020.

**Vicky Ford:**

Since 20 March, the majority of children and young people have not been attending education settings. Children with education, health and care (EHC) plans have only been attending education settings where a risk assessment has determined that their needs cannot safely be met at home. This means it may not be possible for local authorities and commissioning health bodies to deliver the special educational provision that would normally be delivered in an education setting (for example, social skills training in small groups, or the delivery of a personalised curriculum with 1-1 support from a teaching assistant).

Because of these exceptional circumstances, some aspects of the law on EHC needs assessments and plans have changed temporarily to strike the right balance between:

- the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities to be protected and receive the right support in a timely way
- managing the demands on local authorities and health bodies to respond to the outbreak

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education has issued a notice to modify temporarily the duty on local authorities and health commissioning bodies to secure or arrange the provision specified in EHC plans so that they can discharge this by using their 'reasonable endeavours'. The modified duty applies to all local authorities and health commissioning bodies in England.

The modified duty relates to the provision for each individual child and young person. Local authorities and health commissioning bodies must not apply blanket policies about the provision to be secured or arranged. Instead, in deciding what provision must be secured or arranged in discharge of its modified duty, the local authority and health commissioning body should consider: specific local circumstances; the needs

of and circumstances specific to each child and young person with an EHC plan and the views of children, young people and their parents as to what might be appropriate.

We are continuing to monitor local authorities and health commissioning bodies, including the ways in which they are discharging this modified duty. We know that there are some excellent examples of where local authorities and health commissioning bodies have put alternative arrangements in place to support children and young people with EHC plans – for example, through arranging for therapy sessions to be delivered over video, or providing sensory kits for children with the most profound needs.

We are committed to ceasing this temporary change to the duty on local authorities and health commissioning bodies to secure or arrange the provision specified in EHC plans at the earliest opportunity and will keep these measures under close review.

#### ■ Students: Coronavirus

**Gavin Robinson:**

**[43946]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what (a) support and (b) guidance he is providing to students who have returned home from university during the covid-19 lockdown and are being required to (i) pay rent for their accommodation, (ii) remove their belongings but not return and (iii) pay for storage, removal and cleaning costs.

**Michelle Donelan:**

As my right hon. Friends, the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer have both made clear, the government will do whatever it takes to support people affected by COVID-19. Students will continue to receive scheduled payments of loans towards their living costs for the remainder of the current 2019/20 academic year.

To provide further support, we have worked closely with the Office for Students to enable providers to draw upon existing funding to increase hardship funds and to support disadvantaged students impacted by COVID-19. As a result, providers will be able to use the funding – worth around £23 million per month for April and May - towards student hardship funds, including for the purchase of IT equipment and mental health support.

The government encourages universities and private hall providers to be fair in their decisions about rent charges for this period. A number of universities and large companies have waived rents for the summer term or released students early from their contracts.

The government guidance makes clear that tenants should continue to pay rent and abide by all other terms of their tenancy agreement to the best of their ability during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The government's COVID-19 recovery strategy, published on 11 May, sets out a cautious roadmap to ease existing measures in a safe and measured way. The strategy allows for certain necessary travel if people take precautions.

In light of this, we are developing guidance on students travelling to and from student accommodation and this will be published today.

We have made clear meanwhile that we do not believe that students should be fined for failing to collect their belongings if this is because they are complying with the government's travel advice.

If a student has asked their accommodation provider to store their belongings for collection once the COVID-19 lockdown period is over, there may be costs to the provider associated in carrying out this service. We would not expect a provider to make a profit from such a service.

**Matt Vickers:**

**[46198]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that university students receive value for money from student fees during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Michelle Donelan:**

The government recognises the challenges facing students and supports them in their desire to continue receiving the best possible learning experience from our higher education providers. This is a difficult and uncertain time for students, but we are working with the sector to make sure all reasonable efforts are being made to enable students to continue their studies.

The Office for Students (OfS), the regulator in England, has committed to protecting students throughout the present crisis and has produced guidance on practical ways in which students can complete their studies whilst ensuring quality and standards are upheld. This guidance is clear that standards must be maintained - further details are available here: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/guidance-for-providers-about-quality-and-standards-during-coronavirus-pandemic/>. The government is also working closely with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education to ensure students continue to leave university with qualifications that have real value, reflect their hard work and allow people to progress.

We have seen some fantastic and innovative examples of high-quality online learning being delivered by higher education providers across the country and the sector is working hard to provide learning materials for the summer and autumn terms. Our priority now is to maintain the integrity of higher education qualifications and the achievement of students' learning aims. The government expects universities to continue delivering a high quality academic experience and help students to achieve qualifications that they and employers will value.

Universities are autonomous and responsible for setting their own fees. In deciding to keep charging full fees, universities will of course want to ensure that they can continue to deliver courses which are fit for purpose and which help students progress their qualifications. If providers are unable to facilitate good online tuition, then they should seek to avoid charging students for any additional terms they may need to undergo as a consequence – avoiding effectively charging them twice.

Whether or not an individual student is entitled to a refund of fees will depend on the specific contractual arrangements between the provider and student.

If students have concerns, there is a process in place. They should first raise their concerns with their university. If their concerns remain unresolved, students at providers based in England or Wales can contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education to ask them to consider their complaint.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Agricultural Products: Coronavirus

**Jack Lopresti:**

[\[46614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that a range of farm produce that is consistent with best practice in (a) animal welfare and (b) sustainability continues to be made available to consumers.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The food industry has responded quickly and impressively to the significant changes in demand that we have seen over the past weeks. This has ensured supply into stores and people's homes across the country and has demonstrated that the supply chain remains resilient.

To help industry, the Government has introduced several regulatory easements to keep food supply flowing. These include asking local authorities to show flexibility to allow extended delivery hours and flexing rules on drivers' hours to allow a higher frequency of deliveries to stores.

More generally, this Government was elected on a manifesto commitment that in all of our trade negotiations we will not compromise on our high environmental protection, animal welfare and food standards. The UK's growing reputation for quality food and drink, with high standards of food safety, animal welfare and sustainability, serves as an excellent platform to increase demand for our products still further.

### ■ Dogs: Imports

**Kenny MacAskil:**

[\[46162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many vehicles transporting dogs have entered the UK under the Balai Directive in each month from February 2019 to April 2020.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Animal and Plant Health Agency is not able to provide data regarding this matter.

Dogs entering the UK from the EU do so on an Intra-Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC) issued via the Trade Control and Expert System.

There is no requirement for the certifying veterinarian to add the vehicle registration to the ITAHC and there can be multiple vehicles per ITAHC. Usually, the vehicle registration is not entered onto the ITAHC when it is created because the certifying veterinarian will have no knowledge of which vehicle is going to be used. They can inspect the consignment at any time in the 48 hours prior to travel, so it is unlikely that the transport will have arrived when they are doing their inspection.

## ■ Food: Coronavirus

**Sir John Hayes:**

[\[46532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to maintain supply chains for independent, small food retailers during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Victoria Prentis:**

We welcome the actions that the convenience sector is taking, including increasing home deliveries, supporting vulnerable customers by offering more flexible payment options, and adjusting product ranges to manage changes in consumer buying habits. Small retailers play a vital role in ensuring people have access to the food they need, particularly in isolated and rural communities.

The UK food sector has adapted quickly to unprecedented challenges during the COVID-19 outbreak to ensure people have the food and products they need. We are confident in the resilience of the UK food supply chain.

To help industry, the Government introduced several regulatory easements to keep food supply flowing. These include asking local authorities to show flexibility to allow extended delivery hours and flexing rules on drivers' hours to allow a higher frequency of deliveries to stores.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, we have intensified our discussions with the food industry, bringing together stakeholders from across the supply chain. We are monitoring the ongoing challenges of in-store stock with the Association of Convenience Stores. We are also monitoring the service levels from manufacturers to wholesalers supplying the small retail sector and supermarkets which show an improving picture.

We will continue to work closely with the industry.

**Sir John Hayes:**

[\[46534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that produce delivered to clinically extremely vulnerable people is healthy and nutritious.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Shielding packages contain a basic selection of food and other essential items. They are a standardised package designed to be suitable for the majority of people and deliver the nutritional requirements for one person for one week, as reviewed by nutritionists and key industry groups.

Because the packages are standardised, some of the products they contain may not be suitable for everyone. In such instances, we are encouraging people to contact their local authority or to supplement their food package with the necessary items by using the offer of priority access to online supermarket delivery slots for clinically extremely vulnerable people.

## ■ Gun Sports: Coronavirus

**Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown:**

[46528]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to enable the early resumption of shooting after the covid-19 outbreak.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government has said people can now leave their homes for the purposes of open-air recreation in public open spaces to promote their physical or mental health or emotional wellbeing. What counts as "open-air recreation" is not defined in the regulations but would include shooting. The regulations define public open spaces as:

- (a) Land laid out as a public garden or used for the purpose of recreation by members of the public;
- (b) land which is "open country" as defined in section 59(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, as that definition has been extended by section 16(1) of the Countryside Act 1968;
- (c) land which is "access land" for the purposes of Part 1 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (see section 1(1) of that Act)

The Government has published guidance on the phased return of outdoor sport and recreation. Outdoor sports courts and other outdoor sporting activities are permitted to reopen if those responsible for them are ready to do so and they can do so safely, following public health guidance. This can be found on the GOV.UK website at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-phased-return-of-outdoor-sport-and-recreation](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-phased-return-of-outdoor-sport-and-recreation)

## ■ Markets: Disease Control

**Ian Lavery:**

[46069]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking as part of the international response to the continued existence of wet markets in (a) China and (b) other countries throughout the world.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Whilst the sale of wildlife in "wet markets" has been suspected as the source of the current COVID-19 pandemic, conclusive evidence is not yet available. Research into the origin of the virus causing COVID-19 is ongoing, and the UK is working with the international scientific community to determine the source of the outbreak. When we

have sound evidence, we will support the delivery of swift and effective policy interventions where needed.

We recognise however that 'wet markets' selling live animals and meat are a high risk environment for the transmission of disease from animals to other animals, and from animals to humans, if they are not subject to high standards of biosecurity and hygiene. It is essential that strict food hygiene and health standards are met, and we agree with the WHO that markets should close if these standards are not met.

In the meantime, the UK continues to provide leadership in the efforts to combat and end the illegal wildlife trade, which not only increases the risk of zoonosis, but contributes to loss of biodiversity and increased corruption.

### ■ **Veterinary Services: Cost Effectiveness**

**Nadia Whittome:** [\[46205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the value for money of out-of-hours veterinary care.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Department has not made a value for money assessment of out-of-hours veterinary care.

### ■ **Water Supply: Coronavirus**

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[46645\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of access to running water in (a) social and (b) privately-rented housing during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Under the Security and Emergency Measures Direction 1998, water companies are obliged to maintain plans to ensure the provision of essential water supply at all times. Water companies have been monitoring the adequacy of supply for all properties during the COVID-19 outbreak. They do not distinguish between provision of supply to social, privately rented and privately owned properties.

In addition, water companies cannot disconnect household water supply for the non-payment of charges. All water companies also provide a range of support for vulnerable customers and those struggling with affordability. For example, all water companies have social tariff schemes in place to provide discounted water bills to those eligible.

### ■ **Wildlife: Smuggling**

**Henry Smith:** [\[46605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what reports he has received on the increase in (a) the international trade in tigers and tiger body parts

and (b) captive breeding of wild animals; and what steps he is taking to ban trophy imports to the UK.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The UK is a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which places strict controls on international trade in tigers. We are aware of concerns raised in relation to the illegal trade in tigers and tiger farms and remain fully committed to working with our international partners, including through CITES, to ensure strong protection is in place and to bring an end to the illegal trade in wildlife.

A consultation on controls on the import and export of hunting trophies to and from the UK was undertaken between 2 November 2019 and 25 February 2020. The outcome of the consultation, and the accompanying call for evidence, will inform our next steps and we are continuing to work on this important area.

## FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

### ■ Armed Conflict: Sexual Offences

**Anthony Mangnall:**

[\[46797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 4 May 2020 to Question 39744, on Armed Conflict: Sexual Offences, whether his Department's forthcoming strategy will include specific measures to support male survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK is fully committed to supporting all survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. As stated in my [Minister Adams] answer to PQ 39744, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's forthcoming three-year strategy on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) will be a priority for the UK Government. We are committed to ensuring that this strategy is survivor-centred throughout, and will work closely with the UK's PSVI Survivor Champion Kolbassia Haoussou to ensure that the needs of all survivors and children born of conflict-related sexual violence, including men and boys, remain at the centre of PSVI policy and programming.

### ■ China: Borders

**Anthony Mangnall:**

[\[46799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Chinese counterparts on the Chinese Government's use of so-called exit bans.

**Nigel Adams:**

FCO Travel Advice highlights the possibility of travel bans being imposed on those suspected of committing a crime. If an individual is subject to a travel ban, the level of assistance the Foreign and Commonwealth Office can provide is set out in our

publically available guidance 'Support for British nationals abroad'. This includes raising individual cases with the Chinese authorities.

## ■ China: Uighurs

**Ruth Jones:** [\[47454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Chinese Government on the humanitarian situation of the Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang Province.

**Nigel Adams:**

On 9 March, the Foreign Secretary directly raised concerns about the situation in Xinjiang with his Chinese counterpart, State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. We will continue to make clear to the Chinese authorities our serious concerns about the human rights and humanitarian situation in the region, including the extra-judicial detention of over a million Uyghur Muslims and other minorities in "political re-education camps".

## ■ France: Coronavirus

**Mark Pritchard:** [\[46016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he plans to update his covid-19 Exceptional Travel Advisory Notice for France.

**Mark Pritchard:** [\[46017\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he plans to update his Department's Covid-19 Exceptional Travel Advisory Notice for Spain.

**Mark Pritchard:** [\[46018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he plans to update his Department's Covid-19 Exceptional Travel Advisory Notice for Denmark.

**Mark Pritchard:** [\[46019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he plans to update his Department's Covid-19 Exceptional Travel Advisory Notice for Sweden.

**Nigel Adams:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is advising British people against all non-essential travel worldwide due to the unprecedented international border closures and other restrictions currently in place in response to the global pandemic.

We are monitoring the international situation very closely and keeping all our travel advice under constant review to ensure it reflects the latest situation on the ground and our assessment of risk to British people.

## ■ Human Rights and Journalism: Coronavirus

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[45205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what diplomatic steps his Department is taking to support (a) human rights defenders and (b) overseas journalists during the covid-19 pandemic.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK published the document 'UK Support for Human Rights Defenders' in July 2019, which sets out our ongoing dedication to supporting and protecting human rights defenders worldwide. The UK will continue to give strong support to human rights defenders worldwide during the COVID-19 pandemic to enable them to carry out their work safely and without fear, and we regularly assess how we can enhance our ability to make a positive difference. Our diplomatic network regularly engages with Non-Governmental Organisations representatives and human rights defenders to address the challenges which they face and how the UK can help overcome them. Media freedom is vital to open societies and journalists must be able to investigate and report without undue interference. We must oppose all attempts by any state to use the pandemic to restrict press freedom, silence debate, abuse journalists, or spread misinformation. When he addressed the Alliance for Multilateralism on 16 April, the Minister of State responsible for Human Rights, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon highlighted the UK's commitment to human rights and media freedom, particularly during the crisis. To mark World Press Freedom Day (WPFDD), the Foreign Secretary issued a statement with his German, French and Dutch colleagues, calling on governments to defend media freedom, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The UK also signed a statement issued by the Media Freedom Coalition on WPFDD and supported a Dutch social media campaign publicly highlighting cases of journalists who have been killed or imprisoned.

## ■ Iran: Coronavirus

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[47314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Government of Iran on releasing prisoners of conscience (a) Pastor Yousef Nadarkhani, (b) Pastor Matthias Haghnejad and (c) Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee as a result of the threat of covid-19 to detainees in overcrowded prisons.

**James Cleverly:**

We have regularly expressed our concerns to the Government of Iran at the ongoing incarceration of prisoners of conscience, including the sentencing of Christians for practicing their faith. The reality is that many non-Muslims in Iran face discrimination. We will continue to take action, both bilaterally and with the international community, to press Iran to improve its poor human rights record.

## ■ Iraq: Yazidis

**Anthony Mangnall:**

[\[46798\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he plans to make to the recently appointed Prime Minister of Iraq on support for Yazidi people in Iraq.

**James Cleverly:**

We welcome the appointment of Mustafa al-Kadhimi as Prime Minister of Iraq. The UK is committed to supporting the new Government to address the significant economic, security, health and human rights challenges facing Iraq. As part of this we will urge the protection of minorities, including the Yezidi people, in our engagements with the new Government and emphasise the importance of reconstruction and reconciliation in those areas liberated from Daesh.

## ■ Libya: IRA

**Louise Haigh:**

[\[46107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has received the report from William Shawcross on UK victims of Qadhafi-sponsored IRA terrorism.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK is committed to supporting the victims of Libyan-sponsored IRA terrorism. That is why in March 2019 the former Foreign Secretary appointed William Shawcross as the UK's Special Representative on UK victims of Qadhafi-sponsored IRA terrorism. Mr Shawcross has now submitted his report. Ministers will consider the report in detail once the current need to focus on the Covid-19 crisis has abated.

## ■ Slavery: Textiles

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

[\[46693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the implications for his policies on tackling modern slavery in the textile industry globally of the UK's commitments under the 2017 UN Call to Action to End Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK Government is committed to the eradication of all forms of forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking worldwide by 2030 as set out in Sustainable Development Goal 8.7. Building on the 2017 Call to Action to end forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking, which has now been endorsed by 92 countries, the UK jointly launched the 'Principles to Combat Human Trafficking in Global Supply Chains' with the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand at the UN General Assembly in September 2018. These Principles commit governments to implementing a range of measures that help address modern slavery in global supply chains. The UK is now focused on implementation of the Call to Action and encouraging member states to devise national action plans and deliver on their own

commitments. Currently we are working across Government with partners to assess the impact of COVID-19 on modern slavery including in the textile industry.

The UK is the first country to require businesses to report on the steps they have taken to tackle modern slavery in their operations and global supply chains. The landmark 'Transparency in Supply Chains' provision in the Modern Slavery Act requires certain businesses with a turnover of £36m or more to publish annual modern slavery statements and applies to all sectors, including textiles.

In addition, the Department for International Development funds two programmes which seek to tackle modern slavery in the textile industry. The UK's contribution to the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery seeks to trial new approaches to tackling modern slavery in the apparel sector in India and Bangladesh, among other sectors. One of the objectives of the Work in Freedom programme is to reduce the vulnerability of women and girls to forced labour in the textiles, clothing, leather and footwear industries of South Asia.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### ■ Abortion

**Scott Benton:**

[\[46181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that women and girls seeking abortion under the March 2020 regulations to enable at-home abortions receive adequate support and assistance (a) when they wish to continue the pregnancy but are concerned about covid-19 and (b) in other circumstances.

**Helen Whately:**

The Required Standard Operating Procedures set out in the Department's Procedures for the Approval of Independent Sector Places for the Termination of Pregnancy require that all women requesting an abortion should be offered the opportunity to discuss their options and choices with a trained counsellor and this offer should be regularly repeated. Guidance from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists sets out that healthcare staff caring for women requesting abortion should identify those who require more support in the decision-making process and pathways to additional support, including counselling and social services, should be available. All abortion providers should ensure that women have the time and space to discuss their reasons for seeking abortion. Impartial, accurate information is supplied to help the woman consider her options so she can reach an informed choice this should include information on the impact of a COVID-19 diagnosis on pregnancy if this is a particular concern.

## ■ Care Homes: Coronavirus

**Nadia Whittome:**

**[39805]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many covid-19 tests have been (a) requested and (b) completed for residents in care homes on each day since 1 March 2020.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 29 April 2020]:* Since the start of the pandemic, nearly 125,000 workers in care settings and over 118,000 care home residents have been tested through DHSC and PHE testing routes.

On 11 May we launched the 'whole care home' portal. We have the capacity to deliver up to 30,000 tests a day to residents and staff in care homes, making sure that all residents and asymptomatic staff can all be tested.

Data on the number of tests requested is not currently available or published in the format requested. This information is for England only and supplements the local systems already in place for testing residents.

**Helen Hayes:**

**[41553]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that (a) all care home (i) staff and (ii) residents have access to testing and (b) testing sites are accessible without a car.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 4 May 2020]:* All social care staff are now eligible for testing whether symptomatic or asymptomatic. This also applies to care home residents. Patients discharged from hospital into care homes will be tested before discharge as a matter of course. Care home staff can continue to access testing by registering through the self-referral portal for tests at regional test sites or home test kits. We are also ramping up satellite test provision for care homes. Under this model, we distribute test kits to a care facility that has a pressing need and then collect and process the swabs through the COVID-19 National Testing Programme labs.

**Greg Smith:**

**[44047]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that testing methods for covid-19 in care homes take account of the specific needs of people with dementia.

**Helen Whately:**

As the national testing capacity has increased, we have built a national testing infrastructure and are using this capacity to deliver up to 30,000 tests a day to residents and staff in care homes for older people. We know many of those in care homes will have specific needs, including residents with dementia. We have provided detailed guidance and training materials to ensure staff can administer tests safely and effectively, and with due regard for the residents' best interests.

Our care system represents the best of us, supporting our loved ones with tenderness and dedication at their time of greatest need. Through this unprecedented expansion of testing, we can give them the certainty and confidence that high-quality testing can provide.

**Greg Smith:**

[44048]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of recommending the use of an oropharyngeal swab only for testing care home residents with dementia for covid-19 to reduce distress.

**Helen Whately:**

As the national testing capacity has increased, we have built a national testing infrastructure and are using this capacity to deliver up to 30,000 tests a day to residents and staff in care homes for older people. We know many of those in care homes will have specific needs, including residents with dementia. We have provided detailed guidance and training materials to ensure staff can administer oropharyngeal tests safely and effectively, and with due regard for the residents' best interests.

Our care system represents the best of us, supporting our loved ones with tenderness and dedication at their time of greatest need. Through this unprecedented expansion of testing, we can give them the certainty and confidence that high-quality testing can provide.

**Philip Davies:**

[46009]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the (a) guidance issued to care homes in relation to the covid-19 outbreak since the start of 2020 and (b) the dates on which that guidance was issued.

**Helen Whately:**

We have published a range of guidance to care homes, as well as other care providers, unpaid carers and local authorities on how to continue giving care during the COVID-19 outbreak.

A list of the guidance we have published for care homes in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak since the start of 2020 is attached.

Further relevant guidance on adult social care can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-social-care-guidance>

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[46125]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 1 May 2020 to Question 38948 whether it remains Government policy that patients who have tested positive for covid-19 and who have not completed an isolation period can be discharged to care homes.

**Helen Whately:**

[Holding answer 18 May 2020]: A small number of people may be discharged from the National Health Service within the 14-day period from the onset of COVID-19

symptoms needing ongoing social care. Some care providers will be able to accommodate these individuals through effective isolation strategies or cohorting policies. If appropriate isolation is not available with a local care provider, the individual's local authority will be asked to secure alternative appropriate accommodation and care for the remainder of the required isolation period.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

**[46126]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 11 May 2020 to Question 38554 on Care Homes: Coronavirus, what data he holds on the number of patients who have been discharged from hospitals to care homes in (a) Birmingham, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England have been tested for covid-19 in each of the last 12 weeks.

**Helen Whately:**

This data is not available. NHS England publish data via their statistical work areas on a monthly basis and this is available via the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/>

**Siobhain McDonagh:**

**[46522]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made for the implications for his policy on the personal protective equipment (PPE) to care homes of the Alzheimer's Society survey, published 13 May 2020, that found 43 per cent of care homes reported that they did not have adequate supplies of PPE.

**Helen Whately:**

Supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) to the care sector is fundamental for both the good care of individuals with suspected symptoms of COVID-19 and equally vital to protect the care workers in social care settings.

To address this, the Government has stepped up support, supply and distribution of PPE to the care sector. As of 8 May, we have released 60.9 million items of PPE to designated wholesalers for onward sale to social care providers. In addition, between 6 April and 12 May, we have delivered over 94 million items of PPE across 38 Local Resilience Forums to respond to spikes in need.

Working with care sector representative bodies, PHE published tailored guidance: 'COVID-19 How to work safely in care homes' on 17 April, as well as a specialised training video demonstrating the donning and doffing of PPE in care home settings. The PHE guidance also provides tables on when and which PPE to use.

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[46599]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies on care homes of the London School of Economics Care Policy and Evaluation Centre Study on the number of care home residents who have died as a direct or indirect result of Covid-19; and if he will make a statement.

**Helen Whately:**

On 15 May we published a Care Home Support Plan. This is the next phase of our response for care homes, using the latest domestic and international evidence brought together by Public Health England, and drawing on the insights of care providers.

The Government has made £3.2 billion available to help local authorities deal with the immediate impacts of COVID-19. In April we set out an action plan to support the adult social care sector throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, including ramping up testing, overhauling the way personal protective equipment is being delivered to care homes and helping to minimise the spread of the virus to keep people safe.

We are currently working with the Care Quality Commission and other organisations, including the Office for National Statistics, to understand how best to provide up to date information about deaths in care homes and elsewhere.

**■ Care Homes: Dementia****Rosie Cooper:****[45063]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to issue guidance to care homes on allowing visitors to care home residents with dementia.

**Helen Whately:**

The Department, Public Health England, the Care Quality Commission and the National Health Service have published guidance on the care of residents in care homes, including those with dementia. It asks care homes to consider alternatives to in-person visiting, including use of telephones or video, or the use of plastic or glass barriers between residents and visitors. Care homes are responding with innovative solutions which are allowing residents to stay in touch with their family and friends.

While we have recommended that family and friends should be advised not to visit care homes, we are clear that there may be exceptional situations where this is appropriate. This includes visits at the end of life.

Work is ongoing with the National Clinical Director for dementia, service providers, and user groups to develop additional resources on dementia to support those in care homes and the community.

We will continue to review our policies in line with the latest scientific advice.

**Dr Lisa Cameron:****[46699]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to issue guidance to care homes on safe visitation guidance to ensure that people with dementia can retain cognitive and communication skills.

**Helen Whately:**

The Department, Public Health England, the Care Quality Commission and the National Health Service have published guidance on the care of residents in care homes, including those with dementia. It asks care homes to consider alternatives to in-person visiting, including use of telephones or video, or the use of plastic or glass

barriers between residents and visitors. Care homes are responding with innovative solutions which are allowing residents to stay in touch with their family and friends.

While we have recommended that family and friends should be advised not to visit care homes, we are clear that there may be exceptional situations where this is appropriate. This includes visits at the end of life.

Work is ongoing with the National Clinical Director for dementia, service providers, and user groups to develop additional resources on dementia to support those in care homes and the community.

We will continue to review our policies in line with the latest scientific advice.

### ■ **Coronavirus: Airports**

**Olivia Blake:**

**[45516]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department are taking to introduce covid-19 testing at airports for passengers on incoming flights.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* As the level of infection in the United Kingdom reduces, it will be important to manage the risk of transmissions being reintroduced from abroad. As set out in the COVID-19 recovery strategy, the Government will introduce a series of measures and restrictions at the UK border, including requiring international arrivals to provide contact information and self-isolate. More information is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy#our-roadmap-to-lift-restrictions-step-by-step>

### ■ **Coronavirus: Autism**

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

**[43958]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the long-term effect of the covid-19 lockdown on (a) mental and (b) physical health inequalities among (i) autistic people and (ii) other neurodivergent groups.

**Helen Whately:**

We recognise the challenges that autistic people and neurodivergent people and their families face as a result of the response to COVID-19, and it is clear that we need to understand how the response will affect these groups of people in the longer term.

The Department is currently exploring research opportunities to assess the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic response to vulnerable people such as those with learning disabilities and/or autism.

**■ Coronavirus: Death****Sir Roger Gale:**[\[42864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people employed or volunteering in NHS hospitals who have died as the result of a covid-19 infection were working on (a) intensive care wards, (b) Blue (covid-19) wards and (c) Red (non-covid 19) wards.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 11 May 2020]:* As of 13 May 2020, the number of National Health Service workers who have died from COVID-19 in England is 147. At this stage, the data that we hold is not available in the format requested. We will continue to review what data we publish.

**■ Coronavirus: Disability****Dr Lisa Cameron:**[\[45273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of long-term social distancing measures on disabled people and their families; and what discussions he has had with those groups on the effect of social distancing measures on them.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government recognises that the effect of long-term social distancing is likely to impact different groups in a variety of ways, including disabled people and their families. These impacts have been carefully considered as part of the process for determining what measures to include in the Coronavirus Regulations and at each review point, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement for public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. We appreciate this is an ongoing concern which is why we are engaging closely with a wide range of charities and representative organisations.

**■ Coronavirus: Disease Control****Mr Barry Sheerman:**[\[38423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, during the covid-19 outbreak, whether he plans to issue further guidance on (a) self-isolation and (b) testing to UK nationals returning from abroad.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 27 April 2020]:* The Government first issued guidance to the public on household isolation on 12 March 2020 and we have continued to iterate our advice as the science has evolved. Our most recent update to the stay at home guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

As the level of infection in the United Kingdom reduces, it will be important to manage the risk of transmissions being reintroduced from abroad. As set out in the COVID-19 recovery strategy, the Government will introduce a series of measures and restrictions at the United Kingdom border, including requiring international arrivals to provide contact information and self-isolate.

On 13 May 2020, the Government updated its travel advice which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

**Mr David Davis:**

**[44969]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the evidential basis for the decision to stop testing and tracking the contacts of people who potentially had covid-19 during the early phases of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

Contact tracing has been used throughout the COVID-19 response. It was not stopped.

At the start of the outbreak, when we were in the 'contain' phase, we traced the contacts of every case. This helped to delay community transmission and bought time for the National Health Service and country to prepare. As the virus became more widespread and the chains of transmission unclear, the country moved to the 'delay' phase, and the contact tracing approach changed. Rather than follow up every case, we focused on specific places such as care homes and prisons to control specific outbreaks and protect those most at risk of infection.

On testing, from the start of the pandemic, our first priority was patients. This was vital in helping clinicians to better understand their condition and ensure they received the best quality care. As our capacity increased, we then expanded testing to other groups.

As we move into the next phase of our response, both testing and contact tracing will play an increasingly important role – that is why we are developing an integrated test and trace programme. This includes a new app which will complement existing web-based and phone-based contact tracing approaches. Alongside this there will be swab testing for anyone reporting COVID-19 symptoms.

This programme will play an important role in helping to minimise the spread of the virus in the future.

**Helen Hayes:**

**[45335]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had on the appointment of Serco to oversee manual covid-19 contact tracing; what assessment he has made of the (a) value for money and (b) effectiveness of that

centralised approach compared with resourcing local authorities or CCGs to deliver contact tracing at a local level.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* Contact tracing will be overseen by specialist public health staff supported by a mix of health professionals and call handlers.

We are working with a number of private companies to ensure we have the right number and calibre of call handlers. Serco are an approved supplier on the Contact Centre Services contact centre framework. They gained their place through fair and open competition via an Official Journal of the European Union procurement. Value for money and capability were part of the assessment criteria. The Department has put in place arrangements to ensure robust contract management in line with relevant guidance.

The approach to contact tracing in the test and trace programme recognises the importance of both national and local approaches.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[45376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how the covid-19 alert system will be communicated to people (a) who are digitally excluded, (b) without TV licences and (c) in areas that are experiencing a localised outbreak.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

As the Prime Minister said in his statement on Sunday 10 May, we are currently establishing a new COVID-19 Alert System run by a new Joint Biosecurity Centre, which will be established swiftly over the coming days. The details of the system, including how the alert level will be communicated to the public are still being finalised and we will have further details on this in due course.

■ **Coronavirus: Easington**

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[41430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will identify a suitable site for a covid-19 testing centre accessible to people living in Easington constituency who do not have access to private transport.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 4 May 2020]:* We have expanded test accessibility by increasing the number of home test kits that are couriered to and from the home. These are available to book by eligible individuals using the self-referral portal. We have also increased mobile testing, with 96 units currently operational as of 4 May 2020. Mobile test units are being deployed to areas that have a pressing need for testing by individuals who cannot access regional test sites. Local Regional Forums coordinate with local partners to inform the Department of where a unit is required.

## ■ Coronavirus: Hospitals

**Siobhain McDonagh:** [\[42874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people have been admitted to hospital with covid-19 in the UK, by faith group.

**Siobhain McDonagh:** [\[42876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, by ethnicity, how many people have been admitted to hospital with covid-19 in the UK.

**Edward Argar:**

This data is not held in the format requested.

## ■ Coronavirus: Screening

**Tom Hunt:** [\[38952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure available university resources are being used to develop tests for covid-19.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The Department is working closely with the universities sector to ensure any available university resources are being deployed in the national testing effort. As a result of our engagement several universities are now conducting research to develop novel solutions and testing methods as well as providing expertise, equipment and workforce to laboratories for COVID-19 testing purposes.

**Layla Moran:** [\[38971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the locations are of the 50 regional covid-19 test centres that are being created.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 27 April 2020]:* The broad geographical locations were selected with the aim of ensuring that as many people as possible live within 45 minutes of a centre by road. We aim to be responsive to local need and, where possible, consult with local stakeholders and partners before making decisions. We will be publishing the full list and locations of Regional Testing Sites soon.

**Tim Farron:** [\[39539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to (a) source clinically approved covid-19 tests from UK companies, (b) introduce a mechanism to allow those companies to apply for the covid-19 tests they produce to be clinically approved and introduced into circulation and (c) publish the requirements necessary for covid-19 tests to be clinically approved for use.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 29 April 2020]:* We have established a web portal for manufacturers of tests from any country to register their interest in supplying COVID-19 tests to the United Kingdom. Through our work in Pillar 5 on the UK Industrial Strategy, we are

supporting a number of earlier-stage UK-based companies to develop their clinical evidence bases, obtain regulatory approval, and commercialise their offers.

Once a company registers a test via the online portal, it is reviewed by a panel of clinical experts. The most promising tests are put forward for independent clinical evaluation.

We have published Target Product Profiles for Serology testing, which we continually update, to inform the market of our testing requirements. Through our web portal and crowd sourcing challenge platform, we also flag the types of innovation in Molecular testing that we are trying to identify.

**Alberto Costa:**

**[41085]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to provide access to covid-19 testing for people in (a) South Leicestershire constituency and (b) England.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The Government is rapidly scaling up the national effort to boost testing capacity for COVID-19 to protect the vulnerable, support the National Health Service, and ultimately save lives. Details of this work can be found in the Government's Testing Strategy 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): scaling up testing programmes', published on 4 April and available online.

As of 19 May 2020, the Government has established a network of 50 Regional Testing Sites across the UK, of which 50 are in England. The sites at Birstall Park and Ride in Leicestershire and the RICOH Arena in Coventry are the closest to South Leicestershire, and there are also Mobile Testing Units and home delivery testing kits available based on local need.

**Sir Mike Penning:**

**[41926]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to extend covid-19 testing to staff working for private health and care providers; and if he will make a statement.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

All health and social care staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 are eligible for testing and have been since 17 April. This includes National Health Service staff, those employed by local authorities, and those working for private providers. Health and social care staff can book a test through the Government's online self-referral portal, which allows them to register for a home test kit or book a drive-through test at a regional test site. Testing is also available through mobile and satellite test centres that are placed where need is greatest, including to NHS hospitals or care homes. Testing within an NHS facility, such as a hospital, is available for NHS workers.

**Daniel Zeichner:**

**[42069]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will include trade union officials on the list of workers that may be tested for covid-19.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

All essential workers with symptoms and anyone with symptoms whose work cannot be done at home is now eligible for testing. Trade union officials in these groups are eligible for testing.

Essential workers and those who cannot work from home can book a test through the Government's online self-referral portal, which allows them to register for a home test kit or book a drive-through test at a regional test site.

Testing is also available through mobile and satellite test centres that are placed to where need is greatest.

**Barry Gardiner:****[42867]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government has changed the method by which it calculates the number of covid-19 tests carried out in a 24-hour period, since 1 April 2020.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

As the United Kingdom COVID-19 testing programme has significantly increased through April and May, we have adapted our reporting processes to ensure they remain as accurate as possible.

Further detail, including definitions and published data, can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

**Ms Lyn Brown:****[42968]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that covid-19 tests undertaken at home are not counted for statistical purposes both when they are sent out and when they are returned and processed.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The Government receives a daily report on the number of COVID-19 home kits dispatched. This single, reliable figure is the only one used for external statistical processes. Home kits returned to the laboratories are uniquely identifiable and therefore not counted in the daily statistics for the number of COVID-19 tests processed.

**Preet Kaur Gill:****[43115]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of tests for covid-19 have been conducted (a) at home and (b) by a drive-through testing centre in the last seven days.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

From 29 April to 5 May, over 92,000 home tests were dispatched and 227,000 tests were conducted at regional test sites.

**■ Disability: Day Care****Nick Fletcher:** [\[46192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that specialist daycare facilities for the mentally handicapped and disabled are considered for reopening in circumstances where there is no other provision for respite care during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Helen Whately:**

We know how beneficial it can be for people to access day care and respite settings. The Department recognises the importance of day centres and other forms of respite provision. However, it is important that they continue to follow the current social distancing guidelines, in addition to the shielding advice for vulnerable groups where this applies. Both the current advice and guidelines are available publicly on GOV.UK. We are working with the sector to understand where further national guidance would be beneficial.

**■ Doctors: Coronavirus****Martyn Day:** [\[45330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to waive General Medical Council registration fees for doctors that are working in response to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Martyn Day:** [\[45331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to waive General Pharmaceutical Council registration fees for (a) pharmacists and (b) pharmacy technicians that are working in response to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Martyn Day:** [\[45332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to waive Health and Care Professions Council registration fees for all allied health professionals that are working in response to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Helen Whately:**

The General Medical Council (GMC) is the statutory independent regulator of medical practitioners in the United Kingdom and is responsible for operational matters concerning the discharge of its statutory duties. The GMC's regulatory activities are primarily funded by annual registration fees, currently set at £406 per year for a full registration with licence to practise.

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) is the independent regulator of Pharmacies, Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians in Great Britain. The GPhC's regulatory activities are primarily funded by annual registration fees, currently set at £121 for pharmacy technicians and £257 for pharmacists per year.

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is the independent regulator of 15 professions in the United Kingdom, including paramedics, practitioner psychologists

and occupational therapists. The HCPC's regulatory activities are primarily funded by annual registration fees, currently set at £90 per year.

There are no registration fees for any healthcare professionals joining the GMC, GPhC or HCPC temporary emergency registers.

We have no plans to subsidise the annual registration fees of existing GMC, GPhC and HCPC registrants. However, we recognise the incredible work that healthcare staff are doing to support the collective effort to tackle the COVID-19 outbreak. As part of this, we will be engaging with staff and employers.

## ■ Fairways Care Home Chippenham: Coronavirus

**James Gray:**

[43588]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with representatives of Public Health England about Fairways Care Home in Chippenham, Wiltshire; what steps his Department is taking to ensure that staff of that home have access to testing for covid-19; where the nearest covid-19 testing centre is to that home; what steps those staff should take to prevent the spread of covid-19 in that home in the event that they are not routinely tested; and if he will make a statement.

**Helen Whately:**

The local Health Protection Team undertakes a joint risk assessment with care homes reporting outbreaks of COVID-19, as part of its routine procedures. We have launched the whole care home testing portal which will enable all symptomatic and asymptomatic care home staff and residents to get tested. We have the capacity to deliver up to 30,000 tests a day. For staff who are self-isolating they can book a test online or be referred by their employer through the employer referral portal. Tests can be booked online at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test>

Public Health England has published clear guidance on infection prevention and control within care homes which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance#adult-social-care>

## ■ Health and Social Services: Conditions of Employment

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[47449]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the £60,000 death-in-service lump sum payment in respect of covid-19 will be available to the families of contract workers in (a) hospitals and (b) care homes.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 20 May 2020]:* The Government has announced a life assurance scheme for frontline National Health Service and social care staff. The scheme is non-contributory and pays a £60,000 lump sum where staff who had been recently

working where personal care is provided to individuals who have contracted COVID-19 die as a result of the virus.

Staff working in hospitals and care homes are eligible, providing that their work requires them to be present in frontline NHS or social care settings where COVID-19 is present.

As well as NHS employees, the scheme also covers staff who work for organisations that support the delivery of NHS services or work on an NHS contract, such as agency and bank staff. Within social care the scheme covers all staff employed by an organisation registered by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to provide social care services. In addition, any members of the social care workforce in non-CQC registered organisations are also eligible, if their employer receives public funding.

### ■ Health Professions: Registration

**Barbara Keeley:**

[\[43860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with the (a) Health and Care Professions Council and (b) Nursing and Midwifery Council on reducing the fees paid by medical professionals for registration and replacing those fees with Government funding.

**Helen Whately:**

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is the independent regulator of nurses and midwives in the United Kingdom, and nursing associates in England. The NMC's regulatory activities are primarily funded by annual registration fees, currently set at £120 per year.

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is the independent regulator of 15 professions in the UK, including paramedics, practitioner psychologists and occupational therapists. The HCPC's regulatory activities are primarily funded by annual registration fees, currently set at £90 per year.

There are no registration fees for any healthcare professionals joining the NMC or HCPC temporary register.

While we currently have no plans to subsidise the annual registration fees of existing NMC and HCPC registrants, we are considering how to recognise the incredible work that healthcare staff are doing to support the collective effort to tackle the COVID-19 outbreak. As part of this, we will be engaging with staff and employers.

### ■ Health Services and Social Services: Coronavirus

**Ian Paisley:**

[\[40611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress his Department has made on ensuring NHS and care staff are able to access covid-19 tests in Northern Ireland.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

National Health Service and care staff in Northern Ireland can book a test through the Government's online self-referral portal, which allows them to register for a home test kit or to book a drive-through test at a regional test site. Three regional testing sites have been set up in Northern Ireland; in Belfast, Derry and Craigavon. We recognise that each devolved administration will have its own eligibility criteria and testing priorities in their region, however we are working closely to align our approaches.

**Hospices: Coronavirus****Catherine West:**[\[45352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that children's hospices have an adequate supply of personal protective equipment during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Helen Whately:**

The Department recognises the vital services that children's hospices provide and are aware of issues they have been facing in obtaining personal protective equipment (PPE). The Department is working on putting a sustainable solution in place to ensure continuity of supply for the hospice sector, which has recently stepped up to take the pressure off the National Health Service as part of a £200 million funding arrangement announced by the Chancellor on 8 April.

To address continuity of supply concerns, central delivery points provided by hospices, including children's hospices, to the Department will get weekly drops of PPE until they can be added to the PPE e-commerce ordering portal. The Department will continue to work with the hospice sector to ensure they have the support they need during this challenging period.

**Hospitals: Protective Clothing****Laura Farris:**[\[43773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking with Public Health England (PHE) to address concerns of frontline NHS staff working in hospital settings with covid-19 positive patients that the current PHE guidance for non-core covid-19 treatment centres, which does not include gowns or visors, leaves staff underprotected.

**Jo Churchill:**

The COVID-19 pandemic guidance on infection prevention and control (IPC) is issued jointly by the Department, Public Health Wales, Public Health Agency Northern Ireland, Health Protection Scotland, Public Health England and NHS England. The IPC guidance is available to view at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/881489/COVID-19\\_Infection\\_prevention\\_and\\_control\\_guidance\\_complete.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/881489/COVID-19_Infection_prevention_and_control_guidance_complete.pdf)

The guidance provides advice on the use of personal protective equipment by healthcare staff which is dependent on the clinical care and procedures being undertaken, and the closeness of contact between staff and patients.

### ■ NHS and Social Services: Protective Clothing

**Sir John Hayes:**

[\[40981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress his Department has made on ensuring that all (a) NHS and (b) social care staff are able to access covid-19 tests.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

All National Health Service and social care staff are now able to register for COVID-19 tests, whether or not they are symptomatic. The Government has sufficient capacity to provide COVID-19 tests to all NHS and social care staff that need one. NHS and social care staff can book a test through the Government's online self-referral portal, which allows them to register for a home test kit or to book a drive-through test at a regional test centre. Testing is also available through mobile and satellite test centres that are placed where need is greatest, including to NHS hospitals or care homes. Testing within an NHS facility, such as a hospital, is available for NHS workers.

### ■ NHS and Social Services: Uniforms

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[46723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that NHS and social care staff do not wear their uniforms in the community.

**Helen Whately:**

There is no evidence that National Health Service staff or social care staff wearing their uniform outside of work is linked with a risk of infection. However, in line with 'Uniforms and workwear: guidance for NHS employers', published by NHS England and NHS Improvement on 2 April 2020 - it is good practice for staff to change at work or cover their uniforms as they travel to and from work.

All NHS trusts have local uniform and workwear policies for clinical staff that should be enforced locally. All NHS and social care staff should wear a freshly laundered uniform that is removed if soiled. If care workers do not wear a uniform, they should change their clothing when they get home and launder as for uniforms.

### ■ NHS Trusts: Email

**Paul Bristow:**

[\[46814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure implementation of the DMARC email authentication system by all NHS Trusts.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

NHSmal, an email service provided to National Health Service organisations by NHS Digital, is in use by over 90% of the NHS in England with over 1.3 million users. This service fully implements the Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting and Conformance (DMARC) controls with a policy set to reject any emails that fail the DMARC checks.

Within all of health and social care there is a secure email standard to ensure email is securely exchanged. The information standard is published under section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and all NHS organisations are required to give due regard to the standard. It also requires NHS organisations not using NHSmal to have a DMARC policy of 'quarantine' and an agreed timeline for implementing a 'reject' policy.

**■ NHS: Agency Workers****Rosie Cooper:**[\[46001\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that registered NHS agency workers are being deployed to help tackle the covid-19 outbreak.

**Rosie Cooper:**[\[46002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he is taking steps to ensure that all registered NHS agency workers are deployed to help tackle covid-19.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* The National Health Service has mobilised a large number of clinical and non-clinical staff to manage the challenges posed by the pandemic, including those retired and those who normally work in the private sector.

In addition, the NHS has a robust temporary staffing supply chain to ensure it can bring in the right people at the right time to deal with fluctuations in demand.

During the pandemic, we have also seen increasing numbers of staff sign up to NHS staff banks, which are pools of flexible resource that can be deployed as an alternative to the use of staffing agencies. Bank staff provide good continuity of care and value for money, and we continue to actively encourage and support trusts to further develop these banks.

**■ NHS: Computer Software****Chi Onwurah:**[\[43900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many times the ethics advisory board for the covid-19 Tracking App has met to date; who attended each of those meetings; and if he will publish the minutes of those meetings.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 12 May 2020]:* The Ethics Advisory Board (EAB) has been meeting weekly since Thursday 2 April and has met five times to date. A list of members is published at the following link:

<https://www.nhsx.nhs.uk/covid-19-response/nhs-covid-19-app/members-ethics-advisory-board/>

As well as board members, meetings are attended by a secretariat and the EAB may also invite expert stakeholders to attend. The Board's Terms of Reference allow for agreed minutes to be made publicly available.

**Gill Furniss:** **[45354]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether people will have the right to access and erase data submitted through the covid-19 contact tracing app.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

If users delete the app, all data stored on the phone and not already voluntarily shared with the Department or the National Health Service would be deleted. If users do not opt to share their data while the app remains on their phone, it will automatically be deleted on a continuous 28-day cycle within the app, on the phone.

By law, an individual has a number of rights as a data subject, such as the right to access information held about them or ask for their data to be deleted. The Information Commissioner's Office provides more detail about individual rights at the following link:

<https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters>

**Gill Furniss:** **[45356]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS covid-19 contact tracing app, what consultation the Government has had with the Information Commissioner before processing personal data under Article 36 of The General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

There is no legal requirement for the data controller to consult the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) under Article 36 of the General Data Protection regulation as the data collected is not identifiable and the processing is not therefore considered to be high risk.

However, the ICO has been working with NHSX for some time providing information governance assurance on the app development, including advising on the Data Protection Impact Assessment regarding risk mitigation. The ICO is represented on the Assurance Board and on the Ethics Advisory Board as an observer. Both boards report up to the app's Oversight Board.

The ICO published a statement on 24 April confirming they will offer support during the life of the app as it is developed, rolled out, and when it is no longer needed.

## ■ NHS: Cybercrime

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[45187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what resources the Government is committing to the NHS's cyber security protocols as part of the Government's response to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

It is not possible to completely eliminate cyber threats and cyber actors have already been seen to attempt to exploit this pandemic. It is therefore critically important that the National Health Service remains resilient to cyber-attacks. To support the NHS and further strengthen cyber resilience across the system during the COVID-19 response period, we are providing enhanced central support and additional funding to help local NHS organisations to manage their cyber risks. This includes:

- NHSX working collaboratively with the National Cyber Security Centre and NHS Digital to rapidly understand cyber security vulnerabilities;
- a rapid remediation programme to immediately fix major cyber security vulnerabilities in high priority NHS organisations, those most critical to the COVID-19 response;
- working closely with the host organisations for the NHS Nightingale sites to review their cyber security posture and help them quickly remediate vulnerabilities; and
- increased 'boots-on the ground' contingency capacity for incident response.

## ■ NHS: Recruitment

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[46763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 4 May 2020 to Question 43117 on NHS: Recruitment, whether there is a turnaround target time for applicants to the Bringing Back Staff campaign to be deployed.

**Helen Whately:**

The Bringing Back Staff campaign makes returning healthcare professionals available for deployment to local health and care providers.

There is no target for the deployment of professionals as part of the Bringing Back Staff programme, as the process includes a number of steps outside the control of the Bringing Back Staff campaign.

## ■ NHS: Training

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[\[38919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS staff have undertaken additional training to support patients with respiratory needs since 31 January 2020.

**Helen Whately:**

Information on the number of National Health Service staff who have undertaken additional training to support patients with respiratory needs is not collected centrally. It would be for individual trusts to train staff according to local needs and demand.

A variety of guidance on workforce, including the principles for increasing the nursing workforce in response to exceptional increased demand in adult critical care, can be found on NHS England's website and accessed via the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/workforce/>

**■ NHS: Voluntary Work****Andrew Rosindell:****[45023]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of people that offered to become NHS Volunteer Responders have been (a) vetted and accepted as volunteers and (b) allocated a task.

**Helen Whately:**

As of 13 May 2020, out of the 750,000 people who have signed up to the NHS Volunteer Responders programme, 589,487 have completed the necessary identity checks to begin helping those most vulnerable. Out of these, 132,838 volunteers have been notified of a task and a total of 147,697 tasks have been completed and this is increasing by around 7,000 tasks a day.

**■ NHSX: Computer Software****Chi Onwurah:****[46060]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 7 May 2020 to Question 41449 on NHS: Computer Software, whether data that will remain under the control of the NHS will remain (a) on NHS infrastructure and (b) in the UK.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* If users choose to share their information with the Department and the National Health Service, it will remain under the control of the Department and the NHS throughout. Companies working with the NHS are bound by robust contract and data processing agreements that specify how and when the data must be stored, secured, used and destroyed.

The data that app users have chosen to share with the NHS may be retained for research in the public interest, or by the NHS for planning and delivering services, in line with the law and on the basis of the necessary approvals required by law.

Data will be stored securely and processed in the United Kingdom. Information that does not, and cannot, identify a user may be stored and processed outside of the UK (for example, information purely about the number of proximity alerts issued, or the number of outcomes from tests).

The Data Protection Impact Assessment and Privacy Notice for the app set out how the data voluntarily provided by a user is stored and used.

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

**[47295]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which private companies were involved in the development of the NHSX contact tracing app and what role did each of those companies play.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The National Health Service COVID-19 app software is being built for the NHS by VMware Pivotal Labs, a software development company that is part of a company called VMware Inc. Several other organisations are actively helping the NHS to develop and test the NHS COVID-19 app including Zuhlke Engineering, Microsoft, and Amazon Web Services. The data protection impact assessment lists the data processors and their roles. This is available on the NHS website.

## ■ Palliative Care: Coronavirus

**Jim Shannon:**

**[45197]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking help ensure provision of end of life care by community-based palliative care teams during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Helen Whately:**

It is important to ensure patients requiring high-quality palliative and end of life care, whether in hospices or in the community, continue to receive that support during the COVID-19 outbreak.

To support local commissioners during this challenging time, a range of guidance has already been made available to support the delivery of high-quality end of life care in community settings, including:

- The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 'Rapid Guideline: managing symptoms (including at the end of life) in the community' .
- The NHS England and NHS Improvement clinical specialty guide 'Community Palliative, End of Life and Bereavement Care in the COVID-19 pandemic' .
- The NHS England and NHS Improvement clinical guidelines for children and young people with palliative care needs in all care settings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Links to the guidance are as follows:

[www.nice.org.uk/guidance/NG163](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/NG163)

[elearning.rcgp.org.uk/pluginfile.php/149342/mod\\_resource/content/1/COVID%20Community%20symptom%20control%20and%20end%20of%20life%20care%20for%20General%20Practice%20FINAL.PDF](http://elearning.rcgp.org.uk/pluginfile.php/149342/mod_resource/content/1/COVID%20Community%20symptom%20control%20and%20end%20of%20life%20care%20for%20General%20Practice%20FINAL.PDF)

[www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/C0249-clinical-guidelines-children-young-people-with-palliative-care-needs-24-04-2020.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/C0249-clinical-guidelines-children-young-people-with-palliative-care-needs-24-04-2020.pdf)

## ■ Protective Clothing

**Lee Anderson:**

**[40764]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if the Government will take steps to prioritise the development of personal protective equipment in the UK to reduce reliance on the import of those products.

**Jo Churchill:**

As of 15 May, over 13,000 businesses have contacted the Government with offers of help on supplying personal protective equipment (PPE). Many are related to the manufacture of PPE for the National Health Service and care sectors, a vast majority of which we are taking forward, predominantly from United Kingdom-based companies but also including multinational companies. Some offers were not progressed due to financial and capability considerations.

The Department engages directly with potential manufacturers to qualify and prioritise the opportunity, based on availability of/access to raw supplies, lead-times to manufacture, and other commercial considerations. Product prototypes are submitted to a Technical Product Review process, to ensure they meet essential health, safety and quality standards for PPE. Financial due diligence and fraud prevention measures are also undertaken, after which the Department can contract with the manufacturer.

Lord Deighton is leading the Government's efforts to secure sufficient PPE and ensure this gets to where it is needed. He is also driving forward coordination of the end-to-end process design and manufacture of new domestic PPE supplies. As at 15 May, the Department has entered into contract and placed orders with 8 manufacturers to provide millions of items of PPE products to the National Health Service and carers. Details of this work can be found in the links below. The volumes will increase in the coming weeks.

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/70-million-face-masks-for-nhs-and-care-workers-through-new-industry-deal>

## ■ Protective Clothing: Coronavirus

**Seema Malhotra:**

**[43655]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he has taken to incentivise companies to use their manufacturing facilities to produce personal protective equipment during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

As of 15 May, over 13,000 businesses have contacted the Government with offers of help on supplying personal protective equipment (PPE). Many are related to the manufacture of PPE for the National Health Service and care sectors, a vast majority of which we are taking forward, predominantly from United Kingdom based

companies but also including multinational companies. Some offers were not progressed due to financial and capability considerations.

The Department engages directly with potential manufacturers to qualify and prioritise the opportunity, based on availability of/access to raw supplies, lead-times to manufacture, and other commercial considerations. Product prototypes are submitted to a Technical Product Review process, to ensure they meet essential health, safety and quality standards for PPE. Financial due diligence and fraud prevention measures are also undertaken, after which the Department can contract with the manufacturer.

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## ■ **Protective Clothing: Manufacturing Industries**

**John Spellar:**

**[43592]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to incentivise companies to use their manufacturing facilities to produce personal protective equipment during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

As of 15 May, over 13,000 businesses have contacted the Government with offers of help on supplying personal protective equipment (PPE). Many are related to the manufacture of PPE for the National Health Service and care sectors, a vast majority of which we are taking forward, predominantly from United Kingdom based companies but also including multinational companies. Some offers were not progressed due to financial and capability considerations.

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### ■ Protective Clothing: Procurement

**Tim Farron:** [38446]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the names of businesses (a) that have contacted the Government offering to produce personal protective equipment and (b) whose offers have been accepted.

**Tim Farron:** [38447]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he has taken to assess the viability of businesses that have approached the Government to produce personal protective equipment to the necessary standard for use in the NHS and social care settings.

**Tim Farron:** [38448]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what mechanism he has established for the receipt and assessment of offers from businesses for the production of personal protective equipment.

**Tim Farron:** [38449]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what level of production of personal protective equipment he estimates will be produced by UK businesses in each of the next three months; and when that equipment will be available for use.

**Tim Farron:** [38883]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which UK businesses have contacted the Government with offers to produce personal protective equipment (PPE); what process the Government used to assess these offers; which offers were accepted; and when PPE from those successful offers will be available for use.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 27 April 2020]:* As of 15 May, over 13,000 businesses have contacted the Government with offers of help on supplying personal protective equipment (PPE). Many are related to the manufacture of PPE for the National Health Service and care sectors, a vast majority of which we are taking forward,

predominantly from United Kingdom-based companies but also including multinational companies. Some offers were not progressed due to financial and capability considerations.

The Department engages directly with potential manufacturers to qualify and prioritise the opportunity, based on availability of/access to raw supplies, lead-times to manufacture, and other commercial considerations. Product prototypes are submitted to a Technical Product Review process, to ensure they meet essential health, safety and quality standards for PPE. Financial due diligence and fraud prevention measures are also undertaken, after which the Department can contract with the manufacturer.

Lord Deighton is leading the Government's efforts to secure sufficient PPE and ensure this gets to where it is needed. He is also driving forward coordination of the end-to-end process design and manufacture of new domestic PPE supplies. As at 15 May, the Department has entered into contract and placed orders with eight manufacturers to provide millions of items of PPE products to the National Health Service and carers. Details of this work can be found in the links below. The volumes will increase in the coming weeks.

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/70-million-face-masks-for-nhs-and-care-workers-through-new-industry-deal>

**Rachel Reeves:**

**[39551]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many UK businesses have offered support to the Government for the manufacture of personal protective equipment.

**Jo Churchill:**

As of 15 May, over 13,000 businesses have contacted the Government with offers of help on supplying personal protective equipment (PPE). Many are related to the manufacture of PPE for the National Health Service and care sectors, a vast majority of which we are taking forward, predominantly from United Kingdom based companies but also including multinational companies. Some offers were not progressed due to financial and capability considerations.

The Department engages directly with potential manufacturers to qualify and prioritise the opportunity, based on availability of/access to raw supplies, lead-times to manufacture, and other commercial considerations. Product prototypes are submitted to a Technical Product Review process, to ensure they meet essential health, safety and quality standards for PPE. Financial due diligence and fraud prevention measures are also undertaken, after which the Department can contract with the manufacturer.

Lord Deighton is leading the Government's efforts to secure sufficient PPE and ensure this gets to where it is needed. He is also driving forward coordination of the end-to-end process design and manufacture of new domestic PPE supplies. As at 15

May, the Department has entered into contract and placed orders with 8 manufacturers to provide millions of items of PPE products to the National Health Service and carers. The volumes will increase in the coming weeks. Details of this work can be found at the following link:

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**Helen Hayes:**

**[39562]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many UK businesses have been contacted by his Department to provide support in the manufacture of personal protective equipment.

**Jo Churchill:**

As of 15 May, over 13,000 businesses have contacted the Government with offers of help on supplying personal protective equipment (PPE). Many are related to the manufacture of PPE for the National Health Service and care sectors, a vast majority of which we are taking forward, predominantly from United Kingdom based companies but also including multinational companies. Some offers were not progressed due to financial and capability considerations.

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/70-million-face-masks-for-nhs-and-care-workers-through-new-industry-deal>

**Simon Baynes:**

**[40788]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking with UK manufacturers to increase the supply of personal protective equipment.

**Jo Churchill:**

As of 15 May, over 13,000 businesses have contacted the Government with offers of help on supplying personal protective equipment (PPE). Many are related to the manufacture of PPE for the National Health Service and care sectors, a vast majority of which we are taking forward, predominantly from United Kingdom-based companies but also including multinational companies. Some offers were not progressed due to financial and capability considerations.

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**■ Protective Clothing: Social Services****Helen Hayes:****[39604]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department made of the adequacy of (a) the funding available and (b) supply levels of personal protective equipment for local authorities that wish to provide that equipment to social care providers in their area.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 29 April 2020]:* On 19 March we announced £1.6 billion to help local authorities deal with the immediate impacts of COVID-19, which many councils will have directed towards the adult social care services required to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. On 18 April we announced an additional £1.6 billion of funding to support councils delivering essential front line services.

This funding is part of the Government's commitment to ensure the National Health Service and social care system, and other public services, have the resources required to tackle COVID-19. The government will continue to monitor pressures in the NHS and local government and will keep future funding under review.

We are working at pace with wholesalers to ensure a longer-term supply of all aspects of personal protective equipment (PPE), including gloves, aprons and facemasks.

During April, we:

- Provided essential PPE supplies to 58,000 different providers, including care homes, hospices and community care organisations;
- Authorised the release of 37 million items of PPE across 38 Local Resilience Forums (LRFs), including 9 million aprons, 4 million masks and 21 million gloves; and
- Authorised a further 15 million items of PPE to the LRFs identified as being in the highest need of resupply and will continue to make drops of PPE for distribution by the LRFs to meet priority needs until the new e-commerce solution.

To further strengthen the resilience and responsiveness we mobilised a National Supply Disruption Response (NSDR) system to respond to emergency PPE requests, including for the social care sector. The NSDR have made over 3,000 emergency deliveries of PPE, many of which are to the adult social care sector.

We are also working this week with a range of social care providers to pilot the Parallel Supply Chain. This is a dedicated channel for critical PPE, and core PPE products for COVID-19, to ensure the system can work well for the social care sector, ahead of rolling it out over the coming weeks.

## ■ **Rett UK: Finance**

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

**[46101]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he will make an assessment of the potential merits of allocating funding to Rett UK to enable it to maintain the provision of providing support to people with Rett syndrome.

**Helen Whately:**

On 8 April 2020 the Chancellor announced £750 million to support the charity sector in response to COVID-19. This fund comprises three elements:

- £360 million will be allocated by central government to charities in England based on evidence of service need. This will include up to £200 million support for hospices, with the rest going to organisations like St John Ambulance and the Citizens Advice Bureau as well as charities supporting vulnerable children, victims of domestic abuse, or disabled people. The Department of Health and Social Care is working with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and HM Treasury to work through which voluntary sector organisations are making an essential contribution to the COVID-19 response and may be eligible for funding;
- £370 million will support charities working with vulnerable people. In England, this support will be provided through the National Lottery Community Fund. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is working with the National Lottery Community Fund to develop eligibility, application and assessment criteria for this part of the fund, which will be launched imminently. Applicants will be assessed on

the extent to which they meet the objectives of the fund, which are to reduce temporary closures of essential charities and to reduce the burden on the public services, including the National Health Service; and

- The Government will match the public donations to the BBC Big Night In fundraising event, which took place on 23 April, starting with a contribution of at least £20 million to the National Emergencies Trust appeal.

Charities can also access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme; the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme; and, they are able to benefit from the three-month VAT deferral scheme. Charity shop premises will benefit from the new enhanced retail rate relief at 100%.

## ■ Sheltered Housing: Coronavirus

**Dr Dan Poulter:**

[\[42982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to test residents living in sheltered accommodation for covid-19.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 11 May 2020]:* Testing is a vital part of the United Kingdom's response and millions of people from across the UK are now eligible to receive a test if they need one.

The Government's overall ambition is to ensure that everyone who needs a test can get one. We will continue to be guided by the science and regularly review eligibility for testing.

## ■ Social Services: Coronavirus

**Nadia Whittome:**

[\[39804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many covid-19 tests have been (a) requested and (b) completed for care workers on each day since 1 March 2020.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 29 April 2020]:* The Care Quality Commission referred over 34,000 care workers for testing between 10 April and 26 April. Care home workers with symptoms should be self-isolating and can access testing through the self-referral or employer referral portals. Data on the number of tests completed is not currently available or published in the format requested.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[43063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that his Department's guidelines on testing for covid-19 are complied with in care settings.

**Helen Whately:**

We have produced detailed and clinically approved guidance for care home managers, in addition to a tutorial video to guide staff through the swab collection

process. Training and advice can be sought via the local Clinical Commissioning Group Director of Nursing, in the same way that infection control training is being accessed.

**Olivia Blake:**

**[45517]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that people with personal care budgets who are making direct payments are (a) receiving personal protective equipment (PPE) for the care workers they employ, (b) able to commission care workers who have been trained to use PPE and sanitation methods appropriate to the covid-19 outbreak and (c) being provided with support to replace care workers on their care team who are off sick or shielding.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* The Department has published detailed guidance for those who hold a personal budget or personal health budget and take this as a direct payment, as well as clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), local authorities and those provide care and support. This is to ensure holders of direct payments are supported to continue receiving the care they need to keep safe and well during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Care workers and personal assistants have been specifically listed as eligible for the personal protective equipment (PPE) stock which has been distributed to Local Resilience Forums and through the emergency National Supply Disruption Response line. To help operationalise these, local authorities have been encouraged to contact all individuals using direct payments to offer advice and to ensure they know who to contact if they are unable to access recommended PPE.

Working with care sector representative bodies, Public Health England (PHE) published tailored guidance for care homes on 17 April, as well as a specialised training video demonstrating the donning and doffing of PPE in care home settings. Additional guidance on the use of PPE in domiciliary care was published on 27 April. We will keep under review what other forms of training and support may be required locally to ensure safety and respond to the needs of staff working in the sector.

The support available to direct payment holders to replace care workers who are off sick or shielding is detailed in the published guidance at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-people-receiving-direct-payments>

## ■ Voluntary Work: Coronavirus

**Sajid Javid:**

**[45133]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to enable voluntary and community sector partners to recruit volunteers from the NHS Volunteer Responders list.

**Helen Whately:**

The NHS Volunteer Responders programme was designed to complement local level volunteering activity by supporting health and social care services to keep vulnerable people affected by COVID-19 and associated measures safe and well in the community.

Due to General Data Protection Regulations, volunteers are not able to be transferred to other organisations without their consent. However, a regular newsletter is sent to all NHS Volunteer Responders promoting opportunities with other voluntary and community sector organisations.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government has also been working with the Voluntary and Community Sector Emergency Partnership to identify better ways of matching the country's strong base of willing volunteers with priority needs. This involves improving coordination between sector organisations, identifying unmet needs and coordinating volunteer demand and supply, including from the NHS Volunteers Responders programme

**HOME OFFICE****■ Asylum: Housing****Thangam Debbonaire:**[\[46102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that access to (a) WiFi, (b) smartphones and (c) other digital devices are provided for asylum seekers living in National Asylum Support Service supplied accommodation during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Chris Philp:**

Asylum seekers receiving support under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 are generally provided with accommodation and a cash allowance to cover other essential living needs. The level of the cash allowance provided take into account communication needs, including the cost of buying and using a mobile phone. As a result of the Covid-19 crisis a higher proportion of asylum seekers than usual are being accommodated in full-board hostels and hotels. We are looking at practical ways of providing internet access to this group and other ways to enable them to communicate effectively. Our accommodation providers can and have provided mobile phones to those who do not have one.

**■ Crimes Against the Person: Pharmacy****Matt Vickers:**[\[46197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many cases of assaults against pharmacists were reported in each region in each of the last six months.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Home Office collects data relating to violence against retail staff within the 'Commercial Victimization Survey' (CVS) but the latest estimates are from the 2018 CVS. This includes information on assaults and threats experienced by staff working in Wholesale and Retail premises, but these figures cannot be broken down specifically for pharmacists.

The Government recognises the damaging impact that crime can have on victims, businesses, and the wider community. Pharmacies provide vital services to our communities and it is important that they should be free to trade without fear of crime or disorder, particularly in these unprecedented times. I am working closely with the police and industry to continue to monitor these types of incidents during this challenging period.

**Domestic Abuse: Victim Support Schemes****Jim Shannon:**[\[46068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps she has taken to ensure the availability of support for women experiencing domestic abuse during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Domestic abuse is unacceptable in any situation. We are working closely with domestic abuse charities, the Domestic Abuse Commissioner and the police to understand the impact of COVID-19 on domestic abuse incidents.

The Government has announced £28m of funding to support domestic abuse charities. The Home Office has announced an additional £2 million in funding to help bolster specialist helplines and online services so that victims can continue to seek support.

We have also launched a campaign to raise awareness of domestic abuse and signpost victims to the support services available. The campaign, under the hashtag #YouAreNotAlone, aims to reassure those affected by domestic abuse that support services remain available during this difficult time. Details of these services can be found at [www.gov.uk/domestic-abuse](http://www.gov.uk/domestic-abuse)

**Fingerprints: Databases****Daniel Zeichner:**[\[47319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the effect on the ability of police to identify criminals following the European Parliament's decision to reject the European Council's proposal to allow the UK to participate in the automated searching of fingerprint data stored in the EU's Prüm DNA database.

**James Brokenshire:**

UK Police forces are already identifying criminals as a result of the UK's connection to Prüm DNA exchanges. Since joining Prüm in July last year, the UK's connection to

Prüm has led to tens of thousands of DNA profiles being matched in the UK and across EU Member States, advancing law enforcement investigations in the UK and the EU.

We are ready to begin sharing fingerprints with EU Member States and next steps are with the European Commission to determine when the UK can begin to exchange fingerprint data via Prüm.

The vote in the European Parliament does not affect our ability to continue to participate in DNA exchanges with EU Member States on a reciprocal basis. We are committed to cooperation that keeps our citizens safe.

## ■ Firearms: Licensing

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[45986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information her Department holds on firearms licensing compiled by constabularies on the advice given by the Chairman of the National Police Chief Council's firearms and explosives committee.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Firearms licensing is an operational matter for the police who are not required to provide information on their decisions in individual cases to the Home Office.

Similarly, it is open to the National Police Chiefs' Council to provide advice or information to police forces relating to firearms licensing. We do, however, have regular discussions with the police, including the National Police Chiefs' Council, about matters relating to firearms licensing.

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[45987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the introduction of medical verification of firearms licensing on trends in the number of people applying for a grant or renewal of a (a) shotgun certificate and (b) firearms certificate.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The police are responsible for assessing the suitability of those who apply for the grant or renewal of a firearm or shotgun certificate. The police carry out a number of checks to ensure that those in possession of firearms do not pose a danger to public safety, and this includes checks relating to the medical suitability, based on information from the applicant's GP. This is an important part of the process, as it helps to ensure that those who have lawful access to firearms do not pose a risk to themselves or to others.

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[45988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what representations she has received from coroners on the involvement of medical practitioners in firearms licensing in each of the last 10 years.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Representations received from coroners have helped to inform the discussions we have had with interested parties on strengthening the medical arrangements for firearms licensing. These representations have, in particular, highlighted the importance of the police having sight of medical information from a firearm applicant's GP prior to granting of a licence, and for the need for a firearms marker to be placed on patient records so that GPs can advise the police if a person begins to suffer from a relevant medical condition while their licence is valid.

Following discussions with police, medical and shooting representatives, new medical arrangements were introduced in 2016 so that medical information would be requested from GPs prior to issuing of a firearms licence and GPs asked to place the firearms marker on patient records.

**Sir Mike Penning:**[\[45989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she place in the library the results of the pilot trials on placing markers on firearms certificate holders' medical notes that were conducted in Essex and Wiltshire.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The firearms marker on a GP's patient's record enables the GP to advise the police if a licensed firearm or shotgun holder begins to suffer from a relevant medical condition while their firearm certificate is valid. Trials testing the medical arrangements took place in Essex and Wiltshire prior to the introduction of a new system in 2016. The results of the trials were not placed in the House Library but were made available to, and were considered by, the members of the working group developing the medical arrangements, including police, medical and shooting representatives. The Government is supportive of the use of the medical marker as a means of helping to ensure that firearm certificates are held safely.

**Sir Mike Penning:**[\[45990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation of the 2016 Home Office Guidance on firearms licensing.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Home Office Guide on Firearms Licensing Law is intended to assist the police and other interested parties in applying and complying with firearms legislation. The guidance is underpinned by the publication of the Authorised Professional Practice for Firearms Licensing which was published in April 2014 through the College of Policing.

The guidance is currently under review so that all legislative amendments made to our firearms controls can be incorporated. A range of interested parties have been consulted about potential changes.

In addition, the Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduced a power to enable the Secretary of State to issue statutory guidance to the police on their firearms licensing

functions. The Government has consulted on the introduction of this guidance, which will bring greater consistency to firearms licensing across England, Wales and Scotland. The Government will publish its response to the consultation and the statutory guidance in due course. Once published, the police will be required to have regard to the statutory guidance.

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[45991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason her Department held discussions on the role of GPs in firearms licensing with the British Medical Association and not the General Medical Council.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Home Office Ministers and officials have regular meetings with Ministerial colleagues and others as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings. It is, however, the case that we have discussed the involvement of medical professionals in firearms licensing procedures with representatives of the medical profession, including the General Medical Council and the British Medical Association, and we will continue to do so, as appropriate.

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[45992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she publish the (a) dates and (b) outcomes of the meetings held by (a) Ministers in her Department and (b) officials in her Department with representatives from the General Medical Council on the medical involvement in firearms licensing since May 2016.

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[45993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the (a) dates and (b) outcomes of the meetings held by (i) Ministers in her Department and (ii) officials in her Department with representatives from police forces on the medical involvement in firearms licensing since May 2016.

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[45994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she publish the (a) dates and (b) outcomes of the meetings held by (a) Ministers in her Department and (b) officials in her Department with representatives from the British Shooting Sports Council on the medical involvement in firearms licensing since May 2016.

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[45995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she publish the (a) dates and (b) outcomes of the meetings held by (a) Ministers in her Department and (b) officials in her Department with representatives from the Countryside Alliance on the medical involvement in firearms licensing since May 2016.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Home Office Ministers and officials have regular meetings with Ministerial colleagues and others as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the

case with previous administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings. It is, however, the case that we have discussed the involvement of medical professionals in firearms licensing procedures with a range of interested parties including the police, representatives of the medical profession, including the General Medical Council, and shooting organisations including the British Shooting Sports Council and the Countryside Alliance, and we shall continue to do so, as appropriate.

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[45999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department's policy is on the placing of markers on the medical notes of those granted shotgun and firearms certificates; and if she will make a statement.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The police are responsible for assessing the suitability of those who apply for the grant or renewal of a firearm or shotgun certificate. The police carry out a number of checks to ensure that those in possession of firearms do not pose a danger to public safety, including in relation to medical suitability based on information from the applicant's GP.

Use of the firearms marker on GP patient records enables the GP to advise the police if a person begins to suffer from a relevant medical condition while their firearms certificate is valid, enabling the police to review their suitability. The Government is supportive of the use of the medical marker as a means of helping to ensure firearms licences are held safely.

## ■ Hate Crime

**Bambos Charalambous:**

[\[46772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the Hate Crime Action Plan for 2020-24.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Government is considering a range of options to tackle hate crime beyond the current Action Plan, including engagement with a range of Departments and civil society partners to explore possible approaches.

## ■ Hate Crime: Coronavirus

**Bambos Charalambous:**

[\[46777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps is taking to support different ethnic and religious communities in the UK who are being targeted with online abuse and hate speech due to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Home Office are working closely with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), civil society partners and social media platforms to encourage victim reporting of online hate crime during the pandemic. We are also working with the

NPCC to ensure that all police forces are providing reassurance to affected communities.

Government continues to work with communities around the country and the police to ensure people of all backgrounds have access to the latest information and are supported through this period.

## ■ **Hezbollah: Foreign Relations**

**Theresa Villiers:** [\[47215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the accuracy of reports that Hezbollah's Foreign Relations Department is raising funds and operating within the EU.

**James Brokenshire:**

We do not provide comment on our intelligence assessment of terrorist organisations.

## ■ **Immigration Controls: Coronavirus**

**Stephen Doughty:** [\[46675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the evidence provided to the Science and Technology Committee on 13 March, on what date advice from scientific modellers was first provided to (a) COBR, (b) the Prime Minister, (c) the Secretary of State for Health and (d) the Secretary of State for Transport on the likely incidence of covid-19 infection among travellers arriving at the UK Border; and on what dates any subsequent revision of those models was provided.

**Chris Philp:**

The modelling in question was done by SAGE. The Home Office cannot provide information on when SAGE advised (a) COBR, (b) the Prime Minister, (c) the Secretary of State for Health and (d) the Secretary of State for Transport.

## ■ **NHS: Migrant Workers**

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[46764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of granting international medical students who have graduated early due to the covid-19 outbreak and are working for the NHS special dispensation to switch sponsors without having to apply for another visa.

**Kevin Foster:**

International students with current Tier 4 visas can already work full-time following the completion of their course without switching sponsors, provided the conditions of their visa permit work.

During the Covid-19 outbreak, those applying for new visas under Tiers 2, 4 or 5 can commence work or study with their new sponsor before a decision is made on their application provided the relevant conditions outlined on Gov.uk are met. These details can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents)

## ■ Places of Worship Security Funding Scheme

**Bambos Charalambous:** [46780]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's News story of 19 March 2019 entitled Places of worship to get security funding boost, how much of her Department's £5 million fund to provide security training for places of worship has been awarded; and how much of that funding has been awarded to each organisation.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Home Office is working with policing and faith representatives to understand the training needs of places of worship and how these are best met. This is to ensure the training made available is suitable and effective for faith institutions.

## ■ Police: Coronavirus

**Chi Onwurah:** [48422]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many police officers have been tested for covid-19 since the start of the covid-19 outbreak, by police force.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Testing is key in our battle against coronavirus and on Friday 17 April the government extended coronavirus testing to more frontline workers, including for police. The number of police officers who have been tested for Covid-19 by police force is not a number that is held by centrally by the Home Office.

## ■ Youth Mobility Scheme: Coronavirus

**Catherine West:** [46761]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to issue further guidance for people on Tier 5 Youth Mobility Visas that have been extended to 31 May 2020 who may be unable to leave the UK by that date.

**Kevin Foster:**

The exceptional provisions outlined in the Covid-19 guidance are being reviewed regularly. We will review the Covid-19 extensions prior to 31 May and will publish further information on Gov.uk prior to this date.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-immigration-and-borders>.

**HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT****■ Almshouses: Coronavirus****Mr Stephen Morgan:**[\[46141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the role of almshouses in local authorities housing vulnerable people after the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will take steps to ensure the continuing viability of almshouses.

**Luke Hall:**

Almshouses play an important role in providing affordable homes, and often support, for older and other vulnerable residents in need. I have no doubt that many local authorities across the country similarly value the role that almshouses can play in helping to meet housing need in their area, and that councils will be using their local knowledge to engage with local almshouses providers to assess any scope they may have to help during this period. The Government absolutely values the dedication and work of the trustees and volunteers who run our almshouses, and particularly so during the current pandemic.

The Government has given councils over £3.2 billion additional funding to help them fund essential services for the vulnerable during the pandemic. The Government has also announced that charities across the United Kingdom will receive £750 million to help them continue to deliver services to the vulnerable. This includes £370 million for small and medium-sized charities, through a grant to the National Lottery Community Fund for charities in England.

**■ Arts: Coronavirus****Kevin Brennan:**[\[46569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will extend the same protections that are in place for tenants of commercial properties to artists facing eviction from rented workspaces and studios as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

Through Section 82 of the Coronavirus Act 2020, the Government has introduced temporary new measures to protect tenants renting commercial property from aggressive forms of rent recovery: we have legislated to enact a moratorium on commercial forfeitures due to non-payment of rent, due to end on 30 June; statutory demands and winding up petitions issued to commercial tenants will be temporarily voided; and changes have been made to the use of Commercial Rent Arrears Recovery.

The protection from eviction applies to businesses from any sector which have:

(a) a tenancy to which Part 2 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 applies, or

(b) a tenancy to which that Part of that Act would apply if any relevant occupier were the tenant.

Assuming the nature of their lease or contract is in line with the above, any tenant should be protected under this legislation.

#### ■ **Buildings: Safety**

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[46150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he will take to consult leaseholders and residents on the priorities for the Building Safety Fund.

**Christopher Pincher:**

Engagement with leaseholders has informed Government's decision to provide £1 billion of funding to support the remediation of buildings with unsafe non-ACM cladding in high-rise residential buildings. We are regularly engaging with key stakeholder groups to understand their views ahead of the launch of the Building Safety Fund and this engagement remains ongoing.

#### ■ **Empty Property: Council Tax**

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[46152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of issuing guidance for local authorities on the use of Empty Property Premiums during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

The Government has no plans to issue guidance to local authorities on the use of council tax Empty Property Premiums in the circumstances of the Covid-19 outbreak. Local authorities who have chosen to charge a premium on long term empty properties in their area will want to take account of all relevant circumstances in its administration.

#### ■ **Fire Prevention: Coronavirus**

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[46148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what progress his Department has made on providing transitional support to cover the costs of waking watch schemes during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Christopher Pincher:**

Interim measures such as waking watch should only ever be short term and are not a substitute for remediation. Lord Greenhalgh, the new Minister with responsibility for building safety, is investigating what can be done to reduce the cost of waking watch, and to ensure that waking watches, where they are required, can continue during the current Covid-19 restrictions.

We continue to take action to support remediation, including significant funding of £1 billion for non-ACM cladding remediation, on top of the existing £600 million for ACM remediation, so that work to make buildings safe can continue as quickly as possible.

■ **High Rise Flats: Bolton**

**Mike Amesbury:**

[\[46146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if the Government will publish the Building Research Establishment report on the fire at the Cube building in Bolton on 15 November 2019.

**Christopher Pincher:**

We expect the final report on the Bolton Cube fire from Building Research Establishment imminently. We have shared the interim report with BRAC, the Expert Panel and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service. It is important that we understand all the facts around the incident and we must look to the final report to understand the complete picture. We will review the full findings with the Expert Panel and act where necessary to ensure the advice to building owners is up to date.

■ **High Rise Flats: Fire Extinguishers**

**Mike Amesbury:**

[\[46147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the building regulations requirement that new buildings over 11 meters are fitted with sprinklers, if his Department will make an assessment of the merits of ensuring existing buildings over 11 metres are fitted with sprinklers.

**Christopher Pincher:**

We plan to publish in May an update to Approved Document B that will include a provision for sprinkler systems and new high-rise blocks of flats over 11 metres tall.

The Government has been clear, building owners are responsible for making sure that any existing residential building has the appropriate fire safety in place, including the retrofit of sprinklers where necessary. Sprinklers are only one of the fire safety measures which can be provided in an overall fire safety package and an appropriate level of fire safety can be achieved without the need to retrofit sprinklers. Building owners should take advice from competent professionals and decide whether or not to retrofit sprinklers.

For buildings in scope of the new building safety regime, the Accountable Person will be required to demonstrate how they are managing fire and structural risks on an ongoing basis.

## ■ High Rise Flats: Insulation

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[46149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has scheduled a meeting with representatives from the insurance industry on the high cost of insurance cover for residents of housing blocks with dangerous cladding.

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[46151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what plans his Department has to provide financial support to residents and leaseholders of buildings who face high insurance costs as a result of their building's dangerous cladding.

**Christopher Pincher:**

On 13 and 21 May, the Minister for Building Safety held roundtables with representatives of the insurance industry. This was to address some of the insurance challenges impacting on residents of high-rise residential buildings. A number of options were discussed and are being considered further.

## ■ Hospitality Industry: Small Businesses

**Afzal Khan:** [\[46157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he has taken to support small and medium-sized businesses operating in the wedding industry sector during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

The Government has announced a package of support for businesses to help with their ongoing business costs in recognition of the disruption caused by Covid-19. In particular, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has been working across Government to provide £12.33 billion of grant funding to help small and rural businesses and businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors manage their cash-flow through this period.

This support has taken the form of two grant funding schemes, the Small Business Grant Fund (SBGF) and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF).

All businesses with a property that on 11 March 2020 were eligible for Small Business Rate Relief Scheme or those which on 11 March 2020 were eligible for relief under the Rural Rates Relief Scheme will be eligible for a payment of £10,000 under the SBGF.

Businesses in England that would have been in receipt of the Expanded Retail Discount (which covers retail, hospitality and leisure) on 11 March with a rateable value of less than £51,000 will be eligible for the following cash grants per property:

- Eligible businesses in these sectors with a property that has a rateable value of up to and including £15,000 will receive a grant of £10,000;
- Eligible businesses in these sectors with a property that has a rateable value of over £15,000 and less than £51,000 will receive a grant of £25,000.

In addition, on 1 May, the Business Secretary announced that up to £617 million is being made available to Local Authorities in England under the Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund (LADGF). This is up to an additional 5 per cent uplift to the £12.33 billion funding previously announced for the SBGF and the RHLGF.

The LADGF is aimed at small businesses with ongoing fixed property-related costs but not liable for business rates or rates reliefs. Businesses already in receipt of the Small Business grant, Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grant or Self-employed Income Support Scheme payment are not eligible.

We are asking local authorities to prioritise the following types of businesses for grants from within this funding pot:

- Small businesses in shared offices or other flexible work spaces. Examples could include units in industrial parks, science parks and incubators which do not have their own business rates assessment;
- Regular market traders with fixed building costs, such as rent, who do not have their own business rates assessment;
- Bed & Breakfasts which pay Council Tax instead of business rates; and
- Charity properties in receipt of charitable business rates relief which would otherwise have been eligible for Small Business Rates Relief or Rural Rate Relief.

Local authorities are responsible for defining precise eligibility for this fund and may choose to make payments to other businesses based on local economic need, subject to those businesses meeting the specific eligibility criteria.

Guidance, intended to support local authorities in administering the Discretionary Grants Fund, was published 13 May.

Guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-business-support-grant-funding>.

This will not replace existing guidance for the SBGF or the RHLGF.

Guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-business-support-grant-funding-guidance-for-businesses>

## ■ Housing

**Ben Everitt:**

**[46195]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his department will be issuing definitive guidance for introducing controlled viewings and conveyancing in the residential property sector.

**Christopher Pincher:**

My Department issued revised guidance for England on how to move home safely on 13 May 2020.

## ■ Housing: Students

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[46574\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to ensure that university accommodation and student accommodation landlords whose properties are not being used during the covid-19 outbreak offer refunds to their tenants.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The negotiation of early releases from contracts is a matter between the parties concerned. During these unprecedented times, the Government encourages student accommodation providers, landlords, letting agencies and tenants to take a pragmatic, flexible approach and have a frank and open conversation at the earliest opportunity, to allow both parties to agree a sensible way forward. Students are able to end or surrender their fixed term tenancy early if they reach an agreement with their accommodation provider or landlord. Where students have a joint tenancy agreement, all tenants will need to agree to the surrender.

## ■ Local Enterprise Partnerships: Finance

**Dr Luke Evans:**

[\[46807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to clarify with local enterprise partnerships the level of funding that they will receive to support the recovery of the economy.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are due to receive Local Growth Funding for 2020-21 to support the delivery of the Growth Deals agreed with Government. We have communicated with all LEPs clarifying our approach, and how we will support them manage funding and delivery at this challenging time. That confirmed LEPs will receive two thirds of their Local Growth Fund allocation in May to ensure they have adequate funding to drive forward their programmes where delivery is happening. The final third will be released pending a short light touch review over the summer to understand what if any slippage or disruption the effects of Covid-19 may have caused to individual LEP programmes. This will help everyone understand where further work and support from Government may be required, whilst ensuring funding is awarded when it is needed.

The March 2020 Budget also confirmed up to £387 million in 2021-22 to provide certainty for local areas that they will be able to continue with existing priority Local Growth Fund projects that require funding beyond 2020-21. We have said that we will work closely with LEPs and Mayors to understand the changing needs of local economies, and will look at how this funding could be used alongside other resources to support local economic recovery efforts. Future funding decisions will be announced in due course.

## ■ Local Government: Coronavirus

**Chi Onwurah:**

**[46054]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department has issued to local authorities on the (a) format of support through grants and loans and (b) assessment of need for welfare assistance schemes during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mr Simon Clarke:**

Local government is an essential part of our response to COVID-19 and has mobilised to help us keep the country moving. We have been working together closely with councils to ensure they have the resources and support they need to support their communities. This has included issuing guidance, including:

- Guidance for local authorities on the Small Business Grants Fund and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Fund was published by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on GOV.UK on 24 March. On 1 May, the Business Secretary announced a third fund, the Local Authority Discretionary Fund. Guidance for this was published on GOV.UK on 13 May. Both sets of guidance can be found on the GOV.UK website at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-business-support-grant-funding>
- The government has provided local authorities with a £500m hardship fund to enable them to provide additional council tax relief, with a focus on working-age recipients of Local Council Tax Support. The Department published guidance to councils on administration of the fund, which is available at the following address:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/874867/COVID-19\\_Council\\_Tax\\_Hardship\\_Fund\\_Guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874867/COVID-19_Council_Tax_Hardship_Fund_Guidance.pdf)

To address the pressures councils are facing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic we have now made available £3.2 billion in grant funding, this will be un-ringfenced, recognising local authorities are best placed to decide how to meet the major COVID-19 service pressures in their local area.

## ■ Repossession Orders: Coronavirus

**Rushanara Ali:**

**[46659]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of homes that could be repossessed due to the economic effects of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The Department does not forecast future repossession rates. Currently, both arrears and repossession rates are close to historically low levels.

The Government is determined that lenders should treat borrowers fairly. The independent Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) is responsible for the regulations that are in place to protect customers in their dealings with financial services firms, and

these include at their heart a requirement that firms must deal fairly with customers in payment difficulties. Their rules require lenders to consider a variety of options to help the borrower cope with these difficulties and any agreed solution should meet the needs of both borrower and lender.

The Government has been working to keep repossessions at a minimum at this time. The Government has announced unprecedented support for business and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency including an initial £330 billion of guarantees – equivalent to 15 per cent of UK GDP. This includes the extension to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, which will help keep people in employment, protecting livelihoods and helping people to remain in their homes. On 17 March the Chancellor announced, on behalf of the sector, that banks and building societies will offer a 'mortgage holiday' for borrowers struggling financially as a result of COVID-19. This forbearance measure enables affected borrowers to defer their mortgage payments while they get back on their feet. Lenders have also agreed to a moratorium on residential and Buy-to-Let possession action to provide customers with reassurance that they will not have their homes repossessed at this difficult time. The Master of the Rolls, with the agreement of the Lord Chancellor, has also suspended all ongoing and new housing possession cases for 90 days from 27 March 2020. These measures have been strengthened by the Financial Conduct Authority's new draft guidance for lenders which sets out the expectations for firms and the options available to their customers. This includes extending the application period for a mortgage holiday until 31 October so customers that have not yet had a payment holiday and are experiencing financial difficulty will be able to request one. In combination, these measures will serve to protect homeowners from repossession at this time.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Exports: Worcestershire

**Sajid Javid:**

[\[47246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps her Department is taking to support exporters in (a) Worcestershire (b) Bromsgrove constituency.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Department for International Trade (DIT) delivers a range of export services across the West Midlands. The steps include support for accessing international exporting opportunities and participation in trade missions; providing export credit and insurance through UK Export Finance (UKEF); access to DIT's international network and face to face support provided by experienced international trade advisers. There is a dedicated local DIT team of five international trade advisers based in Worcester, which covers Hereford and Worcestershire including the Bromsgrove constituency.

UKEF also has its own network of Export Finance managers who act as local points of contact for exporters and businesses with export potential. Further information is available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/find-an-export-finance-manager](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/find-an-export-finance-manager).

## ■ Fossil Fuels: Argentina

**Caroline Lucas:**

[46597]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the value was of export credits awarded to oil, gas and fracking projects in Argentina in each of the last 10 years.

**Graham Stuart:**

Since current records began in May 2011, UK Export Finance (UKEF) has not provided support directly to any fracking projects in Argentina.

UKEF provided an export working capital guarantee of £375,000 to support a UK company to provide a drilling simulator and consultancy services in Argentina in March 2017.

In September 2017 UKEF provided an export working capital guarantee of £290,000 to the same exporter for provision of drilling consultancy services in Argentina.

## ■ Trade: Disease Control

**Sir John Hayes:**

[46540]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the relationship between (a) free trade, (b) porous borders and (c) the spread of highly contagious pandemics.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

Free trade has a vital role in addressing the immediate impact – and resolving the longer term effects – of this pandemic. This Department is working with our international partners to co-ordinate international strategy that will help protect and manage global supply of essential goods and services, including medical products.

## ■ World Trade Organisation

**John Spellar:**

[48263]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the UK's policy is on the future of the World Trade Organisation.

**Greg Hands:**

The UK believes a strong, rules based, multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) at its core, is in the best interests of all nations. The UK is working to strengthen and reform the WTO, so it can continue to deliver a free, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent framework for trade between countries. This will play an important role in resolving the economic effects of the global pandemic.

We are engaging closely with the WTO Secretariat and the wider Membership to achieve an early resumption of the WTO's regular work. Our priorities are making

progress on updating the WTO rulebook, in particular in the areas of digital, services and the environment, and to improve transparency.

We continue to support a fully-functioning dispute settlement system with an appeal function and remain committed to finding a permanent resolution to the impasse of the Appellate Body.

## JUSTICE

### ■ Prisoners: Coronavirus

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

**[46590]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of potential effect on prisoner (a) discipline and order issues, (b) self-harm and (c) suicides on the custodial estate due to the continuation of covid-19 lockdown measures on the custodial estate while lockdown measures are being relaxed in the wider community.

**Lucy Frazer:**

COVID-19 presents a unique set of challenges to maintaining safety in custody.

We have taken temporary measures to restrict prison regimes and cease all non-essential activities involving groups of people. This includes social visits, education, non-essential work, association, and access to the gymnasium.

However, prisoners are given access to essential services including meals, showers, telephone contact with loved ones, access to health services, and time in the open air where possible.

This does unfortunately mean that prisoners will spend more time in their cells, which we recognise may increase the risk of self-harm or violence. We have provided guidance to Governors on the risks of isolation on both self-harm and violence and a range of materials have been provided to help mitigate this risk, including distraction packs and in-cell activities.

In recognition of the positive impact that family contact can have in terms of a prisoners' mental health, we have provided locked mobile handsets for those without in-cell telephony. Additionally, we are extending the 'email a prisoner' facility to all sites. Following a successful trial at HMP Berwyn, we are rolling out secure video calls to 10 other institutions this week, with a wider roll-out in the coming weeks. Time-limited calls will be made either by prisoners making a call request to their designated contact or by families who can request a time slot through a mobile app or directly with the establishment.

The increased access to phones will also facilitate access to the Listener scheme run by the Samaritans.

These measures are part of the nationwide efforts to control the virus and save lives. We will regularly review these restrictions taking into account the best public health advice and the impact of any changes on the safety and stability of prisons.

## ■ Prisons: Coronavirus

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[46586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the accessibility of (a) physical and (b) mental healthcare provision in prisons and other custodial facilities due to (i) staff absence and (ii) redeployment of healthcare resources; and what assessment he has made of the level of reported anxiety among prisoners due to extended period of confinement to cells during the outbreak.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The Government takes the health of prisoners very seriously. NHS England commission healthcare in prisons and the Ministry of Justice is working with health partners to continually monitor the health and wellbeing of people in prisons and other custodial facilities during COVID-19. COVID-19 presents a unique set of challenges that we must address to keep prisoners safe. To mitigate these, we are operating a National Response Model in prisons, and working very closely with public health authorities to ensure our approach is based on the best scientific advice available.

Detail regarding the redeployment of healthcare staff and resources is not held by the MoJ and should be requested from NHS England. However, people in prison continue to be given access to services including health services, telephone contact with loved ones and, where possible, time in the open air. We are also taking further action to support the mental and physical wellbeing of people in custody.

We continue to make the Samaritans phone service available, and are working with the Samaritans to ensure that the Listener peer support scheme continues to function effectively. To address anxiety and boredom, we are also providing distraction packs and in cell activities and providing time in the open air where possible. We are continuing to provide care and support to people at risk of self-harm or suicide through ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork) case management. For those with severe mental health issues, we are doing everything we can to ensure that the process for transfer to hospital continues in as normal a way as possible.

Measures are also being taken to protect prisoners with particularly vulnerable physical health from COVID-19. Prisoners identified in accordance with NHS guidance as being 'extremely vulnerable' to COVID-19 are being proactively considered for release from custody under existing Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) provisions. Where a prisoner falling within this category is considered not suitable for release, they will continue to be appropriately shielded within custody.

## ■ Remand in Custody: Children

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[46583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Youth Justice Statistics, England and Wales, April 2018 to March 2019, published on 30 January 2020, if he will

make an assessment of the implications for his policies on the use of remand for children of the finding that 66 per cent of children given a remand to youth detention accommodation did not subsequently receive a custodial sentence.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The decision on whether a child should be remanded into custody is a matter for our independent judiciary. We are clear that custody, including custodial remand, should always be used as a last resort for children, and the remand framework ensures the court considers all other options, including bail and remand into local authority accommodation, before remanding a child to custody.

We are currently undertaking work to consider the use of youth custodial remand and in due course we aim to identify options to reduce the numbers of children remanded to custody where appropriate, while ensuring victims and the public are protected.

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

**[46588]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the proportions of the unconvicted children held on remand in youth detention accommodation during 2019 who were remanded to that accommodation on the basis of consideration of each of the following sets of conditions, with reference to the Youth Court Bench Book published in August 2017: (a) 31 a, b, ci, di; (b) 31 a, b, ci, dii; (c) 31 a, b, cii, di; (d) 31 a, b, cii, dii; (e) 32 a, b, c, di, ei, fi; (f) 32 a, b, c, di, ei, fii; (g) 32 a, b, c, di, eii, fi; (h) 32 a, b, c, di, eii, fii; (i) 32 a, b, c, dii, ei, fi; (j) 32 a, b, c, dii, ei, fii; (k) 32 a, b, c, dii, eii, fi; and (l) 32 a, b, c, dii, eii, fii.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The Ministry of Justice routinely publishes the number of unconvicted children on remand (including in youth detention accommodation), which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2018>. Figures for 2019 will be published later in May.

The Ministry of Justice does not centrally hold data on reasons why children are held on remand.

The decision on whether a child should be remanded into custody is a matter for our independent judiciary. We are clear that custody, including custodial remand, should always be used as a last resort for children, and the remand framework ensures the court considers all other options, including bail and remand into local authority accommodation, before remanding a child to custody.

We are currently undertaking work to consider the use of youth custodial remand and in due course we aim to identify options to reduce the numbers of children remanded to custody where appropriate, while ensuring victims and the public are protected.

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

**[46589]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an estimate of the proportion of unconvicted children held on remand during 2019 who were denied bail on the basis of (a) the child's own welfare or protection, (b) the child already being in custody serving a sentence, (c) there being insufficient information relating to the case, (d) the child already

having been on bail during the proceedings and having been arrested for breach of those bail conditions, and (e) it being impracticable to complete enquiries or make a report unless the child is in custody.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The Ministry of Justice routinely publishes the number of unconvicted children on remand, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2018>. Figures for 2019 will be published later in May.

The Ministry of Justice does not centrally hold data on the reasons why children are held on remand or why they were refused bail.

The decision to grant or refuse bail is a matter for our independent judiciary. There is a general presumption to bail in criminal proceedings, but there are exceptions to this. The remand framework ensures the court considers all options, including bail and community remand options, before a remand into custody would be considered.

We are currently undertaking work to consider the use of youth custodial remand and in due course we aim to identify options to reduce the numbers of children remanded to custody where appropriate, while ensuring victims and the public are protected.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### ■ **Pregnancy: Northern Ireland**

**Carla Lockhart:**

**[47478]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what steps his Department is taking to support pregnant women in Northern Ireland that wish to continue their pregnancy.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

Maternity and prenatal health is a devolved matter for Northern Ireland.

The Government recognises the importance of consulting with experts, counselling and other support services to support women and girls through any difficult decisions. This will be a matter for the Department of Health to take forward as part of its commissioning of abortion services as a new healthcare service in line with the regulations we made and in accordance with paragraphs 85 and 86 of the CEDAW report.

### ■ **Terrorism: Northern Ireland**

**Alexander Stafford:**

**[47488]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many dissident republican attacks there have been in Northern Ireland in each month in the last three years.

**Alexander Stafford:** [47489]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many potential dissident republican attacks have been prevented in Northern Ireland in each month in the each of the last three years.

**Alexander Stafford:** [47490]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many potential dissident loyalist attacks have been prevented in Northern Ireland in each month in each of the last three years.

**Alexander Stafford:** [47491]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many dissident loyalist attacks there have been in Northern Ireland in each month in the each of the last three years.

**Alexander Stafford:** [47492]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many people have been injured as a result of dissident loyalist attacks in Northern Ireland in each month in each of the last three years.

**Alexander Stafford:** [47493]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many people have been injured as a result of dissident republican attacks in Northern Ireland in each month in each of the last three years.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

This Government's first priority is to keep people safe and secure right across the United Kingdom. The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), MI5 and others who work to keep people safe from terrorism and paramilitarism, have our full support. We have provided PSNI with additional resources to tackle the terrorism threat and have also provided match funding to the NI Executive's Tackling Paramilitarism Programme.

PSNI recorded statistics relating to the security situation in Northern Ireland are the main source of official information on trends and statistics relating to the security situation.

The PSNI produces statistics on incidents relating to the security situation that are reported to the police, including security related deaths, shooting and bombing incidents, paramilitary style attacks and arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

Information covering the last three years is provided below.

**19/20 Bulletin:**

<https://www.psni.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/security-situation-statistics/2020/march/security-situation-statistics-to-march-2020.pdf>

**19/20 Spreadsheet:**

<https://www.psnipolice.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/security-situation-statistics/2020/march/march-2020-accompanying-excel-spreadsheet-for-security-website-online-15.05.2020.xls>

**18/19 Bulletin:**

<https://www.psnipolice.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/security-situation-statistics/2019/march/security-situation-statistics-to-march-2019.pdf>

**18/19 Spreadsheet:**

<https://www.psnipolice.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/security-situation-statistics/2019/march/march-2019-accompanying-excel-spreadsheet-for-security-website-online-17.05.2019.xls>

**17/18 Bulletin:**

<https://www.psnipolice.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/security-situation-statistics/2018/annual-security-situation-statistics-report-2017-18.pdf>

**17/18 Spreadsheet:**

<https://www.psnipolice.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/security-situation-statistics/archive/archive-spreadsheets/march-2018-accompanying-excel-spreadsheet-for-security-website-online-17.05.2018.xls>

## PARLIAMENTARY WORKS SPONSOR BODY

■ **Palace of Westminster: Freight**

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** **[48275]**

To ask the right hon. Member for East Hampshire, representing the Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of moving freight to and from the Restoration and Renewal construction site at the Palace of Westminster by river.

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** **[48279]**

To ask the right hon. Member for East Hampshire, representing the Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body, whether an environmental impact assessment has been carried out for the Restoration and Renewal project on the Palace of Westminster.

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** **[48280]**

To ask the right hon. Member for East Hampshire, representing the Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body, what steps he will take to minimise air pollution in central London from the Restoration and Renewal project on the Palace of Westminster.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Sponsor Body has agreed a strategic objective to mitigate the environmental impact of the Restoration and Renewal Programme during the construction phase and to minimise the impact in relation to the Palace's future operation. This objective has been endorsed by the Commissions of both Houses and will be kept under

review as the Programme progresses. An Environment Impact Assessment will be conducted in due course once the preferred approach to the works has been determined as part of the business case process, which will consider the impact on air quality and river ecology. The Programme is also expected to agree a series of controls and mitigations, as well as monitoring arrangements, for air quality during the construction phase as part of the planning process. The merits of using the river for moving materials to and from the construction site, to minimise the effects of construction on road traffic emissions, will also be considered by the Programme.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Aviation: Coronavirus

**Henry Smith:** [\[46606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether there are criteria in place for lifting the proposed policy of 14 days' quarantine for inbound airline passengers to the UK.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Home Office will be introducing new health protection measures at the border, and details will be published soon. Further queries should be directed to the Home Office.

**Henry Smith:** [\[46608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to determine the list of exemptions to the proposed 14-day quarantine policy for inbound airline passengers to the UK.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Home Office will be introducing new health protection measures at the border, and details will be published soon. Further queries should be directed to the Home Office.

**Alexander Stafford:** [\[46830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to introduce a covid-19 screening regime at airports that helps to protect people from that disease while enabling the travel industry to recover from the financial effect of the outbreak.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The aviation sector plays a key role in our future as a global trading nation, as well as playing a critical role in local economies. The Government is working closely with the sector to enable its restart and recovery.

Airlines will be asked to provide the latest Public Health England information at several stages of the passenger journey, including as part of the booking process, at check-in, and on board the aircraft. Airports are also displaying posters and digital signage relaying Government information about COVID-19.

The Government's approach to passenger screening is being kept under review as the pandemic develops. This may mean that measures and procedures change as we control the spread of, and understand more about, the virus. Any changes to our approach will be led by advice from PHE, SAGE and the Chief Medical Officer.

## ■ **British Airways: Redundancy**

**Martyn Day:**

[46745]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has had discussions with representatives of British Airways on postponing its planned redundancies following the Government's announcement of an extension to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Department for Transport is in regular contact with airlines, airports and unions to understand the impact that COVID-19 is having on the sector and its workers.

However, we do not comment on discussions held with individual companies, as this information is commercially sensitive.

**Kate Osamor:**

[46750]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with representatives of British Airways as a result of their recent announcement on staff redundancies.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

It would not be appropriate to comment on individual discussions. However, we recognise that this will be very distressing news for BA employees and their families, and we stand ready to support them.

The aviation sector is essential to the UK economy, and firms can draw upon the unprecedented package of measures, including: schemes to raise capital, flexibilities with tax bills, and financial support for employees. If airlines find themselves in trouble because of coronavirus, and have exhausted the measures already available to them, the Transport Secretary is clear that the Government is prepared to enter discussions with individual companies seeking bespoke support as a last resort, having exhausted all other options. Any intervention would need to represent value for money for taxpayers.

## ■ **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

**Darren Jones:**

[46781]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of the use of air curtains in indoor settings to help prevent the airborne transmission of covid-19.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

DfT is considering a range of potential engineering mitigations for Covid-19 on the transport network. We are following advice from SAGE which has considered the

potential benefits of improved ventilation flows, however to date no assessment on the use of air curtains directly has been made.

We are aware that experts are producing guidance such as the *CIBSE Covid-19 Ventilation Guidance* and the *REHVA Covid-19 Guidance*.

### ■ **Cycling and Walking: Coronavirus**

**Dr Luke Evans:**

[\[46808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to work with road user groups to ensure that the sustainable transport strategy adopted by communities includes the increase in walking and cycling experienced during the covid-19 outbreak and is balanced with car use.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> May the Government announced a £2bn package of funding for cycling and walking over the next five years. This includes £250m to be spent this financial year on measures to enable increased cycling and walking. Local authorities will be responsible for ensuring that they have considered the impact of these measures on other road users.

### ■ **Driving Tests: Coronavirus**

**Zarah Sultana:**

[\[46177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will ensure that theory test refunds are administered for (a) people whose theory test (a) has expired during the driving test suspension (b) will expire while they are on the waiting list for a practical test after the suspension is lifted.

**Rachel Maclean:**

There is no provision in legislation for refunds of test fees in these circumstances. It would therefore not be legal for the Driving and Vehicle Standards Agency to provide refunds.

### ■ **International Transport: Coronavirus**

**Henry Smith:**

[\[46607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether it remains Government policy to work with international partners on global common screening standards for international travel.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The UK is engaging with a number of key international organisations (including ICAO and IATA), and we are working with our international partners to drive forward a shared agenda on public health measures for international travel.

The Government has also established five ministerial-led taskforces to develop plans for reopening sectors which have been heavily impacted by COVID-19, including a taskforce on international aviation.

The Government aims to support industry in developing guidance on a baseline set of measures, based on the available evidence, and for these to become widespread and well-understood, thereby avoiding confusion and uncertainty for both industry and passengers.

■ **Motor Vehicles: Testing**

**Anthony Mangnall:**

[\[46801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the financial effect on garages of the six-month extension to MOT tests in the event that the covid-19 lockdown is lifted.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The loss of MOT fee income has been estimated at £664 million, which is based on the average cost of an MOT of £40 multiplied by the number of MOTs due over the next 6 months. This will be mitigated in part by Government support for industries affected by the ongoing pandemic.

■ **P and O Ferries: Coronavirus**

**Karl Turner:**

[\[46619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect on maritime employment of proposals by P&O Ferries proposals to make 160 seafarers on the (a) Pride of York and (b) Pride of Hull roll-on roll-off passenger ferries between Hull and Zeebrugge and Hull and Rotterdam redundant.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Secretary of State for Transport maintains a close interest in the issues impacting UK seafarers and ferry operations. However, no such assessment has been made on those specific routes.

**Karl Turner:**

[\[46621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with (a) representatives of P&O Ferries and (b) trade unions on that company's proposals for 1,100 redundancies among maritime workers on ferry routes from Hull and Dover; and if he will make a statement.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

I have had continued engagement with a range of maritime and other transport operators during the pandemic. I have also met with the maritime Trade Unions, where current and future matters impacting workers, and the sector as a whole, were discussed, and will continue to have an ongoing dialogue with them.

I have spoken to both P&O and the Trade Unions regarding the challenges P&O are currently facing.

Due to the sensitive nature of this issue we assume talks will also be happening between P&O and the Trade Unions.

**Karl Turner:**

[\[46622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding from the public purse P&O Ferries has received to support (a) UK seafarer employment and (b) maritime supply chains during the covid-19 outbreak to date.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

On 24 April Government committed to keeping freight flowing on routes into and across the UK. Following engagement with operators, DfT has awarded contracts for 16 routes with 6 operators, worth an estimated £34m over 2 months. The Department for Transport will publish regular updates on this support.

In addition, and to support maritime businesses and seafarer jobs, which have been impacted by the outbreak of Covid-19, the Government has made available unprecedented financial support, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. Any employer with a UK bank account and PAYE scheme is eligible for a grant to cover 80% of the wages of its employees, up to £2500 per month.

These measures are helping to ensure vital routes remain open for all companies, including P&O Ferries.

**Karl Turner:**

[\[46623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with DP World, owners of P&O Ferries Ltd on (a) furlough support for the wages of 1,400 P&O staff in the UK and (b) the proposal for 1,100 redundancies amongst P&O's UK seafarers and other maritime staff in Dover and Hull.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Department's officials and I have been working closely with operators across the maritime sector including P&O Ferries, to understand the impacts and challenges they face from the global COVID-19 crisis. The Department recognises the contribution UK seafarers make to the economy and we remain committed to supporting them. On 24 April we announced a package of support to maintain services on critical freight routes between Great Britain and Northern Ireland and between Great Britain and mainland Europe.

**Karl Turner:**

[\[46624\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many staff employed by P&O Ferries Ltd staff furloughed since 26 March 2020 worked on the port or on ferries from (a) Hull and (b) Dover.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

P&O have around 1,400 staff enrolled on the furlough scheme. The specific number of P&O staff furloughed at the ports or ferries at Hull and Dover is not held by the Department for Transport

**Emma Hardy:**

[\[46786\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on P&O Ferries proposals for 1,100 redundancies among seafarers and maritime staff employed on that company's operations from Dover and Hull.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

I have been in regular discussion with Government colleagues throughout this crisis to ensure government measures are supporting the maritime sector. Since the announcement of the proposed redundancies I have not had specific discussions with Cabinet colleagues on P&O's proposal.

## ■ Ports and Shipping: Coronavirus

**Karl Turner:**

[\[46620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps the Government is taking to protect workers in the (a) shipping and (b) ports sectors from redundancy during the covid-19 pandemic.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

To support maritime businesses and seafarer jobs that have been impacted by the outbreak of Covid-19, the Government has made available a series of unprecedented financial support packages, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). Any employer with a UK bank account and PAYE scheme is eligible for a grant to cover 80% of the wages of its employees, up to £2500 per month.

**Emma Hardy:**

[\[46788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to prevent unemployment among key workers in the (a) shipping and (b) ports sectors as a result of the economic effect of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Department's officials and I have been working closely with businesses across the maritime sector, including shipping and port operators, to understand the impact and challenges they face from the global COVID-19 crisis.

The Government has announced an unprecedented package of financial measures to support businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic, worth £350 billion. We are providing the sector with guidance on how to access the government's business support schemes, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

On 24 April we announced a package of support to maintain services on critical freight routes between Great Britain and Northern Ireland and between Great Britain and mainland Europe. The Government has also put together an emergency support package for lifeline ferry services, with up to £10.5m being allocated to safeguard vital transport links connecting the Isle of Wight and the Isles of Scilly to the British mainland.

**■ Roll-on Roll-off Ships: Freight****Emma Hardy:**[\[46787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much freight has been transported on (a) Hull-Zeebrugge and (b) Hull-Rotterdam roll-on roll-off ferries in each month between December 2019 and April 2020.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The data requested is not currently held by the Department for Transport.

UK port freight data is collected by the Department on a quarterly basis. Statistics on overall tonnage and units by port for the first quarter of 2020 (January to March) will be published on 10 June 2020.

Data on port to country routes, such as Hull-Netherlands, are published annually, 2019 data will be published in Summer 2020 and 2020 data will be published in 2021. Data on specific port to port routes, such as Hull-Zeebrugge, are collected on an annual basis but are not disclosed as the release of such information would be likely to prejudice commercial interests.

**■ Taxis: Coronavirus****John McDonnell:**[\[46520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what advice his Department has provided to cab drivers on protecting themselves and their passengers from the transmission of covid-19; and what financial support the Government has provided to cab drivers to implement requisite protective measures.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Government has published transport guidance on the safe provision of transport services during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are separate guidance documents for transport providers and for passengers. Both guidance documents cover all modes. The guidance sets out Government recommendations on who should be traveling and under what circumstances, and how social distancing rules should be interpreted. It also includes information about cleaning practices. In addition, we have been in contact with industry bodies to support interpretation of the guidance for the taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) sector.

We are aware of the issues being faced by the taxi sector and are working with industry to understand the particular pressures they are facing. The Self-employment Income Support Scheme allows taxi and PHV drivers to claim a taxable grant worth 80% of their trading profits up to a maximum of £2,500 per month for the 3 months from April to June. This is a temporary scheme, but it may be extended.

**TREASURY****■ Agency Workers: Coronavirus****Darren Jones:****[47418]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will review the Government's financial support packages for agency workers who (a) are unable to access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, (b) have recently lost their employment and (c) who are ineligible to claim universal credit because they hold more than £16,000 in savings.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government is committed to protecting people's jobs and incomes as far as possible. In March the Government announced the unprecedented Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, which has so far supported more than 7.5 million jobs and was recently extended to October. Employers can claim for employees on any type of contract, including agency workers.

For individuals who need to rely on the safety net of the welfare state, the Government has announced a significant package of temporary measures to support them. These include a £20 per week increase to the Universal Credit (UC) standard allowance, and for renters, an increase to the Local Housing Allowance rates so that the UC housing element covers the cheapest third of local rents.

In order to ensure that support is targeted at families most in need, households with capital, such as savings, above £16,000 will be ineligible for UC. In such cases, it is likely that they will have alternative means of financial support.

Individuals who have lost their jobs may be entitled to other welfare support. If they have made sufficient National Insurance contributions, they may be eligible for new style Jobseeker's Allowance, which does not take savings into account. More information is available at

[www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/employment-and-benefits-support](http://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/employment-and-benefits-support).

**■ Arts: Coronavirus****Kevin Brennan:****[46566]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what additional financial support he plans to make available for self-employed workers in the creative industries during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Government has announced unprecedented support for business and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency including almost £300 billion of guarantees – equivalent to 15% of UK GDP.

Help for self-employed workers in sectors like the creative industry has been provided through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS). SEISS provides grants to those who are self-employed, or members of partnerships, worth 80% of their trading profits/partnership trading profits, up to a maximum of £2,500 per month.

The value of the grant is based on a 3-year average of trading/partnership trading profits, from the tax years 2016-17 to 2018-19. SEISS is available to those who generate majority of their income from self-employment and who earn less than £50k. Some 95% of people who are mainly self-employed could benefit from SEISS. The scheme went live on 13 May.

In addition, to support those on low incomes at this time, the Government has announced a package of temporary welfare measures, including:

- A £20 per week increase to the Universal Credit (UC) standard allowance and Working Tax Credit basic element.
- An increase in the Local Housing Allowance rates for UC and Housing Benefit claimants.
- A relaxation of UC minimum income floor for all self-employed UC claimants affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19.
- A 3-month mortgage holiday for homeowners

Details of the range of support for individuals affected by COVID-19 is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19>.

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

**[47342]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on the financial support that is required to assist people working in the (a) TV, (b) film and (c) other creative industries during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has regular discussions with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture Media and Sport on a range of topics. The Government has announced the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme to support self-employed individuals adversely affected by the coronavirus outbreak. The scheme opened on 13 May, and those eligible will have the money paid into their bank account by 25 May or within six working days of completing a claim. Creative sector businesses are eligible for the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and the Bounce Back Loan scheme. In addition, the Arts Council in England has made up to £160 million of emergency funding available for cultural organisations and individuals during the outbreak.

## ■ Aviation: Coronavirus

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

**[47185]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to encourage businesses in the aviation sector not to make staff redundant as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Steve Barclay:**

The Government recognises the challenging times facing the aviation sector as a result of COVID-19 and the Chancellor wrote to the aviation sector on 24 March to set out the Government's position and the support measures available. The Government has announced an unprecedented package of support for workers and businesses to protect against the current economic emergency.

This includes the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, which help firms to retain employees. This Scheme allows businesses to put employees on temporary leave, with the Government paying cash grants of 80% of their wages up to a cap of £2,500 per month, providing the business keeps the person employed. On 12 May, the Government announced a major extension to the CJRS which will continue to the end of October, including more flexibility and employer contributions from August as people return to work.

The Government is prepared to enter negotiations with individual companies seeking bespoke support as a last resort, having exhausted other options. However further taxpayer support would only be possible if all commercial avenues have been fully explored, including raising further capital from existing investors and discussing arrangements with financial stakeholders. Any intervention would need to represent value for money for taxpayers.

**■ Bounce Back Loan Scheme****Carla Lockhart:**[\[47477\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many bounce back loans have been approved by (a) Ulster Bank, (b) Danske Bank, (c) Bank of Ireland and (d) AIB since the start of the Bounce Bank Loan Scheme.

**John Glen:**

The Bounce Back Loans Scheme (BBLs), launched on 4 May, helps the smallest businesses access loans of up to £50,000 within days.

HM Treasury carefully monitors the progress of the scheme, including by collecting data on applications and loans directly from accredited lenders. However, this data is commercially sensitive and provided in confidence by each lender, so cannot be disclosed publicly.

Since its launch, the scheme has seen over 464,000 loans worth a total value of over £14bn approved. HM Treasury is now regularly publishing the total number and value of loans approved under the scheme.

**■ British Airways: Redundancy****Nick Fletcher:**[\[46194\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department has taken to encourage the International Airlines Group to make use of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to help prevent British Airways staff from being made redundant.

**Jesse Norman:**

All firms affected by coronavirus are encouraged to treat their employees fairly and carefully. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is already helping firms keep millions of people in employment by covering most wage costs. While there is no obligation for employers to take up the scheme, the scheme is open to all UK employers provided they have created and started a PAYE payroll scheme; enrolled for PAYE online; have a UK bank account; and that HMRC have received an RTI submission notifying payment in respect of that employee on or before 19 March 2020.

■ **Bureaux de Change: Coronavirus****Stuart Anderson:**[\[48634\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what financial support is available for currency exchange bureaus affected by covid-19.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Government has announced unprecedented support for business and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency including almost £300 billion of guarantees – equivalent to 15% of UK GDP. Currency bureaus, along with other businesses, may benefit from a range of support measures including:

- Small business grant funding (SBGF) of £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief
- The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)
- The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)
- The Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBL) for small and micro enterprises
- VAT deferral for up to 12 months
- The Time To Pay scheme, through which businesses in financial distress, and with outstanding tax liabilities, can receive support with their tax affairs
- Protection for commercial leaseholders against automatic forfeiture for non-payment until June 30, 2020

The Business Support website provides further information about how businesses can access the support that has been made available, who is eligible, and how to apply - <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support>.

■ **Business: Coronavirus****Nick Fletcher:**[\[47474\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of enabling local authorities to suspend the collection of business licence fees during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Licensing Act provides no legal framework for suspending or waiving premises licence fees. The Act requires that a premises licence be suspended in cases of non-payment or late payment of annual premises licence fees. However, the Minister of State for Crime and Policing has written to chairs of licensing committees to advise that where businesses experience difficulties in paying premises licence fees as a result of the covid-19 outbreak, licensing authorities should exercise their discretion and consider delaying any suspension of a licence.

**Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[46573\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that sole employees and directors of limited companies are not negatively affected by requirements that businesses will start to pay some of the salaries of staff furloughed on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme from August 2020.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Chancellor has confirmed that more details will be set out on the next stage of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme by the end of the month.

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**[\[46700\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of trends in the proportion of (a) disabled and (b) non-disabled employees who have been furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

Applications for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) opened on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April. By close 11 May 2020, 935,000 employers had submitted claims to HMRC, representing 7.5m furloughed employments and £10.1bn.

This is a new scheme and HMRC are currently working through the analysis they will be able to provide based on the data available. HMRC will make the timescales for publication and the types of data available in due course.

**Alec Shelbrooke:**[\[47253\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether people that are shielding are entitled to be furloughed by employers after 16 April 2020 under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme instead of automatic entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay.

**Jesse Norman:**

Employees who are shielding in line with public health guidance (or need to stay home with someone who is shielding) can be placed on furlough. Use of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is at the discretion of the employer. Individuals who are shielding should speak to their employer about whether they plan to place staff on furlough. If a firm chooses not to furlough these staff, they are entitled to Statutory Sick Pay as a statutory minimum, although many employers will pay more than that in occupational sick pay.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

**[47407]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will issue guidance on the definition of (a) discretionary commissions and (b) bonuses for people employed by umbrella companies in relation to applications to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

The guidance on payments in scope was updated on Thursday 14 May to include more information on what is a discretionary or a non-discretionary payment. The updated "Guidance on how to work out 80% of wages to claim through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme" can be found at [www.gov.uk/guidance/work-out-80-of-your-employees-wages-to-claim-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme#include](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/work-out-80-of-your-employees-wages-to-claim-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme#include). This guidance applies to all employers who are applying to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, including umbrella companies. The Government will continue to keep this guidance under review.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

**[47408]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to enable umbrella companies to apply for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

Any employer can apply for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, providing they have created and started a PAYE payroll scheme on or before 19 March 2020; have enrolled for [PAYE online](#); and have a UK bank account.

Any entity with a UK payroll can apply, including businesses, charities, recruitment agencies and public authorities. If an umbrella company meets these eligibility criteria, they are eligible to apply for the scheme.

**Tom Hunt:**

**[47459]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to allow access to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme for businesses where HMRC had not received the necessary Real Time Information submissions through no fault of the businesses; and what steps he is taking to put in place an appeals system to deal with such cases.

**Jesse Norman:**

Employees furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) must have been on their employer's PAYE payroll on or before 19 March 2020 and HMRC must have received an RTI (Real Time Information) submission notifying payment in respect of that employee on or before 19 March 2020.

The Government set up the CJRS to operate at significant scale and with limited manual intervention. The eligibility requirements are designed to ensure as many people as possible are included in the scheme while allowing HMRC to verify claims using RTI data, mitigating the risk of fraud. Processing claims for the CJRS in cases where HMRC did not have RTI data would significantly slow down the system and increase the risk of fraud.

## ■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Charities

**Neil Gray:**

[\[48469\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect on charities of extending the length of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

On 12 May the Government announced a major extension to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme which will continue to the end of October, including more flexibility and employer contributions from August as people return to work. This will provide clarity for the coming months for all businesses, including charities. The flexibilities introduced will allow businesses and charities to move out of the scheme in a measured way that protects people's incomes and helps support furloughed employees as they return to work. The Government has announced a £750 million support package for charities. £360m will be allocated directly to charities providing essential services and supporting vulnerable people. £310m will support smaller, local charities including through grants distributed by the National Lottery Community Fund. £60m will be allocated to the Devolved Administrations through the Barnett formula. The Government pledged to match whatever the public donated to the BBC Big Night In fundraiser on 23 April, with a minimum of £20m going to the National Emergencies Trust.

## ■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Directors

**Munira Wilson:**

[\[46163\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that company directors who receive part of their income through an salary paid annually are eligible for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

For an employee, including company directors, to be eligible for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, they must have been notified to HMRC on a real-time information (RTI) submission on or before 19 March.

Those paid annually are eligible to claim, as long as they meet the relevant conditions, including being notified to HMRC on an RTI submission on or before 19 March 2020 which relates to a payment of earnings in the 2019/20 tax year.

The 19 March cut-off date allows as many people as possible to be included by going right up to the day before the announcement, while mitigating the risk of fraud.

## ■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Non-departmental Public Bodies

**Damien Moore:**

[\[46791\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme rules allow (a) agencies, (b) the BBC and (c) other quasi non-governmental organisations to furlough their staff.

**Jesse Norman:**

Any entity with a UK payroll can apply for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), including businesses, charities, recruitment agencies and public authorities, providing they have a UK bank account, have enrolled for PAYE online, and have created and started a PAYE payroll scheme on or before 19 March 2020.

As the guidance on the CJRS on GOV.UK sets out, the Government expects that the scheme will not be used by many public sector organisations, as the majority of public sector employees are continuing to provide essential public services or contribute to the response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Where employers receive public funding for staff costs, and that funding is continuing, the Government expects employers to use that money to pay staff in the usual fashion; and not to furlough them.

**■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: South Glamorgan****Stephen Doughty:**[\[46677\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people have received support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme in (a) Cardiff and (b) Vale of Glamorgan in each week since that scheme commenced; and how much has been paid out to those claimants during that period.

**Jesse Norman:**

Applications for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) opened on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April. By close 11 May 2020, 935,000 employers had submitted claims to HMRC representing 7.5m furloughed employments and £10.1bn. This is a new scheme and HMRC are currently working through the analysis they will be able to provide based on the data available. HMRC will make the timescales for publication and the types of data available in due course.

**■ Debts: Developing Countries****Rachael Maskell:**[\[46737\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with his international counterparts on the potential merits of cancelling global debt in response to the covid-19 pandemic.

**John Glen:**

It is vital that creditors work together to ensure that countries especially vulnerable to the pandemic can protect their citizens and economies. The Chancellor joined his G20 counterparts to commit to a temporary suspension on debt service repayments from the poorest countries. The government will continue to work through the G20 and Paris Club of official creditors to monitor sovereign debt vulnerabilities closely, and will respond to emerging balance of payments issues in coordination with the international financial institutions, the Paris Club, and commercial lenders.

At Budget, the Chancellor announced a leading contribution of up to £150m to the IMF's Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust, which will provide the world's

poorest countries relief on IMF repayments. The government has committed to double its existing £2.2bn loan to the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust to provide financial assistance to the poorest and most vulnerable members in their fight against COVID-19.

The UK recently led the development of a G20 Action Plan to support the global economy through the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chancellor will continue to have regular engagement with G20 counterparts on the international community's response to COVID-19.

## ■ Economic Situation: Coronavirus

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[46065\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what financial support he plans to make available to help the economy recover from the effects of the covid-19 outbreak; and how that support will be allocated.

**John Glen:**

The unprecedented actions we have taken to support millions of families, businesses, and self-employed people are designed to ensure that viable businesses are not forced to close, that people's jobs are protected, and that households' incomes are supported.

Both the OBR and the Bank of England agree that the actions we've taken are the right actions that will help to mitigate the impact of the virus on our economy - and that without our package of measures things would be worse. The Government will continue to monitor developments to understand the impacts of COVID-19 on individuals and businesses.

The Government will support people back into work as the economy reopens, and has announced that the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will be extended to the end of October.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[46735\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what (a) steps he is taking and (b) methodologies he is using to assess the economic impact on (i) each local authority area and (ii) York of the covid-19 outbreak.

**John Glen:**

The Government is committed to supporting all regions and nations of the UK through the COVID-19 outbreak.

HM Treasury is working with local leaders, including those in the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership, as well as the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and other departments, to understand the impacts of the outbreak on the region.

**■ Equitable Life Assurance Society: Compensation**

**Sammy Wilson:** [46023]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent steps he has taken to ensure that victims of the Equitable Life scandal receive full compensation.

**Sammy Wilson:** [46024]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the accuracy of compensation payments to people affected by the collapse of Equitable Life.

**Sammy Wilson:** [46025]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will ensure that the data needed to make further payments to Equitable Life policyholders is retained.

**John Glen:**

There are no plans to reopen the Payment Scheme or review the £1.5 billion funding allocation previously made to it. The Equitable Life Payment Scheme closed to claims in 2015 and further guidance on the status of the Payment Scheme after closure is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equitable-life-payment-scheme#closure-of-the-scheme>.

The methodology for calculating payments to Equitable Life policyholders was published in 2011 and can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equitable-life-payment-scheme-design>.

The relevant data will be retained as long as it is legal to do so.

**■ Fuels: Excise Duties**

**Sir Mike Penning:** [45996]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 11 May 2020 to Question 42938 on Fuels: Excise Duties, what estimate he has made of the number of SMEs that would benefit from a temporary suspension of fuel duty for the logistics sector during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Sir Mike Penning:** [45997]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 11 May 2020 to Question 42939 on Fuels: Excise Duties, if he will make an estimate of the cost to the public purse of suspending fuel duty on a monthly basis for the logistics industry.

**Sir Mike Penning:** [45998]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 11 May 2020 to Question 42940 on Fuels: Excise Duties, if he will make a comparative assessment of the level of fuel duty derogations available to the French logistics sector; and whether those derogations can be applied in the UK as part of the recovery from the covid-19 outbreak.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

This Government is committed to support the logistics sector and haulage businesses in the United Kingdom, which are an essential part of our economy.

Budget announced that fuel duty would be frozen for a tenth consecutive year. This has saved the average van driver £18 and the average haulier £113 per tank of fuel relative to 2011. To deliver this saving for businesses and households, the Government has foregone already £67bn and will forego a further £46bn by the end of 2025 compared to fuel duty rising in line with inflation. Furthermore, HGV Vehicle Excise Duty has been frozen since 2001.

Fuel duty raised £28.0bn in 2018-19, contributing to meeting the costs of vital public services such as the NHS, that are playing a crucial role in aiding the Government's economic response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## ■ **Hydrogen: Renewable Energy**

**Alex Sobel:**

[\[47436\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to support growth in the production of green hydrogen in the UK.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Government continues to take its environmental responsibilities very seriously.

We are committed to meeting our climate change targets, including net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Hydrogen could be an important part of the transition to net zero.

We are investing in innovation, providing up to £121m to support a range of projects to explore and develop the potential of low carbon hydrogen. This includes production, storage and end use in heat, industry and transport.

In 2019 the Government published a consultation on business models for Carbon Capture and Storage, which sought views on support for low-carbon hydrogen. The response to the consultation will be published in due course.

## ■ **Mortgages: Coronavirus**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[46741\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with representatives of mortgage lenders on extending mortgage payment holidays in line with the term of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme during the covid-19 outbreak.

**John Glen:**

The government is working closely with lenders and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to ensure that people are supported during these challenging times, especially if they are facing financial distress.

On 22 May we announced that lenders will continue to show forbearance to borrowers that need it, this includes the option for them to apply for a mortgage payment holiday up until the 31 October, in line with the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS).

**■ Pay: Coronavirus****Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[47458\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that (a) furloughed workers who are usually paid (i) variable salaries and (ii) tronc and (b) other furloughed workers receive a level of income at least equivalent to the minimum wage.

**Mr Stephen Morgan:** [\[47504\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the financial effect on supply teachers who are employed by umbrella companies of receiving 80 per cent of the national minimum wage as a result of a standard clause in umbrella company contracts during the covid-18 outbreak.

**Jesse Norman:**

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) is calculated on the basis of hours worked, and furloughed workers will not be working any hours for their employer, although they will remain employed by them. Furloughed workers will be paid the lower of 80% of their salary or £2,500, even if, based on their usual working hours, this would be below the NMW. Employers can top up these payments voluntarily.

The Government is also supporting people on low incomes who need to rely on the welfare system through a significant package of temporary measures. These include a £20 per week increase to the Universal Credit standard allowance and Working Tax Credit basic element, and a nearly £1bn increase in support for renters through increases to the Local Housing Allowance rates for Universal Credit and Housing Benefit claimants. These changes will benefit new and existing claimants. Anyone can check their eligibility and apply for Universal Credit by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>.

**■ PAYE****Rachael Maskell:** [\[46721\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answers of 11 May 2020 to Questions 41104 and 41109, when HMRC will make that data available on PAYE in relation to employees that started work with an employer between 28 February 2020 and 19 March 2020.

**Jesse Norman:**

Figures based on complete data are not yet available. The data submitted by employers omits start and leaving dates for a proportion of employments, and to provide complete and full figures it would be necessary to estimate these dates. This has not been possible in the time available to answer this question.

**■ Postgraduate Education: Coronavirus****Daniel Zeichner:** [\[47321\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of allowing postdoctoral researchers in receipt of URKI grants to be furloughed

when their research involving feasibility studies has had to be paused as a result of their needing to collect data from a medical setting.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) is available for researchers who meet the eligibility criteria (as set out in HMRC and DfE guidance for Higher Education Institutions). This includes research staff directly supported by public grants where they are not able to conduct research due to non-pharmaceutical interventions.

Staff costs for that period may not be claimed from the public research funder. The CJRS is not available for researchers who are not on the PAYE payroll.

■ **Public Houses: Coronavirus**

**Anthony Browne:**

[\[46185\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will take steps to ensure that pub tenants are supported in meeting rent obligations and other payments to their landlords whilst they are unable to trade normally during the imposition of longer-term social distancing measures in response to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Government recognises the current challenges facing commercial tenants and the significant impact on our communities, town centres and businesses. The Government will continue to work with and engage the sector to ensure that we are supporting the businesses that make our high street and town centres successful including pubs. The Chancellor has announced unprecedented support for businesses affected by Coronavirus such as pub tenants. This package includes grants for those occupying properties for retail, hospitality and leisure as well as business rates holidays. Building on this, the Government have also taken steps to protect commercial tenants from eviction as well as to safeguard UK high streets against aggressive debt recovery actions during the coronavirus pandemic.

■ **Religious Buildings: Coronavirus**

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[45951\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions his Department has had with representatives of religious institutions on the financial difficulties that places of worship are experiencing as a result of the covid-19 lockdown; and if he will make a statement.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

While HMT is concerned with the financial sustainability of faith organisations, engagement with them on difficulties relating to Covid-19 is handled by the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government.

**■ Seasonal Workers: Coronavirus****John Nicolson:**[\[47331\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has plans to provide bespoke (a) grants or (b) loans to self-employed seasonal workers in the (i) creative, (ii) hospitality and (iii) tourism sectors that are ineligible for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme as a result of the 50 per cent income threshold.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government recognises the extreme disruption the necessary actions to combat COVID-19 are having on businesses and sectors like tourism, hospitality and creative industries. The Treasury is working closely with employers, delivery partners, industry groups and other government departments to understand the long-term effects of social distancing across all key areas of the economy.

The Chancellor has already announced unprecedented support for individuals and businesses, to protect against the current economic emergency. These include a package of welfare measures; grant schemes such as the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund and the Discretionary Grant Fund; a range of Government-backed and guaranteed loan schemes; the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS). The SEISS is intended to support individuals who rely primarily on their trading profits from self-employment and have been adversely affected by COVID-19.

The Government is keeping the exit strategy of all schemes under review as it responds to the pandemic and considers the longer-term economic recovery.

**■ Self-employed: Coronavirus****Kevin Brennan:**[\[46567\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to calculate levels of covid-19 related grants to the self-employed on the basis of turnover rather than profits.

**Kevin Brennan:**[\[46568\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect on the finances of self-employed people working in the creative industries of calculating levels of covid-19 related grants on the basis of profits rather than turnover.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) allows eligible individuals to claim a taxable grant worth 80 per cent of their average monthly trading profits, paid out in a single instalment covering three months, and capped at £7,500 in total. This scheme is intended to support individuals who rely primarily on their trading profits from self-employment and who have been adversely affected by COVID-19.

The self-employed are a very diverse population. They have a wide mix of turnover and profits, with monthly and annual variations even in normal times. The SEISS is based on trading profits, as providing support on the basis of an individual's past turnover would be unfair. For example, an individual could have had a high turnover,

but have made a loss. A turnover-based system would provide more support to such an individual than to an individual with a lower turnover who made a profit.

More information about how income and trading profits are calculated can be found at [www.gov.uk/guidance/how-hmrc-works-out-total-income-and-trading-profits-for-the-self-employment-income-support-scheme](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-hmrc-works-out-total-income-and-trading-profits-for-the-self-employment-income-support-scheme).

## ■ Self-employment Income Support Scheme

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[45976]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to his statement of 12 May 2020 on Covid-19: Economic Package announcing his extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to the end of October, what plans he has to announce a similar extension for the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme.

**Angela Crawley:**

[46718]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has plans to extend the duration of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

The UK has one of the most generous self-employed COVID-19 support schemes in the world. The Self-Employment Income Support Scheme opened on 13 May, ahead of schedule, and it provides support worth up to £7,500 each to millions of individuals. Recipients will have the grants in their bank accounts within six working days of making an application.

The Chancellor indicated that the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme would be temporary when he announced it at the end of March, and that it could be extended if necessary. The Government is keeping this under review.

As the economy re-opens, the Government will consider how to adjust support in a way that ensures people can get back to work, protecting both the UK economy and livelihoods.

**Alberto Costa:**

[47338]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of people who are ineligible for assistance from the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme due to their public sector pension accounting for over 50 per cent of their income.

**Jesse Norman:**

HMRC are unable to report from the information held how many self-employed people may not be eligible for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme as a result of their public sector pension.

The SEISS, including the £50,000 threshold and comparison between trading profits and other income, is designed to target those most in need, and who are most reliant on their self-employment income.

Some 95 per cent of people who receive the majority of their income from self-employment could benefit from this scheme.

Those who are not eligible for the SEISS may still benefit from other support. Individuals may have access to a range of grants and loans depending on their circumstances, and the SEISS supplements the significant support already announced for UK businesses, including the Bounce Back Loan Scheme for small businesses, the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, and the deferral of tax payments.

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

[\[47343\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to extend the Self Employed Income Support Scheme to (a) newly self employed and (b) new start-ups and enable qualification for that scheme to be income assessed on an early submission of a 2019-20 tax return.

**Jesse Norman:**

The new Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) helps those adversely affected by COVID-19. It means the UK has one of the most generous self-employed COVID-19 support schemes in the world.

It has not been possible to include those who began trading after the 2018-19 tax year in the SEISS. This was a very difficult decision and it was taken for practical reasons.

The Government recognises that those who started trading more recently will not have submitted a tax return for the 2018-19 tax year, and it considered alternative approaches. HMRC would not be able to distinguish genuine self-employed individuals who started trading in 2019-20 from fake applications by fraudulent operators and organised criminal gangs seeking to exploit the SEISS.

The self-employed can benefit from the Government's relaxation of the earnings rules (known as the Minimum Income Floor) in Universal Credit. They may also have access to a range of grants and loans depending on their circumstances.

## ■ Self-employment Income Support Scheme: Immigrants

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

[\[46098\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether self-employed people who have No Recourse To Public Funds as an immigration condition are able to apply for the Self-employed Income Support Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

The revised guidance published alongside the legal direction is clear that grants under the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) are not counted as 'access to public funds' and that taxpayers on all categories of visa can claim the SEISS grant. This treatment of SEISS grant payments aligns with that of payments from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

## ■ Self-employment Income Support Scheme: Maternity Leave

**Mhairi Black:**

[\[46095\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will provide financial support to self-employed mothers whose average earnings will be less as a result of taking maternity leave during the timeframe for eligibility for accessing the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Self-Employed Income Support Scheme has been designed to deliver support as quickly and effectively as possible to millions of individuals. The Government understands the challenges faced by those with periods of maternity leave and the existing averaging calculation takes account of periods of reduced profits. The Government will continue to work with stakeholders to make sure funding reaches those who need it most, keeping all policies under review, while ensuring that any potential changes do not risk the wider delivery of Government schemes.

## ■ Stamp Duties: Reform

**Alexander Stafford:**

[\[46827\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of reforming Stamp Duty.

**Alexander Stafford:**

[\[46828\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to reform Stamp Duty.

**Jesse Norman:**

At Autumn Statement 2014 the Government reformed SDLT on residential properties, cutting the tax for 98 per cent of buyers who pay it, unless they are purchasing additional property. Stamp Duty Land Tax continues to be an important source of government revenue, raising several billion pounds each year to help pay for the essential services the Government provides. Any changes to SDLT would have to be carefully considered given the potential effect on public finances.

The Government does not currently have any plans to change the amount of Stamp Duty Land Tax on property purchases. However, the Government keeps all taxes under review as part of the usual tax policy making process.

## ■ Tax Yields: Coronavirus

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[46062\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment has he made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the composition of tax receipts for the period of the covid-19 outbreak in each sector.

**Jesse Norman:**

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic remains uncertain. Alongside published OBR scenarios, the Government keeps tax receipts under review, to ensure the sustainability of the public finances.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) publish monthly tax receipts statistics which include information on tax receipts for March; the first month significantly affected by the current COVID-19 pandemic.

HMRC also publish annual statistics relating to Income Tax, VAT and Corporation Tax by sector. However, due to data lags these do not yet include the period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**■ Taxation: Self-assessment****Steve McCabe:**[\[47177\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that people without access to the internet in their home are not excluded from accessing and completing their tax return online.

**Jesse Norman:**

Without internet access at home, a taxpayer could use an agent, telephoning through figures for the agent to input online. Alternatively, anyone can call HMRC and request a blank return and complete it manually.

**■ Tobacco: Smuggling****Bob Blackman:**[\[48391\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans the Government has for the tobacco track and trace system in the UK at the end of the transition period; and if he will make a statement.

**Bob Blackman:**[\[48392\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government will take to enforce the deadline of 20 May 2020 whereby cigarettes and hand-rolling tobacco products that are not sold through cannot be sold.

**Bob Blackman:**[\[48393\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans the Government has for the tobacco track and trace system at the end of the sell-through period on 20 May 2020.

**Bob Blackman:**[\[48394\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what will happen to non-compliant tobacco track and trace stock on 20 May 2020; and how compliance with that deadline will be enforced during the covid-19 lockdown.

**Bob Blackman:**

[\[48395\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of tobacco (a) manufacturers', (b) wholesalers' and (c) retailers' level of compliance with the tobacco track and trace 20 May 2020 sell through period deadline.

**Bob Blackman:**

[\[48396\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government has made an assessment of the potential effect on levels of counterfeit goods of a suspension of the tobacco track and trace system at the end of the transition period.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

At the end of the transition period, HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) will need to make some changes to the tobacco track and trace system for it to continue to operate. The changes will be kept to the minimum necessary to enable the UK to have full regulatory control.

The government has not made an assessment of the potential effect on levels of counterfeit goods of a suspension of the track and trace system as it remains committed to having a system in place at the end of the transition period.

The government has no plans to make any changes to the end of the sell through period. From 20 May 2020, all cigarettes and hand-rolling tobacco manufactured in or imported into the UK must be marked with a unique identifier code and security label. Businesses with any unmarked stock after this date should return it in accordance with the existing procedures they have in place with their suppliers.

Product which fails to comply with the requirements after the sell through period will be liable to forfeiture. Where HMRC is satisfied that a business is not complying with the requirements it may issue a notice for the business to remedy any non-compliance.

To promote and assess compliance across the tobacco supply chain, HMRC has been working with tobacco manufacturers, retailers and relevant trade bodies to make them aware of their requirements and the sell through period. A key indicator of industry compliance is the high volume of businesses registered to use the system. As of the end of April, over 42,000 economic operators and approximately 65,000 premises were registered on the system.

It would not be appropriate for HMRC to publish detailed information about their operational response during the COVID-19 outbreak. However, the public can be assured that HMRC will support legitimate businesses and individuals while taking tough action against serious criminal activity and those evading and avoiding paying tax.

It is right that HMRC does everything possible to protect individuals, businesses and the economy during this extremely difficult time.

**■ Travel: Coronavirus****Andrew Percy:****[47243]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of whether additional financial support is required by the travel industry due to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Government has announced unprecedented support for business and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency including almost £300 billion of guarantees – equivalent to 15% of UK GDP. The travel industry, along with other businesses, may also benefit from a range of support measures including:

- A 12-month business rates holiday for all eligible retail, leisure and hospitality businesses in England
- Small business grant funding (SBGF) of £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief
- The retail, hospitality and leisure grant fund (RHLGF)
- The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)
- The Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)
- The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)
- The Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS)
- The Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBL) for small and micro enterprises
- VAT deferral for up to 12 months
- The Time To Pay scheme, through which businesses in financial distress, and with outstanding tax liabilities, can receive support with their tax affairs
- Protection for commercial leaseholders against automatic forfeiture for non-payment until June 30, 2020

The Business Support website provides further information about how businesses can access the support that has been made available, who is eligible and how to apply - <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support>.

The Government's economic strategy will be closely coordinated with the public health strategy to ensure a safe return to economic activity. We will continue to monitor developments to understand the economic impacts of COVID-19, including on industries and sectors, and consider how the Government can best support their recovery.

**Treasury: Chief Scientific Advisers****Greg Clark:**[\[48356\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many meetings (a) he and (b) his predecessor had with his Department's Chief Scientific Adviser (i) from 1 September to 30 November 2019 and (ii) from 1 December 2019 to 29 February 2020.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

HM Treasury is committed to ensuring that we access the very best scientific expertise. The Director for the Enterprise and Growth Unit, who is responsible for public science funding, acts as HM Treasury's Chief Scientific Adviser and meets with the Chancellor of the Exchequer regularly.

**WOMEN AND EQUALITIES****Government Departments: Equality****Marsha De Cordova:**[\[47453\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will publish the accessibility guidance that issued by his Department to the (a) Head of Digital Communications and (b) Director of Communications in each Government Department on their accessibility obligations under the Equality Act.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

It is vital that public health information reaches everyone across the United Kingdom. The Cabinet Office has issued internal guidance to every government department reiterating their duties under the Equality Act 2010. This is to ensure that all communications are fully accessible in order that they reach everyone in appropriate, inclusive formats.

We have already shared this guidance with the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) and Action on Hearing Loss (AoHL) because we have been working closely with them during this time.

The internal guidance to departments will be placed in the House of Commons Library.

**WORK AND PENSIONS****Child Maintenance Service: Coronavirus****Jonathan Reynolds:**[\[46051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many staff from the Child Maintenance Service have been temporarily redeployed to other service areas in her Department in response to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mims Davies:**

We have received an unprecedented number of benefit claims and are prioritising getting people that support, while maintaining an essential Child Maintenance Service.

To ensure claims are processed and people are paid on time we have already moved over 8,000 existing staff from across DWP to help with that work.

We are clear that no parent should be using this time as an excuse not to pay what they owe. Those found to be abusing the system at this difficult time could find themselves subject to the full extent of our enforcement powers.

At the start of the situation within the Child Maintenance Group, 1667 people were deployed.

**Housing Benefit****Richard Fuller:**[\[47231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she plans to exclude future increases to the State Pension from the calculation of income for the purpose of housing benefit eligibility.

**Will Quince:**

Housing Benefit is an income-related benefit which is intended to assist people who need help to pay their rent. Any income that is available to meet those expenses, such as a State Pension, is normally taken fully into account when working out how much Housing Benefit can be paid.

There are no plans to amend regulations to allow a disregard for State Pension income, including any increases each year.

**Industrial Health and Safety****Seema Malhotra:**[\[46078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to ensure that complaints made to Health & Safety Executive on workplace risk are not prevented from progressing because employees are concerned about disclosing to employers that a complaint has been made.

**Mims Davies:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* Under normal conditions, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) would cover a site visit to investigate a complaint that cannot be disclosed, by telling the business that they have been selected for an inspection. However, during the coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, HSE has not carried out routine pro-active inspections and has therefore not been able to follow concerns unless the fact of the complaint being made can be disclosed. Now that movement restrictions have been eased, inspectors are visiting workplaces following up any reports or concerns about safety in the workplace including over Covid and ensuring compliance. On the spot inspections are expected to resume imminently.

For any disclosable concerns that HSE does follow up, it will always maintain anonymity if the complainant makes this request.

HSE has stated its policy about handling non-disclosable concerns in the first phase of pandemic restrictions on its [web page for reporting a complaint](#) where it also promises to review the position as the restrictions ease.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

**[46123]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many spot checks have been conducted by the Health and Safety Executive in each of the last 10 years.

**Mims Davies:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* Information on the number of proactive inspections carried out from 2011/12 is published in the Health and Safety Executive's Annual Reports and Accounts which can be found here. HSE aims to publish figures for 2019/20 during the summer. Figures on the numbers of inspections were not required as part of the Health and Safety Executive's targets or performance measures prior to 2011/12 and were therefore not collated.

## ■ Industrial Health and Safety: Coronavirus

**Seema Malhotra:**

**[46076]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of the capability of the Health and Safety Executive to discharge its responsibilities during the covid-19 pandemic.

**Seema Malhotra:**

**[46079]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the capability of the Health and Safety Executive to discharge its responsibilities during the covid-19 pandemic.

**Mims Davies:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is playing a crucial role in the Government's response to covid-19, including its continued work with trade unions, employers and stakeholders to help ensure workplaces are safe environments. The Government is making additional funding available to support covid-19 activity. Ministers meet regularly with senior officials from HSE to discuss how it is discharging its responsibilities during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Seema Malhotra:**

**[46081]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to ensure that the Health and Safety Executive proactively inspects workplaces where employees are known to be at heightened risk from covid-19.

**Mims Davies:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* Following the Government's announcement that additional funds are being made available to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to support their work, and the publication of guidance by the Department for Business

Energy and Industrial Strategy on 11th May 2020 on working safely during the coronavirus pandemic, inspectors are visiting workplaces to follow up any reports or concerns about safety in the workplace and on the spot inspections are expected to resume imminently.

HSE takes a risk-based approach when identifying workplaces to inspect. In addition, HSE continues to address reported workplace concerns with employers, including those relating to employees with a heightened risk from Covid-19.

#### ■ Jobcentre Plus: Coronavirus

**Seema Malhotra:**

[\[46669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether Job Centre Plus staff who are categorised as extremely vulnerable during the covid-19 outbreak are required to go into the workplace.

**Mims Davies:**

Any staff who are in the extremely vulnerable categories are not permitted to go into the office and working from home where possible. The Department has procured significantly more portable computers to expand our home working capacity. We are taking all practical steps to protect the health and safety of those colleagues working in our offices, e.g. through social distancing. We will continue to follow all government guidance on keeping our staff safe.

#### ■ Members: Correspondence

**Mr David Jones:**

[\[47216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average time taken was for a substantive response to letters to her office from hon. Members in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Mims Davies:**

The information is not available in the format requested.

The volume of correspondence to the Department's Ministers is currently three times higher than it was prior to the coronavirus pandemic. In recent weeks the Department has also redeployed thousands of staff to manage the significant increase in claims for benefits and to ensure that claimants are paid in a timely manner. The Department ensures that urgent cases raised by hon. Members are prioritised and is taking steps to provide substantive replies in as short a time as possible.

#### ■ Poverty: Children

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

[\[46694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to ensure that there is no increase in levels of child poverty as a result of the economic effects of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Will Quince:**

This Government committed to supporting everyone through this emergency and has announced an unprecedented programme of support to mitigate the strain that Covid-19 is putting on households, livelihoods, businesses and our nation's economy. This includes the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, both of which are helping to protect people's livelihoods.

We have also taken steps to strengthen our safety net welfare system, which will provide over £6.5bn of additional support. Measures include:

- Increasing Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit by over £1,000 a year for this financial year, benefiting over 4 million households.
- Increasing Local Housing Allowance rates - putting an average of £600 into people's pockets.

**■ Redundancy Pay****Stephen Farry:**[\[46823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether redundancy payments with limited tax liability under the Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003 are treated as capital in the assessment period in which they are received, as opposed to income under Regulation 54 of the Universal Credit Regulations 2013; whether those payments are not counted as earnings or surplus earnings for the purposes of a universal credit award; and whether those payments are assessed as capital for that award.

**Will Quince:**

For those who are made redundant and make a claim to Universal Credit (UC), their redundancy payments, with limited tax liability under the Income Tax (earnings and Pensions) Act 2003, are treated as capital. A claimant's capital is taken into account to determine their entitlement to UC and in the calculation of their UC award.

If capital exceeds £16,000 (after having deducted allowable disregards, such as, personal injury compensation payments) there will be no entitlement to UC.

Redundancy payments treated as capital are therefore not taken into account as earnings, nor would the surplus earnings rules apply to them.

**■ Social Security Benefits****Philip Davies:**[\[46014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will take steps to introduce an escalation route for complex benefits cases referred to her Department by Macmillan Cancer Support and other advice services so that urgent benefits cases can be resolved more swiftly.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

We already have escalation routes in place. We have had assurance from Area Directors that escalation routes are open and working and have sufficient capacity. We are exploring alternatives to further refine the process.

We have previously advised Macmillan if they could provide specific examples of where a Jobcentre has not been able to support them or has not had capacity, that these could be shared with their National Account Manager within National Employer & Partnership Team in DWP.

In addition, we have now mobilised 10 senior safeguarding leaders who between them will cover all our regions, these roles are temporary and will be reviewed in 3 months. These leaders don't replace any of our existing routes into DWP where there is a concern about a customer, but they are there to be the region's escalation point if a solution cannot be found locally, or it is a serious and complex case. These leaders will also be active members of multi-agency boards in their geography.

### ■ Social Security Benefits: Surveys

**Alex Sobel:**

[\[45418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will publish the questionnaire used for the Claimant Experience Survey 2018-19.

**Mims Davies:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* We do not have a copy of the questionnaire available in a suitable format that fully reflects both the questions asked and routing of this survey (it is scripted for telephone interviewing). We have, however, produced a Word document that details the full set of questions as at quarter 3 of the survey year in 2018/19, which relates to questions being asked in the latest fieldwork period.

Please note that:

- the questions asked have changed over time; and
- some questions are only asked of a sub-sample of claimants and this is not reflected in this document.

### ■ Social Security Benefits: Underpayments

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[47373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to tackle the under-payment errors in benefits.

**Will Quince:**

The Department understands the importance of paying the right money to each of its customers and will continue to tackle the causes of underpayments, as part of the wider approach to ensure claimants are paid the amount that they are entitled to.

The majority of underpayments arise through claimants failing to correctly report their circumstances to the Department. We work hard to make it as easy as possible for claimants to understand their obligations.

We also make use of data matching which allows us to identify potential discrepancies in claims. This allows us to ensure these claims are updated, and that claimants receive their correct entitlement.

In addition, the Department is focused on reducing Departmental error. Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, the Department's Quality Assurance Team reviewed a sample of all cases to help better understand the cause of Departmental error and identify the highest risk errors so action could be taken. However, in order to deal with the significant increase in the number of claims being made for Universal Credit and other benefits, many of these staff were redeployed to support benefit paying operations. This work will recommence as soon as resources allow.

## ■ Universal Credit

**Mohammad Yasin:**

**[46119]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of universal credit on childcare payments.

**Will Quince:**

The Government is committed to helping parents into work and childcare costs should not be a barrier to this.

Universal Credit pays up to 85% of childcare costs, compared to up to 70% in legacy benefits and can be claimed up to a month before starting a job. In cases where people need to pay for childcare upfront, prior to starting work, Work Coaches can use the Flexible Support Fund to meet these costs until their first wage is received.

**Maria Eagle:**

**[47193]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many alternative payment arrangements for payment of universal credit were made with claimants in (a) March and (b) April 2020.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 20 May 2020]:* This information is intended for future publication

Statistics on Alternative Payment Arrangements for March and April will be published on 11 August 2020 and can be found at <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

## ■ Universal Credit and Welfare Tax Credits

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

**[46695]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she has had discussions with children's organisations on a potential increase in the child element of universal credit and child tax credit; and if she will make a statement.

**Will Quince:**

The child element of universal credit and child tax credit have recently increased as part of the annual uprating of benefits.

**■ Universal Credit: Coronavirus****Stella Creasy:** [45168]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will publish data on new claims for universal credit since the covid-19 social distancing guidelines were introduced, at a constituency level.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 18 May 2020]:* The Department publishes Management Information each week on the numbers of declarations to Universal Credit since the 1 March.

This information is available here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-declarations-claims-and-advances-management-information>.

Data at Constituency Level is not available.

**■ Universal Credit: Disability****Vicky Foxcroft:** [46747]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many disabled people have made new claims for universal credit since 23 March 2020.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Currently we do not report aggregate information about whether or not a claimant has a disability or a specific health condition and to collate and quality assure this information would incur disproportionate costs. We do not store whether a claimant meets the legal definition of having a disability in a way that is readily available to analysts, however claimants are invited to provide The Department with the details of any health conditions that restrict their ability to work and this information, when verified, will be used to tailor the available support.

The Department takes seriously the need to support claimants with a disability. We are committed to supporting those with disabilities or those with a restricted ability to work, by ensuring that claimants are treated with the utmost sensitivity and care, when making a claim to Universal Credit. Universal Credit provides enhanced, personalised support for all claimants, including those with disabilities. Our work coaches receive training to ensure they can offer effective support to different claimant groups. This enables them to provide tailored support and gain an excellent understanding of whether their claimants have conditions that require extra support.

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [46748]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many disabled people are (a) in receipt of universal credit, (b) have received the coronavirus uplift to universal credit and (c) are in receipt of (i) Employment and Support Allowance, (ii) Housing Benefit and (iii) Jobseekers' Allowance.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

The information for Employment & Support Allowance, Housing Benefit and Jobseeker's Allowance is not readily available and to provide it would incur

disproportionate cost. However, figures are available by medical condition for Employment and Support Allowance claimants, and can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>.

The Department does not hold information on the disability status of Universal Credit claimants. However, figures are available at a household level for Universal Credit claims containing a 'Limited Capability for Work element', and can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>.

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

#### ■ Universal Credit: South Glamorgan

**Stephen Doughty:**

**[46676]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many new applications for universal credit have been processed in (a) Cardiff and (b) Vale of Glamorgan in each month since 1 January 2020.

**Will Quince:**

Statistics on Universal Credit claims can be found on Stat-Xplore:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>.

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

#### ■ Universal Credit: Tees Valley

**Alex Cunningham:**

**[47286]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many new universal credit claimants there were in each of the five local authority areas within the Tees Valley in each of the last three months.

**Will Quince:**

Information on new Universal Credit claims is not available by local authority.

However, data surrounding starts to UC by postcode area is published online and can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

This includes data on the number of new Universal Credit claims in the postcode areas of Cleveland and Darlington up to 9<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

## ■ Universal Credit: Wales

Jessica Morden:

[\[39515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have submitted claims for universal credit in Wales from 23 March 2020 by local authority area.

Will Quince:

*[Holding answer 29 April 2020]:* Number of Universal Credit declarations in Wales 01 March 2020 - 12 May 2020

	INDIVIDUALS	HOUSEHOLDS
<b>Total 1 Mar to 12 May</b>	<b>122,160</b>	<b>95,080</b>
Sun 01 Mar 2020	240	200
Mon 02 Mar 2020	820	690
Tue 03 Mar 2020	710	590
Wed 04 Mar 2020	680	580
Thu 05 Mar 2020	640	530
Fri 06 Mar 2020	530	440
Sat 07 Mar 2020	170	140
Sun 08 Mar 2020	190	160
Mon 09 Mar 2020	720	620
Tue 10 Mar 2020	730	610
Wed 11 Mar 2020	700	580
Thu 12 Mar 2020	630	530
Fri 13 Mar 2020	570	470
Sat 14 Mar 2020	260	210
Sun 15 Mar 2020	300	240
Mon 16 Mar 2020	1,070	880
Tue 17 Mar 2020	1,800	1,480
Wed 18 Mar 2020	2,450	2,010
Thu 19 Mar 2020	2,970	2,370
Fri 20 Mar 2020	3,560	2,810

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	INDIVIDUALS	HOUSEHOLDS
Sat 21 Mar 2020	2,310	1,790
Sun 22 Mar 2020	1,610	1,250
Mon 23 Mar 2020	5,720	4,410
Tue 24 Mar 2020	6,040	4,640
Wed 25 Mar 2020	4,230	3,280
Thu 26 Mar 2020	4,190	3,260
Fri 27 Mar 2020	6,860	4,860
Sat 28 Mar 2020	2,970	2,160
Sun 29 Mar 2020	2,000	1,450
Mon 30 Mar 2020	5,140	3,800
Tue 31 Mar 2020	3,670	2,780
Wed 01 Apr 2020	3,740	2,790
Thu 02 Apr 2020	4,150	3,120
Fri 03 Apr 2020	2,830	2,150
Sat 04 Apr 2020	1,400	1,060
Sun 05 Apr 2020	1,140	880
Mon 06 Apr 2020	2,960	2,310
Tue 07 Apr 2020	2,340	1,820
Wed 08 Apr 2020	2,230	1,720
Thu 09 Apr 2020	1,910	1,500
Fri 10 Apr 2020	1,330	1,040
Sat 11 Apr 2020	810	630
Sun 12 Apr 2020	650	510
Mon 13 Apr 2020	1,090	850
Tue 14 Apr 2020	2,080	1,610
Wed 15 Apr 2020	1,850	1,440

	INDIVIDUALS	HOUSEHOLDS
Thu 16 Apr 2020	1,780	1,370
Fri 17 Apr 2020	1,670	1,290
Sat 18 Apr 2020	870	660
Sun 19 Apr 2020	610	470
Mon 20 Apr 2020	1,570	1,250
Tue 21 Apr 2020	1,320	1,050
Wed 22 Apr 2020	1,290	1,030
Thu 23 Apr 2020	1,350	1,080
Fri 24 Apr 2020	1,140	900
Sat 25 Apr 2020	560	450
Sun 26 Apr 2020	480	400
Mon 27 Apr 2020	1,350	1,070
Tue 28 Apr 2020	1,280	1,030
Wed 29 Apr 2020	1,170	950
Thu 30 Apr 2020	1,240	1,010
Fri 01 May 2020	1,070	880
Sat 02 May 2020	490	390
Sun 03 May 2020	470	380
Mon 04 May 2020	1,140	940
Tue 05 May 2020	1,030	850
Wed 06 May 2020	1,030	860
Thu 07 May 2020	830	710
Fri 08 May 2020	510	420
Sat 09 May 2020	360	310
Sun 10 May 2020	410	340
Mon 11 May 2020	1,090	920

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	INDIVIDUALS	HOUSEHOLDS
Tue 12 May 2020	1,090	900

Caveats:

The figures use the Job centre the claimant has been allocated to rather than the contract address to determine location.

The requested information is not available at local authority level.