



Daily Report

Wednesday, 10 June 2020

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 10 June 2020 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:21 P.M., 10 June 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

■ Coal: Mining

Philip Davies:[\[53352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish the (a) names and (b) locations of the surface coal mines in the UK currently producing coal and (c) dates when they are scheduled to cease producing coal for all purposes; and if he will make a statement.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The names, location and estimated production end dates of surface coal mines are set out in the table below:

MINE NAME	STATUS	LOCATION	PRODUCTION END DATE*
Bradley	Producing	Durham, England	17/08/2020
Field House	Producing	Durham, England	07/11/2020
House of Water Burnston Remainder	Producing	East Ayrshire, Scotland	13/07/2021
Ffos-y-Fran Land Reclamation Scheme	Producing	Merthyr Tydfil, Wales	01/10/2022
Hartington Reclamation	Producing	Derbyshire, England	01/08/2020
Nant Helen Remainder	Producing	Powys, Wales	Under review

**Based on an assessment of remaining reserves at the site.*

Source: Coal Authority May 2020

■ Energy: Meters

Dr Alan Whitehead:[\[53990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of requesting that Ofgem extend their Metering and Monitoring Service Package to include sensors in fossil fuel boilers for those with a hybrid heating configuration to collect data useful to the management of the energy system.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

To date, there has been low uptake of hybrid installations with Metering and Monitoring Service Packages (MMSPs) in the domestic RHI. The domestic RHI, including MMSPs, will close to new applications in March 2022. Therefore, the Government does not consider that extending the MMSP requirements to include sensors in fossil fuel boilers in hybrid installations would provide significant useful data on the overall performance of hybrid heating systems.

The Government will be gathering further evidence on the performance of hybrid heating systems as part of the £16.5m Electrification of Heat Demonstration Project. The project is expected to run until March 2022.

Environment Protection: Taxation**Mark Pawsey:**[\[53413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has for a carbon pricing mechanism after the transition period; and if he will make a statement.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The UK Government and Devolved Administrations on 1 June 2020 set out plans for a carbon pricing mechanism after we leave the transition period. Full details can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-of-uk-carbon-pricing>.

Hospitality Industry: Coronavirus**Sajid Javid:**[\[53392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with representatives from (a) business and (b) consumer advocacy organisations to assess the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on businesses that provide support for weddings.

Paul Scully:

This matter sits with the DCMS ministerial Taskforce. BEIS Ministers and BEIS officials regularly meet consumer organisations and businesses to discuss the effects of the covid-19 outbreak.

Public Buildings: Coronavirus**Dr Alan Whitehead:**[\[53276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to undertake works to increase the energy efficiency of public sector buildings whilst they have reduced occupancy.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

BEIS provides funding for energy efficiency projects in the public sector through the Public Sector Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme. This funding, managed by Salix

Finance, has delivered over 17,000 projects since the scheme started in 2004, significantly improving energy performance in the public sector. The capital pot for England totals £385 million at the end of 2020/21.

Salix have continued to operate the scheme during the Covid-19 lockdown period and public sector organisations are still able to apply for zero interest loans to cover their energy efficiency work.

■ Self-employed: Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell:

[\[54151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support and enable self-employed business people to return safely to trading.

Paul Scully:

The guidance we have published on safer working is designed to help employers, workers and the self-employed understand how to work safely, including what employers need to think about to adapt a workplace to manage risk in the context of the coronavirus pandemic.

We know that every organisation is different. Employers and the self-employed can use the guidance to create specific plans for their business in consultation with those who are affected by their operations, including workers and contractors. Plans will depend on the nature of the business, such as the sector, and the details of the workforce and operations.

■ Shops: Coronavirus

Dr Luke Evans:

[\[53639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that shops are supported to implement social distancing measures in advance of opening as covid-19 lockdown measures are eased.

Paul Scully:

As you are aware, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister confirmed on 25 May that retail shops (including shops selling clothes, shoes, toys, books and electronics) will begin to reopen more widely from 15 June, subject to progress against the five tests and only where the business is able to follow the safer working guidance.

The Government has updated the guidance on working safely in shops and branches to allow venues to prepare. The updated guidance takes into account the best practice demonstrated by the many retailers which have been allowed to remain open and have applied social distancing measures in store.

My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy chaired a taskforce meeting involving businesses, business representative organisations and unions. In addition, a questionnaire was issued to approximately 60 businesses covering the retail outlets captured by the updated guidance.

The guidance on safer working has been welcomed and many sectors appreciate the joint work between government, business and trade unions.

■ Wind Power: Seas and Oceans

Dr Alan Whitehead:

[\[53277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to establish a (a) unified or (b) nodal offshore wind transmission system.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The current approach to offshore wind development allows developers to choose where and when to construct windfarms. Developers can also choose to build the associated transmission assets to bring the energy to shore, before they are tendered by Ofgem to a third party to own and operate. This developer led and competitive approach has led to significant savings for the consumer.

This approach was designed at a time when offshore wind was a nascent sector and industry expectation for deployment was much lower. However, in the context of increasingly ambitious targets for offshore wind the current approach to development of transmission assets may not be appropriate and could become a major barrier to delivery.

BEIS officials are working together with key stakeholders, including Ofgem, National Grid Electricity System Operator and The Crown Estate, to consider an appropriate framework for offshore transmission to support increased ambition for offshore wind.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cybercrime

Martyn Day:

[\[53519\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much the National Cyber Security Programme has spent in each of the last five years.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the Hon. member to the answers given to PQs [52225 and 53531](#) on 9 June 2020.

Martyn Day:

[\[53520\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent discussions his Department has held with local authorities on cyber-security.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Government is ensuring that local government receives regular advice and guidance relating to cyber security.

■ Press Conferences: Coronavirus**Justin Madders:** [52115]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether he plans to cease the daily covid-19 Government press briefings.

Chloe Smith:

The Government remains committed to providing the public with the information they need relating to Coronavirus. We will keep under review how best to provide information but Coronavirus press conferences will continue on weekdays.

■ Research: Disclosure of Information**Olivia Blake:** [55066]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he has taken to communicate covid-19 support and guidance to people whose first language is not English.

Chloe Smith:

Working to ensure that public information on COVID-19 is accessible and reaches all those who need it is a high priority for the Government.

Important health guidance, for example on social distancing and symptoms, has been translated into a range of languages and formats. Key Covid-19 content in alternative formats is available on the Public Health England's Campaign Resource Centre for health bodies, Local Authorities and voluntary sector organisations to access, share and use.

■ UK Trade With EU: Balance of Payments**Emily Thornberry:** [53330]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent representations he has received from representatives of UK businesses on the effect on the UK's balance of payments of the UK's ongoing negotiations with the EU.

Penny Mordaunt:

Ministers and officials talk to representatives of the public and private sectors on a regular basis including regarding negotiations with the EU. Details of ministerial meetings with external organisations are published on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS**■ Churches: Coronavirus****Dr Luke Evans:** [53638]

To ask the Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what steps he is taking to ensure that places of worship can open for (a) private prayer and (b) active worship in compliance with social distancing measures as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are lifted.

Andrew Selous:

The Government has announced that from the 15th June Church of England places of worship may be opened for individual prayer, alongside those of other faiths.

The Church of England has been developing advice, following information from Public Health England and other bodies, to enable its churches to be opened safely, and has been communicating that to dioceses for planning purposes. Not all buildings will be able to open for individual prayer on the 15th June, and bishops will be discussing with local clergy the needs of each parish. We expect a phased reopening that takes into account local circumstances and the available resources to enable it to be done safely.

The House of Bishops will be issuing revised advice once the Government has published its own guidance, further to the statement made by Lord Greenhalgh on Saturday 6th June.

DEFENCE**■ Armed Forces Covenant****Mrs Sharon Hodgson:****[55901]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to bring forward legislative proposals to strengthen the Armed Forces Covenant.

Johnny Mercer:

The Government is committed to introducing legislation and it will be brought forward at the earliest opportunity.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Business and Government Departments: Cybercrime****Martyn Day:****[54172]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what proportion of (a) small businesses, (b) large corporations and (c) Government departments and agencies reported breaches of cyber security in each of the last five years.

Matt Warman:

In 2020, 43% of micro businesses, 62% of small businesses and 75% of large businesses had identified cyber security breaches or attacks in the last 12 months. Figures for the last 4 years are taken from the Cyber Security Breaches Survey.

Due to the complexity of the accompanying table, the link below is to the web version of the answer:

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-03/54172>

■ Caravan Sites

Karl Turner:

[R] [\[55679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when he plans to issue guidance on the reopening of caravan parks in accordance with the Good to Go pan-UK kite mark scheme for tourism businesses.

Nigel Huddleston:

My Department has been working closely with the sector, including the British Holiday & Home Parks Association (BH&HPA), through the Visitor Economy Working Group to produce guidance on the reopening of the tourism sector. This will include guidance on hotels, caravans and other guest accommodation. This guidance will be published shortly.

VisitEngland are working on a common industry standard quality mark. Whilst work is ongoing, it will be designed to complement COVID-19 Secure Guidelines produced by the Government.

We will look at opening forms of holiday accommodation in Step 3 of the government's recovery strategy, currently planned for 4 July at the earliest. This will be subject to the further scientific advice and the latest risk assessment at the time.

We remain in regular contact with caravan park stakeholders - including the BH&HPA - through the Visitor Economy Working Group and the Tourism Industry Emergency Response Group.

■ Creative Industries Council

Tracy Brabin:

[\[53555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the (a) current status is and (b) priorities are of the Creative Industries Council.

Caroline Dinanage:

The Creative Industries Council is a joint forum between government and industry. Council members are leading figures drawn from across the creative and digital industries including TV, computer games, fashion, music, arts, publishing and film.

Secretary of State Oliver Dowden co-chairs the Creative Industries Council and we have been in continual dialogue with the Council through the Covid-19 crisis at both ministerial and official level. The next full meeting of the Council is in early July at which we expect the Council to confirm their priorities for 2020-21.

■ Cultural Renewal Taskforce

Tracy Brabin:

[\[53551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will publish the membership of (a) the Cultural Renewal Taskforce and (b) the Taskforce's working groups.

Caroline Dineneage:

Membership of the Cultural Renewal Taskforce can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/culture-secretary-announces-cultural-renewal-taskforce>. Membership of the Taskforce's working groups can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/cultural-renewal-taskforce-and-supporting-working-groups#entertainment-and-events-members>.

Tracy Brabin:**[53553]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what account his Department took of (a) regional representation, (b) diversity representation and (c) representation of smaller arts organisations and community voices in the establishment of the membership of the Cultural Renewal Taskforce.

Caroline Dineneage:

We have strived to ensure the taskforce is made up of diverse individuals and organisations from across the sectors represented by DCMS, presenting a broad range of views and backgrounds. The organisations sitting on the taskforce vary not only by size and scale, but also represent a broad range of smaller organisations from across the country to ensure we consider the needs of organisations across the country.

Tracy Brabin:**[53554]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will publish the minutes of the (a) Cultural Renewal Taskforce and (b) the Taskforce's working groups.

Caroline Dineneage:

The Department of Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport currently has no plans to publish the minutes of respective Taskforce and working group meetings, but is considering ways to communicate summaries of the Taskforce's work.

Tracy Brabin:**[53556]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many FTE staff in his Department have been allocated to support the work of the Cultural Renewal Taskforce; and what other resources his Department has allocated to that Taskforce.

Caroline Dineneage:

We recognise that these are challenging and unprecedented times, which demand the right affirmative action, and this is why my department has prioritised our handling of COVID-19 to support our citizens, sectors, and public bodies. We temporarily reorganised the department and redeployed staff as necessary to support the Cultural Renewal Taskforce and effectively address the challenges our sectors and stakeholders are facing. 4 FTE members of staff are working directly on the running of the Taskforce.

■ Cultural Renewal Taskforce and Commissioner for Cultural Recovery and Renewal**Tracy Brabin:** [\[53552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will publish the remit, terms of reference and objectives of the Cultural Renewal Taskforce and the Commissioner for Cultural Recovery.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Cultural Renewal Taskforce has been established to support the renewal of DCMS sectors and to help develop new COVID-19 secure guidelines for the reopening of public places and businesses in these sectors, where and when it is safe to do so. The focus of the Taskforce's work is on:

- ensuring that COVID-19 secure guidelines are developed in line with the phasing ambitions and public health directions, building on the existing (work settings) guidance and providing intelligence and sector-specific expert input;
- developing creative solutions, including digital solutions, to drive the return of sectors whilst maintaining consistency with the medical advice;
- agreeing and ensuring alignment of all relevant sectoral guidance; and
- providing key sector stakeholders direct access to ministers.

The role of Commissioner for Cultural Recovery and Renewal has been established to provide the Government with an expert and independent voice on the cultural sectors, and to advise on how culture and heritage in the United Kingdom can begin the road to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further information about the Taskforce, including its purpose can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/culture-secretary-announces-cultural-renewal-taskforce>.

■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Buildings**Rachel Hopkins:** [\[54302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer on 15 May to Question 43779 on Civil Servants, in how many multi-hub locations employees of his Department are working together with employees of another Department or agency in London managed by the Government Property Agency; what the addresses are of those locations; and what other Departments and agencies employ staff at those locations.

Caroline Dinenage:

We currently do not occupy any hub locations managed by GPA.

■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Staff**Tracy Brabin:** [\[53557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Answer of 5 February 2020 to Question 10754 on Department for Digital, Culture, Media

and Sport: Staff, whether the 111 FTE Civil Servants remain allocated to work in relation to culture; and whether there has been changes to the level of staff working on the cultural industries as a result of covid-19.

Caroline Dinéage:

As of 31 May 2020, 114.1 FTE Civil Servants are deployed in DCMS Culture teams. Of these, 11 Civil Servants (10.8 FTE) have been allocated to Covid-19 priority work, including work to support the cultural sector at this time.

■ **Football**

Sir John Hayes:

[\[53303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he has taken to ensure that (a) local communities and (b) grassroots football benefit from the return of (i) Premier League and (ii) Championship football.

Nigel Huddleston:

The Government has been liaising closely with the football authorities as their plans to restart the season have developed. In all discussions with them, Ministers have strongly encouraged them to ensure that finances from the game's resumption support the wider football family, and avoid the net loss of significant sums of money.

The Premier League, alongside the Government and the FA, routinely invest significantly in grassroots sport through the Football Foundation. This three-way partnership sees a combined £70m go to new community facilities each year.

We will continue to press the football authorities to ensure the whole football pyramid is looked after.

■ **Historic Buildings: Coronavirus**

Tracey Crouch:

[\[54087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with (a) English Heritage, (b) Historic England, (c) Historic Royal Palaces and (d) the Churches Conservation Trust on (i) support for and (ii) the preservation of built heritage during the covid-19 outbreak.

Nigel Huddleston:

The government fully recognises the significant impact that COVID-19 is having on the heritage sector. From the very beginning of this crisis, I have been hosting weekly meetings with the sector to better understand how it is affecting organisations and where we can provide support. English Heritage, Historic England, Historic Royal Palaces and the Churches Conservation Trust are either represented directly at these meetings or are members of other organisations that are.

They continue to provide a valuable opportunity for me to listen to concerns of the sector and for the attendees to flag any emerging issues including those related to the preservation and support of our built heritage.

■ Horseracing: Economic Situation

Martyn Day: [54175]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent estimate his Department has made of the contribution of the horseracing industry to the economy in (a) the UK, and (b) Scotland in each of the last five years.

Nigel Huddleston:

The Government recognises the significant contribution that racing makes to British sporting culture and its particular importance to the British rural economy.

The British Horseracing Authority (BHA) estimates that British racing, the UK's second largest sports-related industry, is worth £4.1 billion in annual expenditure to the British economy, directly employing over 20,000 people and supporting employment for tens of thousands more in predominantly rural areas, and generating over £350 million in taxation annually.

An economic impact study commissioned by Scottish Racing in 2016 found that the Scottish horseracing industry generated £302 million in revenues, sustains 3,430 jobs, and generates £30m of tax revenues per annum. Further detail is provided in Scottish Racing's 2016 Annual Review: <http://www.scottishracing.co.uk/annual-review/>.

■ Internet: Safety

Mary Kelly Foy: [54251]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the timescale is for the introduction of the Online Harms Bill.

Caroline Dinéage:

The Government is committed to making the UK the safest place to be online. DCMS and the Home Office are working at pace to develop the legislation. We will publish a full government response later this year, and legislation will be ready this session.

■ Outdoor Recreation: Coronavirus

Rebecca Long Bailey: [52075]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the recent easing of covid-19 lockdown restrictions, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of permitting metal detecting hobbyists to return to their recreation.

Caroline Dinéage:

This government recognises that finds made by the public, including those found by metal-detectorists, make an immense contribution to our knowledge of the archaeology and history of Britain.

The recent easing of lockdown restrictions means that since 13th May, people have been, and are, able to enjoy metal-detecting, as long as they adhere to social

distancing measures. At the moment, in England, this means that groups of up to six individuals from different households are able to meet outside to metal detect as long as they maintain 2 meters between them.

To support the hobby, the department has published guidance on gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-on-searching-for-archaeological-finds-in-england-during-covid-19>.

■ Performing Arts: Coronavirus

Matt Western:

[49099]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he has taken to support the performing arts sector during the covid-19 outbreak.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government has already announced an unprecedented package of measures in place to provide immediate and vital support to the cultural sector during this pandemic. These include the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, the Self Employment Support Scheme, the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, business rates relief and cash grants for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses.

In order to further support the sustainability of the sector, 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.

£90 million is being made available to National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) and Creative People and Places (CPPs) lead organisations. £50 million will be made available to organisations that are not in receipt of regular funding from the Arts Council in order to maintain their survival through this crisis. Finally £20 million of financial support is being made available to individuals, so they can better sustain themselves, and their work, in the coming months. 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.

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.

DCMS is engaging with other departments to support the economic response, by ensuring that the needs of its sectors, and those who work in them, are understood.

DCMS will continue to work with this valuable sector to understand the difficulties it faces and help it access support through these challenging times and through recovery.

Dr Luke Evans:

[53642]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he is holding with theatres, cinemas and music venues to ensure that the arts and

entertainment sectors can reopen while observing appropriate social distancing measures.

Caroline Dineneage:

We are committed to working with the arts and entertainment sectors to reopen their doors as soon as it is safe to do so.

As part of the Government's roadmap for recovery from Covid-19, DCMS has launched the Cultural Renewal taskforce which will develop plans for reopening across DCMS sectors. Its work is supported by the Entertainment and Events working group, which brings together representatives from key sector bodies and organisations in these sectors.

■ **Voluntary Organisations: Finance**

Rachael Maskell:

[49756]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to help ensure that community and voluntary organisations core funding needs are met in the next 12 months.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The government has pledged £750 million to ensure the voluntary and community sector continues its vital work supporting the country during the Coronavirus outbreak. This includes £360m distributed through government departments and £200m for the Coronavirus Community Support Fund, being delivered by The National Lottery Community Fund. The government has unlocked a further £150 million from dormant bank and building society accounts, which will be distributed to organisations to support urgent work to tackle youth unemployment, expand access to emergency loans for civil society organisations and help improve the availability of fair, affordable credit to people in vulnerable circumstances.

We have published clear and comprehensive guidance on the £750 million, plus other sources of support, at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/financial-support-for-voluntary-community-and-social-enterprise-vcse-organisations-to-respond-to-coronavirus-covid-19>.

This is a package of emergency response funding targeted at supporting VCSE organisations on the frontline of responding to Coronavirus, or providing other essential services. We are continuing to assess the medium and long-term impact on VCSE organisations and engaging with sector groups to inform our plans for future support.

EDUCATION

■ Arts: Education

Sir John Hayes:

[53307]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that working class children have adequate access to the arts in schools and colleges.

Nick Gibb:

The Government believes all pupils should have access to an excellent well-rounded education and the arts are central to this. A high-quality arts education should not be the preserve of the elite but the entitlement of every child. That is why music, art and design, drama and dance are included in the national curriculum and compulsory in all maintained schools from the age of 5 to 14. Post-14, all pupils in maintained schools must be offered the opportunity to study at least one subject in the arts.

Ofsted's inspection arrangements place a focus on schools ensuring all pupils receive a broad, balanced, and ambitious curriculum, including the arts and as exemplified by the national curriculum.

In addition, between 2016-20 the Department provided almost £500 million of funding for a range of creative and performance arts education programmes including Music Education Hubs, the Music and Dance Scheme, the Dance and Drama Awards, and a set of diverse cultural education programmes. In early January 2020, we announced funding of £85 million for music and arts in 2020-21; £80 million for music hubs coupled with further investment in film, dance, theatre, and design. Across these programmes there is a focus on inclusion of disadvantaged pupils as part of their provision.

■ Children: Charities

Andrew Rosindell:

[51665]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of the Government's £750m funding for charities is allocated to early years charities; and how is it being made available to those charities.

Vicky Ford:

We are unable to say at this point what proportion of the government's £750 million funding has been specifically allocated to early years charities. A range of government and other third sector support is available. The details are published on GOV.UK by the Office for Civil Society and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media. This includes the £200 million funding from the National Lottery COVID-19 Community Fund, which is available for small and medium sized charities in England to bid to continue their vital work supporting the country during the COVID-19 outbreak. More details are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/financial-support-for-voluntary-community-and-social-enterprise-vcse-organisations-to-respond-to-coronavirus-covid-19>.

As part of the funding package announced on 8 April, the Department for Education received a total of £26.4 million awarded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. This includes funding to enable our early years voluntary and community sector partners to broaden their reach and to provide additional support for disadvantaged and vulnerable children's development. The early years charities will work collaboratively to improve signposting to advice, information and targeted support, including, for example, through £7 million 'See, Hear, Respond service' launched by the government on 5 June 2020. A coalition of charities led by Barnardo's will work together to support those at most risk of harm, including in the early years. The funding allocations will be subject to Department for Education approval, assurance and due diligence processes.

In addition, voluntary providers deliver around 18% of childcare places. The government is planning to spend over £3.6 billion on early education entitlements in 2020-21. Further information is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-free-early-education-entitlements-funding-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>.

■ Children: Day Care

Sir Graham Brady:

[54857]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will take steps to encourage the (a) take-up and (b) provision of apprenticeships in the childcare sector in response to the shortfall in recruitment during the covid-19 outbreak.

Gillian Keegan:

We have introduced a broad range of flexibilities to ensure that apprentices can continue with their learning, as far as possible, and to encourage the take up of apprenticeships. These include encouraging the remote delivery of training, allowing changes to be made to end-point assessment, and removal of the requirement that level 2 apprentices should work towards or sit their level 2 English and maths GCSE or functional skills exams this academic year.

Apprenticeships will have an important role to play in creating employment opportunities, particularly for young people, and supporting employers in all sectors to access the skilled workforce they need to recover and grow post-COVID-19. We are looking to support employers of all sizes, and particularly smaller businesses such as childcare providers, to take on new apprentices this year. We will set out further details in due course. We will also ensure that there is sufficient funding to support small businesses wanting to take on an apprentice this year.

■ Children: Education

Dr Luke Evans:

[52543]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps he has taken to ensure that vulnerable children are engaging in learning and skills development during the covid-19 outbreak.

Nick Gibb:

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.

Vulnerable children are encouraged to attend educational provision where it is appropriate for them to do so. We want to get all children and young people back into education as soon as the scientific advice allows because it is the best place for them to learn and because we know how important it is for their mental wellbeing to have social interactions.

Since 23 March, in line with the scientific advice, nurseries, schools and colleges have remained open to children of critical workers and vulnerable children. From week commencing 1 June 2020, primary schools have been welcoming back children in nursery, Reception, year 1 and Year 6. From 15 June, we are asking secondary schools to offer some face-to-face support to year 10 and year 12 students, and sixth form colleges and further education colleges to do the same for 16 to 19 students who are due to take key exams in 2021. For all providers, this is alongside provision they are already offering to vulnerable children and children of critical workers of all ages.

The Department is committed to ensuring that any children, including vulnerable pupils, who cannot yet return to school continue to learn at home. It is up to each school to determine how to deliver education to its pupils and we recognise that many schools have already shared resources for children who are at home. Our latest guidance on remote education during COVID-19 outbreak is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>.

The Government has also committed over £100 million to boost remote education. This includes providing devices and internet access for vulnerable children who need it most, ensuring every school that wants it has access to free, expert technical support to get set up on Google for Education or Microsoft's Office 365 Education, and offering peer support from schools and colleges leading the way with the use of education technology. Provision of internet access, and technical support, will continue to be available to schools during the phased return of children and young people. Devices will be owned by schools and organisations and will benefit children's education long after schools have opened to all pupils.

■ Children: Publications**Sir John Hayes:****[53308]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that future generations of schoolchildren in addition to online content have adequate access to books and written material (a) in and (b) outside of the classroom.

Nick Gibb:

We believe all children deserve to be taught a rich curriculum which encourages extensive reading of books and other kinds of texts, both physical and digital, in and

out of school. The English programmes of study emphasise the importance of listening to, discussing and reading for themselves a wide range of books, poems, plays and information books. We will continue to encourage the development of a life-long love of literature for future generations.

The Department recently published initial findings on complete curriculum programmes for specific subjects in key stages, showing the benefits of high quality curriculum resources on the quality of education and reducing unnecessary teacher workload. The initial findings can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-curriculum-programme-pilot-early-findings>. A final report will be published in due course.

■ Children: Special Educational Needs and Social Services

Tulip Siddiq: **[52285]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 19 May 2020 to Question 45341 on Children: Social Services and Special Educational Needs, if he will publish the Children's Rights Impact Assessment that was undertaken for the recent changes to the regulations for children's social care.

Vicky Ford:

A copy of the Children's Right Impact Assessment that was undertaken for The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 is attached.

Attachments:

1. 52285_attachment [52285_Child's_Rights_Impact_Assessment.pdf]

■ Electronic Publishing

Marion Fellows: **[54937]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the effect of audiobooks on (a) access to literature and (b) literacy rates; and if he will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

The Department wants children to develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information, whatever the format. Research suggests that reading for pleasure is more important for children's educational development than their parents' level of education. We have not undertaken research on the specific effect of e-reading, but the Department is committed to continuing to raise literacy standards – ensuring all children can read fluently and with understanding.

In 2018, we launched the £26.3 million English Hubs programme. We have appointed 34 primary schools across England as English Hubs. The English Hubs programme is supporting nearly 3,000 schools across England to improve their teaching of reading through systematic synthetic phonics, early language development, and reading for pleasure. The English Hubs are focused on improving educational outcomes for the most disadvantaged pupils in Reception and year 1.

■ Free School Meals: Voucher Schemes

Afzal Khan:

[\[53602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools in (a) Greater Manchester and (b) Manchester, Gorton constituency have placed orders through Edenred for the national free school meal voucher scheme.

Afzal Khan:

[\[53603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer on 27 May 2020 to Question 48619, on Free School Meals: Coronavirus, what the value was of the voucher codes distributed by Edenred for the national free school voucher scheme that had not been redeemed as of 22 May 2020.

Afzal Khan:

[\[53604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he has taken to (a) reduce the waiting time for parents and schools to access the national free school meals voucher scheme system and (b) make other improvements to that scheme since its inception.

Vicky Ford:

During this period, we are asking schools to support children at home 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 providing meals and food parcels is not a practicable option for all schools. That is why on 31 March we launched a national voucher scheme as an alternative option, with costs covered by the Department for Education.

Schools are best placed to make decisions about the most appropriate arrangements for eligible pupils, and this can include food parcel arrangements, alternative voucher arrangements or provision through the national voucher scheme.

We do not hold information on the value of unredeemed vouchers. However, as of Wednesday 3 June, Edenred has reported that over £129 million worth of voucher codes have been redeemed into supermarket eGift cards by schools and families through the scheme. Edenred has reported that over 17,500 schools had placed orders for the scheme as of Tuesday 26 May. Edenred do not report on the data broken down below national level.

We are continuing to work very closely with Edenred to improve the performance of the national voucher scheme. The scheme continues to get easier and faster to use. The latest information provided by Edenred indicates that parents and schools are now facing minimal or no waiting time for orders that are placed online, despite continued growth in the number of parents and schools using the scheme.

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

■ Literacy: Teaching Methods**Preet Kaur Gill:****[53560]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the report published by Newman University in April 2020 entitled, Independent research into the impact of the systematic synthetic phonics government policy on literacy courses at institutions delivering initial teacher education in England; and if he will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

All trainee teachers must meet the Teachers' Standards (2011) in order to achieve Qualified Teacher Status, including for those training to teach early reading to demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics.

The Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Core Content Framework (2019) sets out a core minimum entitlement that every trainee must receive. To ensure that all trainees receive this entitlement, the new ITT Core Content Framework is mandatory (through the ITT Criteria) so all providers will need to ensure their ITT programmes encompass the entitlement in full.

The framework specifies that trainees must learn that systematic synthetic phonics is the most effective approach for teaching pupils to decode. The framework does not set out the full curriculum for trainee teachers, ITT providers may wish to integrate additional analysis and critique of theory, research and expert practice as they deem appropriate.

The Department contracted the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to provide an independent review of all the peer-reviewed evidence on what constitutes good teaching. This includes the latest evidence and research on approaches to literacy. There is sound evidence that systematic synthetic phonics is a highly effective method for teaching early reading. The Department is clear that in future we will review the ITT Core Content Framework and the ECF together in light of the best evidence, as it emerges.

In 2016, England achieved its highest ever score in reading, moving from joint 10th place to joint 8th place in the International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) ranking. This follows a greater focus on reading in the primary curriculum and a particular focus on phonics. In 2019, 82% of pupils in Year 1 met the expected standard in the phonics screening check, compared to just 58% when the check was introduced in 2012.

In 2018 the Department launched the English Hubs Programme, which supports nearly 3,000 schools across England to improve their teaching of reading through systematic synthetic phonics, early language development and reading for pleasure.

Preet Kaur Gill:**[53561]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the report by Newman University entitled Independent research into the impact of the systematic synthetic phonics government policy on literacy courses at institutions delivering initial teacher

education in England, published April 2020, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the conclusions from that report (a) that there needs to be a balanced approach to early reading development and (b) that any divergence from Government and Ofsted policies which focus on systematic synthetic phonics will become more difficult if the proposed draft initial teacher education (ITE) framework is ratified.

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[53562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of teacher trainees learning approaches to literacy which have been successful in other countries and other parts of the UK other than systematic synthetic phonics.

Nick Gibb:

The Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Core Content Framework (2019) sets out a core minimum entitlement that every trainee must receive. To ensure all trainees receive this entitlement, the new ITT Core Content Framework is mandatory (through the ITT Criteria) so all providers will need to ensure their ITT programmes encompass the entitlement in full.

The framework does not set out the full curriculum for trainee teachers and it leaves room for providers to integrate additional analysis and critique of theory, research and expert practice as they deem appropriate. In designing their curricula, providers should carefully craft the experiences and activities detailed in the ITT Core Content Framework into a coherent sequence that supports trainees to succeed in the classroom. It is important to stress that the ITT Core Content Framework does not replace the Teachers' Standards (2011), which remain as the bar that all teachers need to meet in order to achieve Qualified Teacher Status. Providers are therefore obliged to ensure their courses will ensure their trainees are able to demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics.

The department contracted Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to provide an independent review of all the peer reviewed evidence on what makes good teaching. This includes the latest evidence and research on approaches to literacy. There is sound evidence that systematic phonics is a highly effective method for teaching early reading.

In 2016, England achieved its highest ever score in reading, moving from joint 10th to joint 8th in the progress in International Reading Literacy Study ranking. This follows a greater focus on reading in the primary curriculum, and a particular focus on phonics. In 2019, 82% of pupils in Year 1 met the expected standard in the phonics screening check, compared to just 58% when the check was introduced in 2012. In 2018 we launched a £26.3m English Hubs Programme. The English Hubs programme is supporting nearly 3000 schools across England to improve their teaching of reading through systematic synthetic phonics, early language development, and reading for pleasure.

■ Members: Correspondence

Mr Kevan Jones: [51656]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when his Department plans to respond to the email sent by the hon. Member for North Durham on 16 April 2020 on exam provisions for external candidates.

Nick Gibb:

I can confirm that the letter, received into the Department on 16 April 2020, from the right hon. Member for North Durham has been responded to. A response was signed and sent via email to the right hon. Member on 10 June 2020.

■ Nannies: Coronavirus

Anthony Browne: [53655]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether it is the Government's policy that nannies should return to work to care for the children of (a) key workers who cannot work from home and (b) parents who remain at home.

Vicky Ford:

Nannies are able to provide paid childcare in a child's home subject to meeting public health principle's set out in Annex A of 'Our plan to rebuild: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy':

<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#annex-a-staying-safe-outside-your-home>

■ Private Education: Regulation

Jeff Smith: [53483]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will reopen the suspended consultation on Regulating independent educational institutions in order to close legal loopholes that enable (a) illegal and (b) unregistered schools to operate.

Nick Gibb:

The Department intends to re-open the suspended consultation when stakeholders are less likely to be significantly affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

As many stakeholders in the consultation were no longer able to operate due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Department suspended the consultation before it was due to end. The decision to suspend the consultation was due to concern that not all stakeholders may have the opportunity to respond to the consultation as they would like, therefore undermining its value.

The consultation responses that have been received to date will be combined with responses received after the consultation re-opens and they will be fully reviewed after the consultation finally closes.

It is not yet appropriate, however, to set a date for re-opening the consultation as the situation in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak continues to change.

■ Pupils: Academic Year

Kate Griffiths:

[\[52518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions his Department has had with Cabinet colleagues on allowing pupils from reception to year 13 to repeat an academic year in September 2020.

Kate Griffiths:

[\[52519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on allowing pupils from reception to year 13 to repeat an academic year from September 2020.

Nick Gibb:

We want to get all children and young people back into education as soon as the scientific advice allows because it is the best place for them to learn, and because we know how important it is for their mental wellbeing to have social interactions with their peers, carers and teachers.

Once a child has been admitted to a school it is for the headteacher to decide how best to educate them. This may, on occasion, include deciding that a child should be educated in a year group other than the one indicated by their age. Such decisions should be based on sound educational reasons and in consultation with parents. We do not currently anticipate that children and young people will need to repeat a school year as a consequence of the COVID-19 outbreak. We continue to look at all options to make sure children and young people get the support they need to continue their education during the COVID-19 outbreak and make up for time spent out of school.

However, it remains possible for headteachers to agree this in individual cases, if they think it is appropriate.

■ Schools: Coronavirus

Caroline Lucas:

[\[49650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to publish guidance for schools on how to support children and young people's mental health as a result of the covid-19 pandemic as those schools reopen in the coming months.

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 the COVID-19 outbreak. NHS services remain open, and leading mental health charities are being supported to deliver additional services through the £5 million Coronavirus Mental Health Response Fund.

All NHS mental health trusts have been asked to ensure that there are 24/7 open access telephone lines to support people of all ages. Public Health England and

Health Education England have also developed advice and guidance for parents and professionals on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, which is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>.

The department has signposted resources on supporting and promoting mental wellbeing among the list of resources to help children to learn at home, which is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources>.

BBC Bitesize has also worked with the department to provide content with substantial focus on mental health, wellbeing and pastoral care.

The return to school will, in itself, be part of supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, as attendance enables social interaction with peers, carers and teachers. Pupil wellbeing is an important consideration within our guidance on actions for educational and childcare settings as they begin to open in 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>.

Children and young people can access free confidential support anytime from government-backed voluntary and community sector organisations either by texting SHOUT to 85258, or by calling Childline on 0800 1111 or The Mix on 0808 808 4994. Children and young people can also find online information on COVID-19 and mental health on the Young Minds website, which is available here: <https://youngminds.org.uk/about-us/reports/coronavirus-impact-on-young-people-with-mental-health-needs/>.

We are putting in place further support for children and teachers on mental health and wellbeing in response to COVID-19. This includes training for teachers, such as a new module developed with clinical experts on how to teach about mental health in health education and more details are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-mental-wellbeing>.

The support also includes advice seminars, £750,000 to three organisations extend support and advice to schools on tackling bullying, and grants to the Education Support Partnership and Timewise to support teachers' mental health and flexible working.

Dr Lisa Cameron:

[52091]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the timescale for publishing guidance for schools on supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff when they return to school when the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased..

Dr Lisa Cameron:

[52092]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to introduce a readjustment period in schools with pupils returning as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased to allow adjustments to the curriculum to focus on wellbeing.

Vicky Ford:

Ministers and officials in the Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care are meeting regularly to discuss how to provide support for mental health and wellbeing of pupils and their teachers in England. Access to mental health support is more important than ever during the COVID-19 outbreak. NHS services remain open and leading mental health charities are being supported to deliver additional services through the £5 million Coronavirus Mental Health Response Fund. The NHS is also setting up 24/7 open access telephone lines for urgent mental health support for people of all ages.

We want to get all children and young people back into education as soon as the scientific advice allows because it is the best place for them to learn, and we know how important it is for their mental wellbeing to have social interactions with their peers, carers and teachers. From week commencing 1 June 2020, primary schools have welcomed back children in nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, alongside priority groups (vulnerable children and children of critical workers). From 15 June 2020, secondary schools will provide some face-to-face support for young people in Year 10 and Year 12.

The department issued guidance regarding the wider opening of schools from 1 June, first published 11 May, making clear that schools are best placed to make decisions about supporting and educating all their pupils during this period, based on local context and staff capacity. As set out in the guidance, where year groups are returning to school, we would expect school leaders and teachers to consider their pupils' mental health and wellbeing and identify any pupils who may need additional support, so they are ready to learn; assess where pupils are in their learning and agree what adjustments are needed to the school curriculum over the coming weeks; identify and plan how best to support the education of high needs groups, including disadvantaged pupils, SEND and vulnerable pupils.

Mental wellbeing is also included as specific a theme in the planning framework issued by the department, 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>.

Further guidance is provided in the planning guide for primary schools, which is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>.

To help schools implement this, we are putting in place further support for children and teachers on mental health and wellbeing. This includes training for teachers, such as a new module developed with clinical experts on how to teach about mental health in health education and more details are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-mental-wellbeing>.

The support also includes advice seminars, £750,000 to three organisations extend support and advice to schools on tackling bullying, and grants to the Education

Support Partnership and Timewise to support teachers' mental health and flexible working. The Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care will continue to work together on what further support we might provide as more children and young people return to school.

Kate Griffiths:

[\[52522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that the needs of three-tier school systems are included within the strategy for the planned reopening of schools.

Nick Gibb:

We are expecting all mainstream schools and colleges, including independent schools and middle schools, to follow the same approach to wider opening.

Based on all the evidence, the Department asked primary schools to welcome back children in nursery, Reception, year 1 and year 6, alongside priority groups (vulnerable children and children of critical workers), from 1 June. From 15 June we are asking schools to offer some face-to-face support to supplement the remote education for year 10 and, where they have sixth forms, year 12 students who are due to take key examinations next year, alongside the full time provision they are offering to priority groups.

We encourage middle schools to do the same to ensure national parity for children in these year groups. Although in three-tier school systems year 6 students are not facing a transition to a new school, it represents the end of Key Stage 2 and so welcoming pupils in year 6 back will allow schools to support the transition from the primary to secondary curriculum.

There continues to be extensive engagement with teaching unions and other school stakeholder organisations both at a ministerial and official level.

Dr Luke Evans:

[\[52544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that his Department is able to respond to concerns raised by the teaching sector and teachers on the safe reopening of schools as the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education continues to engage closely and constructively with unions, serving school leaders and other school stakeholder organisations to respond to sector concerns and support schools as they open for more pupils.

Ellie Reeves:

[\[53572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans are in place to establish track and trace systems in schools.

Afzal Khan:

[\[53594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer on 28 May 2020 to Question 48614 on Schools: Coronavirus, what steps will be taken under his proposals for rapid action in the event that a child tests positive for covid-19 on returning to school.

Nick Gibb:

The new NHS Test and Trace service was launched on 28 May across England. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and will need to share information about their recent interactions. The Government has recruited 25,000 contact tracers, able to track 10,000 new cases a day.

If a child or young person in school develops symptoms compatible with COVID-19, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days and arrange to have a test. Where the child or young person tests positive, traced close contacts, including the rest of their small group, should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if further positive test results arise among the child's class or school, Public Health England's local Health Protection Teams will conduct a rapid investigation into the outbreak and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases, a larger number of other children may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure.

Afzal Khan:[\[53588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer on 28 May 2020 to Question 48608 on Schools: Coronavirus, if his Department will give schools more than three weeks notice for any future phased opening of schools to ensure that headteachers have adequate time to implement necessary adjustments.

Nick Gibb:

We want to get all children and young people back into education as soon as the scientific advice allows because it is the best place for them to learn, and because we know how important it is for their mental wellbeing to have social interactions with their peers, carers and teachers.

We are committed to giving as much notice of further wider opening as we can, to give schools time to prepare, while ensuring that we are informed by the latest scientific advice.

Afzal Khan:[\[53589\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer on 28 May 2020 to Question 48609 on Schools: Coronavirus, how many meetings (a) Ministers in his Department and (b) officials in his Department have had with representatives from (i) headteacher unions and (ii) the Department for Education's headteacher reference groups.

Nick Gibb:

There have been weekly meetings involving the Secretary of State for Education and headteacher unions. There have been at least weekly official-led meetings involving the headteacher unions but often that engagement has been much more frequent. The headteacher reference groups are maintaining their usual schedule of meeting five times a year.

Afzal Khan:

[53590]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what scientific advice from the Task and Finish Working Group did his Department receive in relation to the integration of testing and tracing into the phased reopening of schools on 1 June 2020.

Nick Gibb:

The Government made clear that schools would only be opened more widely when the five key tests set by Government justified the changes at the time.

The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) Children's Task and Finish Working Group have provided scientific health advice to the Government. This advice was used, alongside other sources of information, to inform decision making on the wider opening of schools.

SAGE are publishing papers in regular tranches. The list of papers to be released to date are available by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/scientific-advisory-group-for-emergencies-sage-coronavirus-covid-19-response>. This includes several schools-related papers and those authored by the Task and Finish Group.

The Task and Finish Group's paper provided insights from indicative modelling of a number of different school opening scenarios. It also provided a behavioural assessment of these options. In doing so it highlighted that wider contextual issues should be considered when assessing the impact of relaxing school closures including the role of testing in schools. The Task and Finish groups paper can be found by following this link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/886994/s0257-sage-sub-group-modelling-behavioural-science-relaxing-school-closures-sage30.pdf.

In addition, the Department for Education has published an explanatory note to accompany SAGE's findings from the Interdisciplinary Task and Finish Group and can be found by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-education-explanatory-note-on-sage-modelling>.

Afzal Khan:

[53593]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which school years he plans to prioritise in the second phased return to school.

Nick Gibb:

From 1 June, the Department asked primary schools to welcome back pupils in nursery, Reception, year 1 and year 6. From 15 June, the Department will ask secondary schools and colleges to provide some face-to-face support for pupils who are due to take exams next year, such as pupils in years 10 and 12 as well as 16 to 19 students in the first year of a 2-year study programme.

The Department will continue to be informed by the latest scientific advice. Schools will only be asked to welcome back additional year groups if the most up-to-date

assessment of the risk posed by COVID-19 indicates it is appropriate to have larger numbers of children within schools.

Selaine Saxby:

[53665]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has for the reopening of schools in relation to pupils taking (a) GCSE and (b) A Level exams in 2021.

Nick Gibb:

From the 15 June, we are asking secondary schools to offer face-to-face support to supplement the remote education of year 10 and year 12 pupils, which should remain the predominant mode of education during this term for pupils in these year groups.

Our assessment, based on the latest scientific and medical advice, is that we need to continue to control the numbers attending school to reduce the risk of increasing transmission. Therefore, schools are able to have a quarter of the year 10 and year 12 cohort (for schools with sixth forms) in school at any one time, alongside full time provision for priority groups (vulnerable children and children of critical workers) in all year groups.

Year 10 and year 12 have been prioritised in mainstream secondary schools because they are preparing for key examinations next year (2021) and, of the secondary year groups, are most impacted by time out of school.

Guidance for secondary schools on wider opening is available on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-secondary-schools>.

■ Schools: Protective Clothing

Afzal Khan:

[53591]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of teachers and school staff wearing (a) face masks and (b) other coverings on pupil's ability to learn.

Nick Gibb:

The Department has published guidance on implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings. The Department worked closely with Public Health England on this guidance, which includes confirmation that wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or nurseries is not recommended.

Face coverings may be beneficial for short periods indoors where there is a risk of close social contact with people you do not usually meet and where social distancing and other measures cannot be maintained, for example on public transport or in some shops. This does not apply to schools or nurseries. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures in controlling the spread of the virus. Face coverings should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young children) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission.

The majority of staff in education settings will not require personal protective equipment (PPE) beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:

- children, young people and students whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way
- if a pupil or student becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home.

Further guidance on implementing protective measures can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings#personal-protective-equipment-ppe-including-face-coverings-and-face-masks>.

■ Schools: Social Distancing

Afzal Khan:

[53592]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of social distancing rules on pupil's ability to (a) learn and (b) socialise with their peers.

Nick Gibb:

From 1 June, the Department asked primary schools to welcome back pupils in nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. From 15 June, the Department will ask secondary schools and colleges to provide some face-to-face support for pupils who are due to take exams next year, such as pupils in years 10 and 12 as well as 16 to 19 students in the first year of a 2-year study programme

Unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, this has been taken into account. Guidance has been published on the protective measures that schools and nurseries should implement to reduce the risks of transmission:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>.

As more year groups return to school, we have asked leaders and teachers to focus on supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing and assess where pupils are in their education and agree what adjustments and support are required.

A planning guide has been published for primary schools in order to help school leaders to prepare and decide arrangements for more children returning to school:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools>.

Guidance for secondary schools has also been published:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-secondary-schools>.

Afzal Khan:

[53596]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer on 28 May 2020 to Question 48615 on Schools: Coronavirus, whether the policy of social distancing of two metres will be maintained in schools when they reopen on 1 June 2020.

Nick Gibb:

We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to schools and nurseries, we are taking this into account. The Department has published guidance for schools on implementing protective measures in schools to help limit the spread of COVID-19:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>.

The approaches and actions in this guidance can be seen as a hierarchy of controls that, when implemented, creates an inherently safer system, where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced.

Secondary schools should aim to practice social distancing in line with the measures the Government is asking everyone to adopt in public and in workplaces, including keeping pupils 2 metres apart from each other where possible. This is more achievable in secondary schools than in primary schools, due to the age of the pupils. Guidance for secondary schools is also available on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-secondary-schools>.

Afzal Khan:

[53597]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer on 28 May 2020 to Question 48615 on Schools: Coronavirus, what estimate he has made of the number of pupils that will attend a different school as a result of their school being unable to implement appropriate social distancing after 1 June 2020.

Nick Gibb:

We are expecting the majority of schools and nurseries to open for children and young people who are eligible so that they can continue to attend their usual school. We recognise that schools need time to plan and to implement the guidance to open more widely, and that some will not have been able to do so by 1 June. We are committed to continuing to work with the sector to ensure any schools experiencing difficulties are able to open more widely as soon as possible.

Where a school is unable to stay open, we will work with local authorities, regional school commissioners and neighboring providers to find an alternative setting for their students.

We have made temporary changes to the law to allow children to attend another school on a temporary basis if their school is closed. The changes ensure they can return to their normal school once it reopens.

■ Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus

Ellie Reeves:

[53571]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what (a) financial support and (b) guidance he has issued to (i) educational providers and (ii) others on the safe return of SEND pupils to school.

Vicky Ford:

The department is providing financial support through providing additional funding to schools, on top of existing budgets, to cover unavoidable costs incurred due to the COVID-19 outbreak that cannot be met from their existing resources. This would include any costs incurred supporting the safe return of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to school. Details of this can be found in the 'School funding: exceptional costs associated with COVID-19 for the period March to July 2020' guidance, which is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-schools/school-funding-exceptional-costs-associated-with-coronavirus-covid-19-for-the-period-march-to-july-2020>.

On the 26 May 2020, the department published its 'Supporting children and young people with SEND [special educational needs and disabilities] as schools and colleges prepare for wider opening' guidance, which was written with help from SEND sector organisations. It outlines pragmatic approaches that local authorities, educational settings, and parents or carers may wish to take to support children and young people with SEND as schools and colleges prepare for wider opening. The guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-send-risk-assessment-guidance>.

This guidance builds upon the department's wider guidance for 'Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings', 'Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings', and 'Opening schools and educational settings to more pupils from 1 June 2020'.

This was supplemented by an open letter from myself to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, their parents, carers and families, and others who support them, about the wider opening of schools, colleges and other educational settings from 1 June 2020.

■ Students: Coronavirus

Mark Pritchard:

[51772]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has held with representatives of the universities sector on reopening residential accommodation for students who return to the UK from abroad and who will need to provide a UK residential address in order to comply with the requirement to quarantine for 14 days.

Michelle Donelan:

We are in discussions with Universities UK and other sector representatives on a regular basis to ensure that international higher education students are welcomed to the UK and we expect international students to be supported upon arrival by their chosen university during these unprecedented times.

We welcome the actions of Universities UK, who have set out principles for the sector to consider as it prepares for the autumn term, including encouraging higher education providers to think about how to support students during the self-isolation period.

The department has also published guidance to support providers in making decisions on re-opening campuses and buildings to students and staff ahead of the academic year 2020/21. Further information on this guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuses/higher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuses>.

International students who are considering studying at a UK higher education provider from September 2020 should contact their chosen university to find out how they are adapting to the COVID-19 outbreak, including how international students can prepare themselves for an autumn start.

■ Students: Disability

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[51578]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the Student Loans Company tender for assistive technology services (ATSP Equipment & Training / 2019-SLC-002) is planned to be completed.

Michelle Donelan:

Due to a number of pressures on the Student Loans Company (SLC), it has not been possible to progress with the tender approval process.

The tender approval process has therefore been paused until 31 July, by which time the SLC should be able to provide a revised timeline for the tender.

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[51579]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure there will not be a gap in provision due to the delay in the tender for assistive technology services (ATSP Equipment & Training / 2019-SLC-002); and if he will make a statement.

Michelle Donelan:

Whilst the tender process is ongoing, the current arrangements for the provision of assistive technology remain in place. The Student Loans Company is continuing to fund assistive technology via Disabled Students Allowances and there should be no interruption to assistive technology provision to students.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Air Pollution: Urban Areas****Catherine West:**[\[52297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to permanently improve air quality in (a) London and (b) other UK cities.

Rebecca Pow:

The Mayor of London is responsible for air quality in the capital and has reserve powers under the Environment Act 1995 to reflect this.

The Government's Clean Air Strategy sets out an ambitious programme of action to reduce air pollution from a wide range of sources. We have also put in place a £3.8 billion plan to tackle roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations. Our Environment Bill makes a clear commitment to set a legally binding target to reduce fine particulate matter and enables local authorities to take more effective action to tackle air pollution in their areas.

■ Algae: Territorial Waters**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[51892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the number of harmful algae blooms in (a) English territorial waters, (b) territorial waters under the responsibility of the devolved Administrations in the UK and (c) territorial waters in the Overseas Territories in each of the last five years.

Rebecca Pow:

The Environment Agency (EA) routinely examine remote sensing images to understand where large plankton blooms are occurring, and they screen these images for blooms that are potentially harmful. This data informs bathing water quality assessments and helps further our understanding of harmful algal blooms.

On the ground, monitoring of harmful algal blooms in the territorial waters of England and the Devolved Administrations ensures that harvested shellfish is safe for human consumption. Monitoring is undertaken at a frequency defined by the risk for the area and reported up to weekly for any one site.

Since monitoring harmful algal blooms is to ensure shellfish safety and protect human health, we do not make a routine assessment of the number of blooms in the territorial waters of England and the Devolved Administrations. Environmental

matters are a devolved responsibility in the Overseas Territories and as such my department does not undertake estimates of harmful algal blooms in their territorial waters.

■ Beverage Containers: Recycling

Lloyd Russell-Moyle: [\[55111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, on what date he plans to publish a further consultation on the design of the deposit return scheme.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle: [\[55112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, on what date he plans to introduce (a) a deposit return scheme and (b) extended producer responsibility.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government committed in its manifesto to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers and extended producer responsibility for wider packaging to drive greater levels of recycling and incentivise better design. We are seeking powers to do so in the Environment Bill. Since consulting on its introduction in 2019, the Government has been developing proposals for a DRS and extended producer responsibility using further evidence and ongoing engagement with stakeholders. The scope of both schemes are being further developed and will be presented in second consultations. The Government is reviewing its implementation timeline for the proposed introductions of DRS and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), which will be announced in due course.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle: [\[55113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential for consumers to switch from aluminium cans in multi-packs to large plastic bottles as an unintended consequence of a deposit return scheme.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government is keen to avoid any unintended consequences. An Impact Assessment will be published alongside the second consultation which assesses the costs and benefits of a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), the costs to business, and covers the wider environmental impacts of implementing a DRS. We are continuing to consult with stakeholders to advise us of any unintended consequences which could arise.

■ Coastal Erosion and Floods: Risk Management

Preet Kaur Gill: [\[52336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the Environment Agency plans to publish its updated National flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England.

Rebecca Pow:

The Environment Agency consulted on the draft National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England in May 2019. It has now reviewed the draft strategy following that consultation and in accordance with the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, and has submitted the strategy to the Secretary of State for consideration. Once the Secretary of State has approved the strategy, it will be laid in Parliament for 40 days.

Environment Protection: Standards**Neil Parish:**[\[51919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if it remains the Government's policy to maintain the October 2022 deadline for (a) air quality, water, (b) biodiversity, (c) resource efficiency and (d) waste reduction targets.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government plans to bring forward at least one target in each of the four priority areas by the Environment Bill's 31 October 2022 deadline. Targets will be developed based on robust, scientifically credible evidence, as well as economic analysis. We want them to be ambitious, credible and supported by society.

European Chemicals Agency**Theresa Villiers:**[\[51702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what provisions he has put in place to ensure that regulatory activities carried out by the European Chemicals Agency functions can be continued in the UK after the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020.

Rebecca Pow:

The preparations we made for the possibility of a no deal exit mean that we are well placed to be ready with our own independent regulatory regime for 1 January 2021. At the end of the Transition Period the UK will have its own independent chemicals regulatory framework, UK REACH. We will bring REACH in to UK law and put in place the systems and capacity to ensure the effective management and control of chemicals which safeguard human health and the environment, and that we can respond to emerging risks. UK REACH will retain the principles and fundamental approach of the EU REACH system, with its aims of ensuring a high level of protection of human health and the environment, as well as enhancing innovation and competitiveness.

Floods: Damage**Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[52335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent progress has been made by the Environment Agency on (a) inspecting and (b) repairing assets affected by the 2019 winter floods.

Rebecca Pow:

The Environment Agency (EA) has carried out approximately 20,000 post-incident inspections following the flooding events in November 2019 and February 2020. These inspections are now complete and the results have been used to plan projects for the EA's recovery programme that will deliver asset repairs. The EA is finalising submissions but expects to have approximately 600 projects across England. To date, 51 projects have been completed and the EA is commissioning its supply chain and planning the delivery of the rest of the programme. It is expected that all assets will be restored by the end of October 2020, or the EA will have sufficient temporary measures in place to mitigate risks to communities while works complete over winter.

Food: Coronavirus**Daniel Zeichner:**[\[53457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the (a) financial effect of the covid-19 outbreak on food wholesalers and (b) adequacy of the Government's support for food wholesalers during the covid-19 outbreak.

Tracey Crouch:[\[54085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Department on the survey of wholesalers affected by the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

Victoria Prentis:

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. With counterparts across Whitehall, and through ongoing engagement with industry, we are closely monitoring the potential impacts of Covid-19 on the food and drink wholesale sector. This includes regular meetings with food and drink wholesalers and their representative bodies.

To help industry, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has set out a package of temporary, timely and targeted measures to support public services, people and businesses through this period of disruption caused by Covid-19. The measures available to food and drink wholesale businesses depend on their size, and includes the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme for furloughing of staff; the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan; the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan; the Covid-19 Corporate Financing Facility; a Statutory sick pay relief package for SMEs with fewer than 250 employees; Value Added Tax (VAT) deferral to the end of June; the HMRC Time To Pay Scheme; Eviction protection for commercial tenants; a £10,000 cash grant for all business in receipt of Small Business Rates Relief and Rural Rates Relief; and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme.

We remain committed to working in partnership with industry to respond to these challenges as they evolve and to assess whether current support mechanisms continue to be sufficient and effective.

■ Food: Standards

Martyn Day:

[55095]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make it his policy to establish a Food Standards Commission to regulate standards of food safety.

Victoria Prentis:

The UK Government will not compromise on our standards. Our manifesto is clear that in all of our trade negotiations, we will not compromise on our high environmental protection, animal welfare and food standards. We remain firmly committed to upholding our high environmental, food safety and animal welfare standards outside the EU. The EU Withdrawal Act will transfer all existing EU food safety provisions, including existing import requirements, onto the UK statute book.

The UK's food standards, for both domestic production and imports, are overseen by the Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland. These are agencies and provide independent advice to the UK and Scottish governments. They will continue to do so in order to ensure that all food imports comply with the UK's high safety standards. Decisions on these standards are a matter for the UK and will be made separately from any trade agreement.

The Government is keen to work closely with the National Farmers' Union and other key stakeholders across the food chain to understand the key concerns about the impact of new trade deals.

■ Litter: Coronavirus

Mr Stephen Morgan:

[52406]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to support local authorities in reducing litter in public green spaces during the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr Stephen Morgan:

[52407]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of recent trends in littering in public green spaces during the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr Stephen Morgan:

[52408]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made on the effect of levels of litter in public green spaces during the covid-19 outbreak on the cleanliness of oceans.

Rebecca Pow:

Local councils remain responsible for keeping their land clear of litter and refuse according to standards set out in the statutory Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse. The Code is available at: <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-on-litter-and-refuse>.

We recognise that in the current circumstances, local authorities may have more challenges than usual in collecting all kinds of waste. The Government has announced £3.2 billion of additional funding to support local authorities in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Defra has also published guidance for local authorities on the prioritisation of waste collection services and released advice over social media on appropriate disposal of personal protective equipment.

Defra does not collect data from local authorities on littering rates in public green spaces or elsewhere, and has made no specific assessment of recent trends in littering in public green spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, industry data collected by ADEPT suggests that over 60% of councils are reporting that their street sweeping services are operating normally with 30% reporting minor disruption, and that the amount of litter collected via street sweeping has reduced during the coronavirus outbreak. The data is available at: <https://www.adeptnet.org.uk/covid-19-waste-survey-results>.

Marine litter is a transboundary issue as it can move with ocean currents, so we cannot yet estimate the effect that COVID-19 will have had on levels in the marine environment.

Mr Stephen Morgan:

[52410]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many tonnes of litter were collected by local authorities in (a) March, (b) April and (c) May 2020.

Rebecca Pow:

Defra does not hold the data requested.

Data on local authority waste is collected on a quarterly basis and is reported three months in arrears to the end of the period to which it relates. Figures for the period January to March 2020 have not yet been submitted by most local authorities.

Quarterly data relating to street cleansing waste tonnages for 2018/19 and earlier years are available at:

<https://data.gov.uk/dataset/0e0c12d8-24f6-461f-b4bc-f6d6a5bf2de5/wastedataflow-local-authority-waste-management>

These figures will include waste collected as part of street cleansing operations, including naturally-occurring detritus such as fallen leaves/blossom and other fine material, as well as waste collected from public litter bins and dropped as litter.

■ Litter: Fines

Mr Stephen Morgan:

[52409]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential environmental merits of increasing fines for littering.

Rebecca Pow:

Littering is a criminal offence, with a maximum penalty on conviction of a fine of up to £2,500, although most enforcement is carried out by local authorities using fixed

penalties. Following consultation, with effect from April 2018, we increased the maximum fixed penalty for littering from £80 to £150, and from April 2019, the minimum fixed penalty was also raised from £50 to £65. We have also given councils in England (outside London) new civil penalty powers to tackle littering from vehicles. We have no plans to make further changes to the level of fixed penalties or fines for littering and have made no specific assessment of the potential environmental merits of doing so at this stage.

Enforcement action should only be taken when it is in the public interest to do so. Enforcement action should always be proportionate, and penalties should not be issued for trivial offences or accidental littering.

We have recently published improved guidance to councils and others on the use of their fixed penalty powers for littering and related offences. The guidance to enforcement officers is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-on-litter-and-refuse>

■ Litter: Tobacco

Luke Pollard: [52483]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to encourage major tobacco companies to (a) undertake activities in respect of and (b) provide financial support for tackling smoking-related litter.

Luke Pollard: [52484]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of (a) the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme for tobacco products with filters that is being introduced in the EU and (b) adopting a similar model to that scheme in the UK.

Luke Pollard: [52652]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to require the tobacco industry to help tackle the littering of its products.

Dr Matthew Offord: [53410]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the amount and proportion of litter on beaches originating from tobacco products.

Dr Matthew Offord: [53411]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of smoking related litter on (a) bird life, (b) marine life and (c) other aspects of the natural environment.

Dr Matthew Offord:

[53412]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a scheme to tackle smoking-related litter by securing a contribution from the UK tobacco industry to pay for the initiative.

Rebecca Pow:

Figures from the Great British Beach Clean 2019 report that cigarette stubs were the second most frequently-found type of litter item on UK beaches, with an average of 42.6 stubs found per 100 metres. UK Government scientists are currently carrying out chemical and toxicological experiments to evaluate the potential harm caused to the marine environment by cigarette stubs. This work will be published by 2022.

The Government has made no specific recent assessment of the UK tobacco industry's contribution to tackling smoking-related litter. I refer honourable members to the answer I gave on 23 March to PQ 29305:

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-03-13/29305/>.

The Government would like to see the tobacco industry delivering on the commitment given by the Tobacco Manufacturers' Association to tackle the litter created by its products and their users. The Government supports ongoing efforts by Keep Britain Tidy (KBT). KBT works in partnership with the tobacco industry to devise a voluntary scheme through which the industry can contribute to the clean-up of cigarette related litter.

Clause 48 in Section 3 of the Environment Bill also grants powers to introduce extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes. In the Resources and Waste Strategy, we committed to looking into and consulting on EPR for five new waste-streams by 2025, and consulting on two of these by 2022. Waste tobacco filters were not included in this list of priorities but progress on the industry's voluntary approach to litter reduction will be monitored.

Tobacco packaging is covered by the current producer responsibility regulations, which require companies to recycle a proportion of the packaging waste they place on the market. Producers of tobacco packaging will also be subject to the forthcoming EPR scheme for packaging which will cover the full net costs of managing packaging at its end of life. In our consultation we proposed that producer fees should cover the full cost to local authorities of dealing with littered and fly-tipped packaging waste.

■ **Marine Environment: Standards**

Theresa Villiers:

[51701]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the UK Marine Strategy produced under the UK Marine Strategy Regulations 2010 is expected to achieve its 2020 targets on good environmental status on marine habitats and species as referred to on page 32 of the 2018 White Paper on Sustainable Fisheries for Future Generations.

Rebecca Pow:

The updated UK Marine Strategy Part One, published in October 2019, provides an assessment of the state of UK seas and shows the progress made towards achieving Good Environmental Status (GES).

The assessment showed that we have made progress towards GES for UK seas and that some marine species, including grey seals, have achieved GES in UK seas. However, the assessment identified other areas, including some bird species and seabed habitats, where more needs to be done.

We are taking action to address those areas where we have not yet reached GES, and intend to publish an update to the UK Marine Strategy Part Three, outlining the programmes of measures that will continue to move us towards GES, in 2021.

Oilseed Rape: Health Hazards**Tom Tugendhat:**[\[52161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what protections are provided by (a) the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and (b) other legislation to residents who have increased medical needs as a result of the planting of oil seed rape near their properties.

Rebecca Pow:

The issue of the impact of oilseed rape on health, specifically in relation to allergies, is kept under review by Defra. Based on the scientific evidence currently available, there would be no justification for regulating the planting and growing of oilseed rape. Defra is responsible for certain legislation that protects human health, including but not limited to air quality legislation and statutory nuisance provisions, however, these do not specifically contain protections from oilseed rape.

Tourist Attractions: Coronavirus**Luke Pollard:**[\[55122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the welfare of animals in zoos, safari parks, aquariums and farm visitor attractions of the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2020.

Victoria Prentis:

I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to my hon. Friend, the Member for North Devon, Selaine Saxby, on 27 April 2020, PQ UIN 37936 and the reply given to the hon. Member for Dunfermline and West Fife, Douglas Chapman, on 11 May 2020, PQ UIN 43675. As announced by the Prime Minister on 10 June, outdoor areas of zoos and safari parks will be allowed to reopen from 15 June, subject to appropriate social distancing measures being in place. This includes keeping indoor exhibitions, such as reptile houses and those in aquariums, closed, and ensuring other amenities like cafes offer take-away services only.

[<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-20/37936/>]

[<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-05/43675/>]

The move follows close work by the Government with the zoo industry to ensure visitor numbers can be managed and safeguards are put in place.

The decision to relax restrictions on these select outdoor attractions is part of the Government's careful approach to easing the lockdown in phases, guided by the advice of scientific and medical experts and the fact the risk of transmission is much lower outdoors.

Officials continue to meet weekly with BIAZA (British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums) and with the CEOs of the largest charitable zoos and aquariums in England providing a valuable forum to monitor concerns and seek insights from key sector representatives on current issues.

■ **Tree Planting: Coronavirus**

Theresa Villiers:

[51704]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to encourage the resumption of tree planting as lockdown restrictions due to the covid-19 outbreak are eased.

Rebecca Pow:

Lockdown started towards the end of the 2019/2020 tree planting season and under normal conditions we would not expect planting to start again until the autumn.

The Forestry Commission and the Rural Payments Agency have remained open for new woodland creation applications and continued to process those applications subject to the restrictions imposed by Government guidance on COVID-19.

The following schemes have remained open for woodland creation applications: Countryside Stewardship, Woodland Carbon Fund, Woodland Carbon Guarantee, Woodland Creation Planning Grant and the HS2 Woodland Fund. The second application window of the Urban Tree Challenge Fund opened during lockdown and was subsequently extended to give applicants more time to apply.

Claims for tree planting under existing grant agreements have continued to be paid, with additional measures being put in place by the Forestry Commission and the Rural Payments Agency to support claimants under lockdown restrictions.

Officials have remained in regular and close contact with the forestry sector, which has continued to operate, where and when it has been safe to do so, throughout lockdown. For example, tree nurseries have responded by amending working practices to ensure social distancing can be maintained while ensuring that plants are available for next year's tree planting season.

■ Water: Consumption

Luke Pollard: [\[52473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the per capita water consumption figures for each water company for the last 12 months will be made available.

Rebecca Pow:

Water companies are legally required to report yearly on the progress of their water resource management plans as part of the Annual Review process, including per capita consumption figures showing average personal water use. We currently expect 2019/20 water company annual reports to be published in mid-July.

Luke Pollard: [\[52474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to set a national per capita water consumption target.

Rebecca Pow:

We consulted and asked for evidence on measures to reduce personal water use for 12 weeks from July 2019 and will publish a Government position later this year. Our response will set out our intended next steps including a personal water consumption target.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ British Nationals Abroad: Coronavirus**

Amy Callaghan: [\[52512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he made of the average cost to UK citizens to repatriate themselves during the covid-19 outbreak.

Nigel Adams:

The British Government is working with the airline industry and host governments across the world to help bring back British travellers to the UK as part of the plan announced by the Foreign Secretary on 30 March - with up to £75 million available for special charter flights from priority countries, focused on helping the most vulnerable travellers. We are determined that the cost of a flight will not be a barrier to bringing British travellers home but we are asking passengers to make a contribution so that we can put on as many flights and bring back as many people as possible. To set a limit on the costs to travellers, we aim to charge passengers no more than £400 for flights under 6 hours, £600 for 6-10 hours and £800 for over 10 hours (using the airline industry's 'time-in-air' calculator). On average, passengers have paid less than £600. Pricing is kept under constant review and there have been small deviations in the past where we have sought to achieve better value for money for taxpayers. Costs above this amount are borne by the taxpayer.

We hope most travellers will be able to claim their costs from their travel insurance but for those British Nationals that cannot afford the cost of a flight to return, and have no other funding options, they may be eligible for financial support through an emergency loan from public funds

Sir David Evennett:

[\[54858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many repatriation flights his Department has arranged during the covid-19 pandemic; and how many people have been repatriated on those flights.

Nigel Adams:

British travellers who need and want to return to the UK is one of the Government's highest priorities. Since the outbreak in Wuhan, we estimate that over 1.3 million people have returned to the UK via commercial routes - the majority supported by our work to keep vital routes open. Since the Foreign Secretary announced £75m to support repatriation efforts on 30 March, the Government has as of 9 June delivered a programme of 183 charter flights from places where commercial options are no longer viable. These flights have brought over 37,700 people from 52 countries and territories, back to UK airports in the East Midlands, London and Manchester.

■ Egypt: Human Rights

Margaret Ferrier:

[\[54122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the human rights situation in Egypt; and what representations he has made to his Egyptian counterpart on human rights (a) issues and (b) cases.

Margaret Ferrier:

[\[54123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his counterpart in Egypt on the ongoing detention of (a) Mahienour El-Massry, (b) Mohamed El-Baqer, (c) Mohsen Bahnasi, (d) Haitham Mohameddeen and (e) other human rights lawyers in that country.

Margaret Ferrier:

[\[54928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the (a) adequacy of conditions in detention facilities and (b) appropriateness of the use of extended pre-trial detention periods in Egypt.

James Cleverly:

Egypt is a Foreign and Commonwealth Office Human Rights Priority Country and the UK continues to urge the Egyptian Government to ensure the full implementation of the rights and freedoms set out in Egypt's constitution. We have concerns about mass detentions and sentencing, prison conditions, access to justice, and restrictions on freedom of expression and the media. We regularly raise these and other issues with the Egyptian Government, both in public and in private, and including at Ministerial level.

During Egypt's Universal Periodic Review in the United Nations Human Rights Council in November 2019, we called upon the Egyptian Government to ensure access to medical care and family visits in prisons, and to release all those detained for exercising the right to freedom of expression. We also raised the issue of extended pre-trial detention in our questions ahead of the Universal Periodic Review. On prison conditions, the Egyptian Government has undertaken to follow up our Universal Periodic Review recommendation.

In addition to these issues, we regularly raise specific cases with the Egyptian authorities, including that of Mohamed el-Baqer, on 17 February. The Foreign Secretary also raised human rights issues with his Egyptian counterpart at this year's UK-Africa Investment Summit.

■ **Libya: Russia**

Henry Smith:

[\[53394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of Russia's attempts to develop a military airbase close to NATO's southern flank in Libya; and what steps he is taking with the UK's allies to tackle that potential threat.

James Cleverly:

We remain concerned at recent reports of Russian fighter jets being deployed into Libya, and growing evidence of Russian involvement in the conflict, including the use of Private Military Companies. We take very seriously any reports of breaches of the UN arms embargo. Russia has a responsibility to uphold UN Security Council Resolutions and international law. External interference is exacerbating the conflict in Libya and undermining the UN-led political process. We regularly discuss with NATO allies our responses to potential threats from Russia.

■ **Turkey: Coronavirus**

Fabian Hamilton:

[\[53313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the situation for human rights defenders and journalists held in pre-trial detention in Turkey, in relation to the risk that overcrowding and unsanitary conditions in Turkish prisons pose to transmission of covid-19.

Wendy Morton:

We regularly raise our concerns with Turkey about conditions in Turkish prisons and the risks posed by COVID-19 in Turkey. We continue to urge the authorities to ensure that all detainees are treated in accordance with relevant international human rights standards. Ministers and our Ambassador to Turkey continue to engage the Turkish Government on Covid risks and future work to tackle the disease.

We support the call made by the UN Secretary-General in his message of 22 April that human rights must be at the front and centre of the COVID-19 response and recovery. We continue to be clear in our expectation that Turkey, like all countries,

should live up to its human rights obligations towards all its citizens. We support all efforts by the UN to minimise long-term damage to global economies, societies, politics and freedoms.

■ **Turkey: Press Freedom**

Fabian Hamilton:

[\[53312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Turkish counterpart on the detention of journalists and writers in that country.

Wendy Morton:

We regularly raise our human rights concerns with the Turkish authorities at the highest level, particularly around detentions, freedom of expression and association. We continue to urge the authorities to ensure that all detainees are treated in accordance with relevant international human rights standards. We will continue to engage the Turkish Government on these important issues, and to urge respect for freedom of the media. We continue to be clear in our expectation that Turkey, like all countries, should live up to its human rights obligations towards all its citizens.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[53496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what contingency plans he has in the event that covid-19 application for tracking contacts fails.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

The National Health Service COVID-19 app is new technology to assist with the well-established technique of contact tracing, including online and local public experts, supplemented by 25,000 dedicated contact tracing staff.

The goal of the app is to reduce transmission of the virus by alerting people who may have been exposed to the virus so they can take action to protect themselves, the people they care about and the NHS.

■ **Coronavirus: Protective Clothing**

Meg Hillier:

[\[51725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the (a) evidence and (b) modelling that indicated that the Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit for Personal Protective Equipment set on 25 March 2020 was sufficient for his Department's needs.

Meg Hillier:

[\[51726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the process by which Resource Departmental Expenditure Limits for Personal Protective Equipment are set in his Department.

Meg Hillier:

[\[51727\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the Resource Departmental Expenditure Limits were for Personal Protective Equipment set by his Department on 25 March 2020.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 4 June 2020]: The Department is not aware of the Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit being referred to.

At the Budget on 11 March 2020 the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, "... whatever extra resources our NHS needs to cope with coronavirus – it will get."

On 13 April, the Chancellor announced COVID-19 funding of £14.5 billion, of which £6.6 billion related to health services.

To date, the Department has been allocated COVID-19 revenue funding of £3,373 million and capital funding of £40 million in the Main Supply Estimate. Due to the timing of Main Estimates, it was agreed that further budget cover would be provided at Supplementary Estimates. The Government continues to support the National Health Service to access the resources it needs to tackle COVID-19.

■ NHS: Protective Clothing

Clive Lewis:

[\[53539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the part-privatisation of NHS Supply Chain on that organisations' ability to ensure adequate provision of personal protective equipment during the covid-19 outbreak.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 8 June 2020]: Supply Chain Coordination Limited (SCCL), the management function of NHS Supply Chain, is a company wholly owned by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, to whom it is accountable and responsible. It aims to deliver significant savings to National Health Service frontline services through leveraging the buying power of the NHS and reducing unwarranted price variation.

A new personal protective equipment (PPE) supply channel has been set up by the Government to focus on securing supplies of PPE to meet the urgent volume requirements for PPE items. This is a dedicated and totally separate PPE supply channel, allowing NHS Supply Chain to focus on ensuring the supply of medical devices and clinical consumables to the NHS. The dedicated PPE supply channel will remain in place for as long as is required.

■ Private Patients: Health Services

Kate Osborne:

[\[52548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when routine services and treatments will recommence in private hospitals.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 4 June 2020]: National Health Service patients are benefitting from an unprecedented partnership with private hospitals in the United Kingdom as we battle the COVID-19 outbreak. Throughout this period, independent providers have continued to provide urgent operations for private pay or insured patients as well as NHS patients.

From the middle of May 2020, independent providers have been able to provide more routine elective work to private pay or insured patients and where this has been agreed locally with the NHS.

■ Surgery

John Redwood:

[\[51509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when non-urgent patients will be able to have hospital operations.

Edward Argar:

With evidence suggesting that we are through the peak of the first wave of COVID-19, and with the National Health Service well-placed to provide world-leading care for those who do still have the virus, we are bringing back routine services that had been temporarily paused. Where additional capacity is available, this includes routine electives, with a focus on prioritising long waiters. Recommended actions include making full use of all contracted independent sector hospital and diagnostic capacity to support with this.

The approach will be flexed at local level according to capacity and demand in different parts of the country, and will be gradual, over weeks. It will also be dependent on the type of services and different demographics affected.

Catherine West:

[\[52296\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he will take to ensure cancelled elective surgeries are rescheduled.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 4 June 2020]: With evidence suggesting that we are through the peak of the first wave of COVID-19, and with the National Health Service well-placed to provide world-leading care for those who do still have the virus, we are bringing back routine services that had been temporarily paused. Where additional capacity is available, this includes routine electives, with a focus on prioritising long waiters. Recommended actions include making full use of all contracted independent sector hospital and diagnostic capacity to support with this.

The approach will be flexed at local level according to capacity and demand in different parts of the country, and will be gradual, over weeks. It will also be dependent on the type of services and different demographics affected.

■ **Surgery: Waiting Lists**

James Murray:

[\[52575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether data on the average waiting time standard for elective care being piloted by 12 NHS Trusts will continue to be collected during the postponement of elective surgery as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Edward Argar:

The monthly referral-to-treatment return continues to be collected from National Health Service trusts during COVID-19, including data on average waiting times at the 12 field test sites.

HOME OFFICE

■ **101 Calls: Fees and Charges**

Sir John Hayes:

[\[53298\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department has taken to ensure that people may use the police 101 non-emergency call number free of charge.

Kit Malthouse:

From 1st April 2020 no member of the public should have to pay for 101 non-emergency calls to the police.

Home Office has engaged with Vodafone, as the current supplier of the 101 service, since May 2019, following its decision to make calls to 101 free of charge.

The vast majority of people will be able to use the service free of charge. However, from 1 April to 1 July there remains a chance that users of small operators may be charged for using the 101 service. The Home Office has urged those providers to refund their customers.

■ **Antifa**

Sir John Hayes:

[\[53296\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of designating Antifa a terrorist organisation.

James Brokenshire:

The Government does not routinely comment on intelligence matters, including whether an organisation is or is not under consideration for proscription.

The Government keeps the list of proscribed organisations under review.

■ Arrests and Stop and Search: Ethnic Groups

Rachael Maskell:

[\[53492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of (a) stop and search cases, (b) arrests and (c) charges were made against BAME people by the police in each of the last 12 months.

Kit Malthouse:

The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of stop and searches and arrests including the ethnicity of the person searched or arrested. Data are published annually in the 'Police Powers and Procedures, England and Wales' statistical bulletin, the latest of which can be accessed [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-powers-and-procedures-england-and-wales), and includes data up to the end of March 2019:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-powers-and-procedures-england-and-wales>

■ Asylum: Finance

Gill Furniss:

[\[52313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of financial support available for people in the asylum system during the covid-19 outbreak.

Chris Philp:

We have been reviewing the level of the cash allowances provided to asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute, as we do each year to ensure that they remain capable of meeting their essential living needs.

As a result of this work, the standard allowance has been raised to £39.60 per week from £37.75 per week, an increase of around 5%.

Kenny MacAskil:

[\[52514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 26 May 2020 to Question 47460, when the review into cash allowances for asylum seekers commenced; what evidence or information is being sought; and what the timescale is for the conclusion of that review.

Chris Philp:

We have been reviewing the level of the cash allowances provided to asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute, as we do each year to ensure that they remain capable of meeting their essential living needs. As a result of this work, the standard allowance has been raised to £39.60 per week from £37.75 per week, an increase of around 5%.

In March 2018, we made public the methodology for calculating the asylum support rates and the underpinning research. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-on-review-of-cash-allowance-paid-to-asylum-seekers>.

■ Asylum: Housing**Kate Green:****[53426]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will ensure broadband provision in asylum accommodation occupied by families to support children's education.

Chris Philp:

Guidance for families (in England) wishing to access support with their children's education can be found on the following government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

■ Borders: France**Andrew Rosindell:****[51666]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department has allocated to French border security arrangements at ports in the last 12 months for which figures are available.

Chris Philp:

Over the 19/20 Financial Year, the UK committed £5.7 million to infrastructure improvements at the ports of Calais and Dunkirk in Northern France. This funding has been committed to improving screening processes at the ports and improving the integrity of the juxtaposed controls.

The UK and France will continue to work closely together to tackle illegal migration across the shared border, whether through the ports or via small boats across the English Channel.

■ British Nationality**Thangam Debbonaire:****[53472]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether settled status is admissible as evidence of lawful residence in the UK for the purpose of making an application for British citizenship.

Kevin Foster:

Settled status is a grant of Indefinite Leave to Remain. It can therefore be used to demonstrate the date on which an applicant became free from immigration time restrictions under the Immigration Rules.

Additional evidence may be required to demonstrate an individual meets the statutory requirements for naturalisation.

■ **British Nationality: Applications**

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[53538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether there are concessions for fees for citizenship applications for British citizenship whose income is prohibitively low.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office does not provide for the reduction or waiver of fees for citizenship applications based on income.

Applying for British Citizenship is not mandatory and many individuals who have Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) in the UK choose not to do so. This is because a person with ILR continues to benefit from full access to the UK labour market, education and healthcare, and the ability to sponsor family member residence in the UK. This means the application can be made once the individual is ready to do so.

The Home Office keeps fees under regular review.

■ **British Nationality: Learning Disability**

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[53537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support the Government has made available to people with learning disabilities who wish to apply for British Citizenship but are unable to complete the application without assistance.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office provides a free Assisted Digital service for customers within the UK who don't have the appropriate access, skills or confidence to use UK Visas & Immigration online services on their own. This service is made available to everyone who needs it, including those with learning difficulties.

A paper application form is still available for those who have difficulties with digital applications.

■ **Council of Europe Convention On Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence**

Martyn Day:

[\[55096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her timescale is for UK ratification of the Istanbul Convention; and if she will make a statement.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government takes its international commitments very seriously and we have always been clear on our commitment to ratify the Istanbul Convention.

The Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Ratification of Convention) Act 2017 requires Ministers to publish annual reports on their progress towards being able to ratify the Convention. The most recent report was published on 31 October 2019 and is available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843509/CCS0919132732-001_Istanbul_Convention_2019_Report_Option_A_Web_Accessible.pdf

Legislation needs to pass before we can ratify the Convention, so at this stage we cannot be sure what the timeframe for ratification will be. When this is clear we will set out a timeframe for ratification. The Domestic Abuse Bill had its Second Reading on 28 April and has now begun Committee stage for detailed scrutiny by MPs. Part 6 of the Bill includes provisions for the purposes of Article 44 of the Convention, which requires that criminal courts in the UK have extraterritorial jurisdiction over certain violent and sexual offences. Additionally, the Domestic Abuse and Family Proceedings Bill currently before the Northern Ireland Assembly provides for a new domestic abuse offence which would criminalise psychological violence in Northern Ireland, as required by Article 33 of the Convention. That Bill also takes extraterritorial jurisdiction in respect of the new offence and so, together with the provisions of Part 6 of the Domestic Abuse Bill, will ensure that the law in Northern Ireland meets the requirements of Article 44.

■ **Discrimination: Ethnic Groups**

Rachael Maskell:

[53493]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that policing activity does not (a) directly and (b) indirectly discriminate against BAME people in the UK.

Kit Malthouse:

The public rightly expect police officers to meet high standards of professional conduct and the vast majority of officers do. In this country, the power of the police to fulfil their duties is wholly dependent on public approval of their existence, actions and behaviour and on their ability to secure and maintain this public respect.

We have put in place measures to ensure that policing is subject to appropriate levels of transparency and accountability – with regular inspections of the way forces engage with communities, frequent publication of data on use of police powers and strengthening the police complaints system. If an officer does commit a serious breach of the standards expected of them, disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, criminal proceedings should follow.

■ **Domestic Abuse: Bosworth**

Dr Luke Evans:

[53637]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Government's press release of 2 May 2020, Emergency funding to support most vulnerable in society during pandemic, how much of that funding has been allocated to support survivors of domestic abuse in Bosworth constituency.

Victoria Atkins:

The Home Office, Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have all published guidance on bidding for the additional funding designed to support domestic abuse charities during this period. The bidding and assessment processes are currently underway.

Domestic Abuse: Children**Ian Mearns:**[\[53406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to strengthen support for children in the Domestic Abuse Bill through provision of a statutory right to specialist support services.

Victoria Atkins:

The Domestic Abuse Bill, as introduced on 3 March, includes a new statutory duty on tier one local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse, and their children, within safe accommodation. Paragraph 207 of the Explanatory Notes which accompany the Bill provides examples of the support that may be provided, including children's support such as play therapy and child advocacy.

To enable us to better understand the complex landscape for community-based support for all victims, including children, the Designate Domestic Abuse Commissioner has agreed to undertake an in-depth exploration of the current community-based support landscape over 2020/21.

The Government will then work with the Commissioner to understand the needs identified and develop options on how best to address them.

Domestic Abuse: Coronavirus**Dr Luke Evans:**[\[37849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to prevent an increase in the level of domestic violence cases during the covid-19 outbreak.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government is working to ensure that support services continue to be available to those that need them that information on these is widely available, and that perpetrators will be brought to justice. The police will continue to respond to any reports of domestic abuse and to prioritise 999 calls. We have made clear that advice to remain at home does not apply to those who need to leave home for safety reasons.

The Chancellor has announced a funding package of some £750m to support charities including those providing domestic abuse services to support vulnerable adults and children during the crisis.

The Home Secretary has announced £2 million of funding to immediately bolster technological capabilities of domestic abuse services to ensure that those at risk of

domestic abuse, including vulnerable adults and children, are able to access support they need.

The Government has also launched the #YouAreNotAlone awareness raising campaign to signpost those at risk of domestic abuse to support.

■ **Drugs: Organised Crime**

Ian Mearns:

[\[53408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle county lines drug trafficking and safeguard vulnerable children from exploitation.

Kit Malthouse:

We are investing £25m to crack down on county lines gangs in 19/20 and 20/21. Through our county lines programme we are expanding the National County Lines Co-ordination Centre, increasing disruption on the rail networks by British Transport Police, delivering operational intensification in the three key exporting areas, investing in new technology including Automatic Number Plate Recognition and providing increased support for victims of county lines exploitation.

Our investment is already delivering results; as a result of the first phase, between November 2019 and March 2020, police forces have made over 650 arrests, closed nearly 140 deal lines, seized cash and drugs with a total value of over £3 million, and made over 100 weapons seizures. Officers have also safeguarded scores of individuals, including 140 children, from being exploited by these gangs.

■ **Emergency Services: Mobile Phones**

Tim Farron:

[\[27986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment the Government has made of the (a) reliability and (b) adequacy of emergency services access to mobile coverage in (i) Kentmere, (ii) Longsleddale and (iii) Langdale.

Tim Farron:

[\[27987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her timescale is for Emergency Services Network and Extended Area Service masts in (a) Kentmere, (b) Longsleddale and (c) Langdale becoming operational.

Kit Malthouse:

The Extended Area Service (EAS) is a critical part of the new Emergency Services Network (ESN). It will ensure that there is ESN coverage in the most rural and remote parts of Great Britain. The EAS programme consists of 292 masts and delivery is well under way. The EAS network is already being built, where possible, to support commercial operators, and we agree that this proposal is a valuable opportunity to enhance the benefit of Government programmes to deliver improved connectivity across the country.

In respect of the EAS sites in question I can give the following updates:

a. The site in Kentmere is currently in the preliminary build stage. There are existing high voltage overhead power lines in close proximity to the site so we are currently working to divert those prior to start of construction.

The current forecast date for completion of build is August 2020.

b. The site Longsleddale is currently in build and we are forecasting completion by end of March 2020 with power on site forecasted to be June 2020.

c. The site in Langdale is at a National Trust campsite in Great Langdale and is currently at the acquisition stage. The current build completion forecast is March 2021, providing negotiations around the acquisition of the site remain completed in good time.

The Home Office is focusing efforts on getting the infrastructure builds completed as quickly as possible. The sites are expected to be activated for ESN purposes closer to the time at which they are required, given that significant operational costs are incurred once the sites are live.

The site in Kentmere will be a lattice structure and will be capable of housing Mobile Network Operators equipment to offer a commercial service once built, however, it is a matter for EE whether they elect to offer a commercial service from the site. The Sites in Longsleddale and Langdale will be monopole structures, due to planning restrictions, and will only offer a commercial service to Mobile Network Operator EE should they wish to activate it.

The primary purpose of the ESN infrastructure planned for Kentmere, Longsleddale and Langdale is that it will ensure that Britain's Emergency Services have reliable communications coverage in these areas. However, once the infrastructure has been delivered, we will seek wherever possible to make it available to the mobile operators to offer a commercial service. As a result, the areas of Kentmere, Longsleddale and Langdale may benefit from improved commercial mobile coverage.

■ **Exploitation and Slavery: Coronavirus**

Carolyn Harris:

[53504]

To ask Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government is taking to prevent a rise in exploitation and modern slavery when the lockdown due to the covid-19 outbreak is lifted.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government is committed to continuing its work to eradicate modern slavery. On 21st May, the Prime Minister hosted a virtual summit focused on 'hidden harms', including modern slavery. The virtual summit brought key decision makers together to share insight, best practice and agree an approach for tackling these crimes as we move towards easing lockdown measures.

COVID-19 has brought unprecedented challenges to us all, but victims of modern slavery may be especially isolated and hidden from view as a result of the lockdown measures required to combat the pandemic. In recognition of this, the Government

has published guidance on gov.uk (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-victims-of-modern-slavery/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-victims-of-modern-slavery>) which provides information about how to spot the potential signs of modern slavery and refer suspected cases to appropriate services. We recognise victims are coming into contact with different services during the COVID-19 outbreak and we have worked to raise awareness of the indicators of modern slavery in these areas to ensure victims continue to be identified and supported.

In addition, during the COVID-19 pandemic the Home Office has been working closely with law enforcement partners to monitor and assess changes to the threat of modern slavery, and to ensure an appropriate response to these.

This work will continue as social distancing measures are eased. We are engaging frontline organisations and NGOs through the Modern Slavery Strategy and Implementation Group (MSSIG) in order to understand challenges that are emerging as the lockdown is lifted and to consider how best to target further awareness raising and communications activity to prevent any rise in exploitation and modern slavery.

■ Firearms

Sir John Hayes:

[\[53302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of firearms owned illegally in the UK.

Kit Malthouse:

The National Ballistics Intelligence Service (NABIS) and wider law enforcement regularly assess the volume of illegal firearms used in crime in the UK. NABIS produce quarterly reports on the threat, but their assessment is continuous and key information is shared amongst law enforcement on a real time basis. This information is operationally sensitive and not published.

We are continuing to deliver our commitment to choke off the supply and availability of illegal firearms to prevent their use by criminal or terrorist groups in the UK. This includes ensuring we have the right intelligence, detection and enforcement capabilities and policies, internationally, at the UK border, and within the UK.

■ Frontex: Turkey

Dan Carden:

[\[23495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what (a) funding, (b) assets and (c) personnel the Government provides to Frontex in the Aegean region.

Chris Philp:

The UK does not provide assets or funding to Frontex in the Aegean region. However the UK provides humanitarian assistance in the Aegean through ongoing deployment of a Cutter to carry out vital search and rescue operations alongside the Hellenic Coastguard.

Since 2015 UK vessels deployed to the Aegean have rescued over 20,000 lives. In addition, due to the strong UK-Greece bilateral relationship we continue to offer support and exchange expertise on effective migration management to alleviate the pressures on the Greek islands.

■ **Home Office: ICT**

Martyn Day:

[52237]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to (a) reduce the amount of manual processing on paper it carries out and (b) make those processes digital.

James Brokenshire:

The government continues to encourage more people to go online, so they can access the guidance and services they need – as well as reducing the cost of public services.

The department has continued to reduce its paper consumption. This has been achieved through activity such as introducing a managed print service and continuing programmes of transformation and improvement within the department to reduce our reliance on paper.

In March 2019 we launched the department's first digital end-to-end solution, the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), which has received over 3.5 million online applications.

Details of the department's performance in reducing its paper consumption were published in the Greening Government Commitments Annual Report – April 2018 to March 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greening-government-commitments-2018-to-2019-annual-report>

■ **Home Office: Pay**

John McDonnell:

[53279]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the pay (a) minimum and (b) maximum is for each civil service grade in her Department below the Senior Civil Service (i) inside and (ii) outside the London area.

James Brokenshire:

The Home Office will place in the Library a copy of the current pay ranges for civil servants in the department.

Attachments:

1. Pay Ranges [pay ranges .docx]

■ Home Office: Written Questions

Mr David Lammy: [\[25006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to answer Questions 12829 and 12830 tabled on 5 February 2020 by the Rt. Hon. Member for Tottenham.

Kit Malthouse:

The responses for UIN 12829 and 12830 were answered on 10th June 2020.

Olivia Blake: [\[42218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to Questions 10485 and 10486 asked by the hon Member for Sheffield, Hallam on 30 January 2020.

Chris Philp:

The responses for UIN 10485 and 10486 were given on 10th June 2020.

Olivia Blake: [\[52628\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to Questions 10485 and 10486 asked by the hon Member for Sheffield, Hallam on 30 January 2020; and Question 42218 asked by the hon Member for Sheffield, Hallam on 30 April 2020.

Chris Philp:

The responses for UIN 10485, 10406 and 42218 were given on 10th June 2020.

■ Hong Kong: Veterans

Dr Julian Lewis: [\[53988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the oral statement of 2 June 2020 by Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Official Report, column 682 on Hong Kong National Security Legislation: UK Response, and his response at column 691 that the Home Office is considering representations on behalf of former Hong Kong Military Service Corps personnel who were not awarded UK passports between 1990 and 1997, if she will take steps with the Foreign Office to ensure that those estimated remaining 250 to 300 military and naval veterans and their families are now permitted to apply for UK passports.

Kevin Foster:

As the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said on Tuesday 2 June 2020, as a Government and as a country we are extremely grateful to those who served in the Hong Kong Military Service Corps.

This situation is being kept under review in light of recent events in Hong Kong.

■ Immigrants: Finance

Owen Thompson:

[53508]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of people who have no recourse to public funds under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Chris Philp:

We do not have estimates of the number of migrants in the UK who are in the UK and subject to no recourse to public funds (NRPF) at any given time. All visitors to the UK are subject to NRPF as are all illegal migrants

The Office for National Statistics publishes quarterly statistics for those who enter or extend their stay in the UK, the vast majority of whom will have the NRPF condition attached to their leave, but these statistics are unable to capture all of those in the UK subject to NRPF.

Owen Thompson:

[53509]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people designated as having no recourse to public funds have applied for that restriction to be lifted as a result of changes in their financial situation since the covid-19 outbreak; and how many applications have been granted.

Chris Philp:

The information you have requested is not assured to the standard required by ONS for publication and as it would be too costly to do so, we are unable to provide it.

Stephen Timms:

[55661]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish her Department's equality impact assessment on the No Recourse to Public Funds policy.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office has published its policy equality statement on the impact of the No Recourse to Public Fund (NRPF) policy on migrants on the 10-year human rights route. It can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-change-of-conditions-of-leave-to-allow-access-to-public-funds-if-your-circumstances-change>.

The NRPF policy, which is based on the principle that migrants coming to the UK are expected to maintain and support themselves and their families without posing a burden on the UK's welfare system. NRPF conditions were introduced in the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Access to benefits and other publicly funded services reflects the strength of a migrant's connections to the UK and, in the main, only become available to migrants when they have become settled in the UK with indefinite leave to remain.

People on the 10-year human rights route can apply to have the condition lifted and other groups, such as refugees, are exempt from the condition.

Patrick Grady: [55706]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her department has made of the effect of the No Recourse to Public Funds restrictions on (a) BAME communities and (b) other communities.

Patrick Grady: [55707]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what equality impact assessments her Department has undertaken on the effect of No Recourse to Public Funds' restrictions in relation to (a) race and (b) other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Patrick Grady: [55709]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what equality impact assessments his Department has undertaken in relation to the effect of No Recourse to Public Funds restrictions on health outcomes by (a) race and (b) other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office has published its policy equality statement on the impact of the No Recourse to Public Fund (NRPF) policy on migrants on the 10-year human rights route. It can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-change-of-conditions-of-leave-to-allow-access-to-public-funds-if-your-circumstances-change>.

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People on the 10-year human rights route can apply to have the condition lifted and other groups, such as refugees, are exempt from the condition.

■ Immigration Controls

Colum Eastwood: [21283]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what comparative assessment she has made of the potential effect of the points-based system for immigration announced by her Department on 19 February 2020 on the skills requirements of (a) Northern Ireland and (b) Great Britain.

Kevin Foster:

The Government published "The UK's Points-Based System: Policy Statement" on 19 February.

The new system will ensure we can attract the high-skilled workers we need to contribute to our economy, our communities and our public services.

In delivering on its manifesto commitments for a new points-based system, the Government has considered relevant views, evidence, and analysis. We will also keep labour market data under careful scrutiny.

Following advice from the independent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) we will reduce both the general salary and skills thresholds for skilled workers.

The MAC has advised against regional variations. We will deliver a system which works for the whole of our United Kingdom.

The Home Office will publish further detail on the points-based system in due course.

■ Immigration Controls: Social Services

Sir Edward Davey:

[21877]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which organisations from the care sector her Department consulted while developing the proposed points-based immigration policy.

Sir Edward Davey:

[21878]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the care sector will be included in communication and engagement programmes to help UK employers understand the new points-based immigration system; and what those programmes will entail.

Kevin Foster:

Following our departure from the European Union, Freedom of Movement is coming to an end and we are taking back control of our borders.

The Government published "The UK's Points-Based System: Policy Statement" on 19 February. Senior care workers who meet the criteria will be able to come to the UK through the points-based system.

The Government has considered relevant views, evidence, and analysis. We are also working alongside employers across the whole of the UK to ensure the workforce has the right number of people to meet increasing demands and have recently launched a national recruitment campaign.

The Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) has been clear immigration is not the solution to addressing staffing levels in the social care sector. A point the Government agrees with as the vision for this sector cannot just be based on paying the lowest wages possible. Employers need to invest in technology, innovation and their existing workforce, focusing on making jobs more attractive for UK workers, especially considering the economic impact of Covid-19 where many may need to find new employment.

We will deliver a comprehensive programme of communication and engagement in the coming months.

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[28562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to Questions 21877 and 21878 on the proposed point based immigration system, tabled on 27 February 2020.

Kevin Foster:

The responses for UIN 21877 and 21878 were given on 10th June 2020.

■ **Immigration: South Asia**

Apsana Begum:

[\[2035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the hostile environment policies on (a) current and (b) potential migrants from (i) India, (ii) Pakistan and (iii) Bangladesh.

Chris Philp:

The Government is committed to a firm, fair and humane immigration policy which distinguishes effectively between those with lawful status and those here illegally.

In common with other comparable countries, the UK has in place a framework of laws, policies and administrative arrangements, introduced under successive governments ensuring access to work benefits and services is permitted for those with the right access to them. Key measures were the subject of public consultations and/or impact assessments before they were introduced. These measures incorporate important safeguards, including the ability to exercise discretion where there are genuine barriers to persons leaving the UK or there are exceptional compassionate factors.

Eligibility checks are based on checking lawful status, not the nationality of those accessing work and key services, applying equally to all.

■ **Immigration: Yorkshire and the Humber**

Olivia Blake:

[\[10485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many immigration raids took place in (a) Sheffield, (b) Rotherham, (c) Barnsley and (d) Doncaster in the 2019 calendar year.

Olivia Blake:

[\[10486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many immigration raids took place in Yorkshire and the Humber in the 2019 calendar year.

Chris Philp:

To maintain the highest standards of accuracy, the Home Office prefers to refer to published data, as this has been subject to rigorous quality assurance under National Statistics protocols prior to publication.

Information about enforcement visits is not available in our published data.

Our published data is available at the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-enforcement-data-august-2019>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-september-2019/summary-of-latest-statistics>

■ Offences against Children: Coronavirus

Ian Mearns:

[53407]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to protect children and young people from child sexual abuse (a) at home and (b) online during the covid-19 outbreak.

Victoria Atkins:

We are acutely aware that the necessary guidelines about social distancing and self-isolation may leave the victims of hidden crime, such as child sexual abuse, feeling especially vulnerable. For some children, home is not the safe-haven it should be, and more time spent online means children may be at increased risk of online harms.

We have responded swiftly to the risks posed by COVID-19, working closely with Law Enforcement, the UK Intelligence Community, safeguarding partners and the third sector to assess the threat and ensure they have the resources they need to tackle offending and provide the greatest protection for vulnerable children.

We are further working across government and agencies to ensure that teachers, parents and carers have access to the support they need to help keep children safe online. As part of this the National Crime Agency have launched the #OnlineSafetyAtHome campaign, the Department for Education has published interim safeguarding guidance for schools and colleges encouraging them to disseminate advice on online safety and we have published guidance for parents and carers on gov.uk.

As part of this the Government made £1.6 million available immediately for the NSPCC to expand and promote its national helpline for adults. We also worked across government, with the NCA and industry to ensure that teachers, parents and carers have access to the support they need to help keep children safe online.

On 21st May, the Prime Minister hosted a virtual summit focused on 'hidden harms', including child sexual abuse. The virtual summit brought key decision makers together to share insight, best practice and agree an approach for tackling these crimes as we move towards easing lockdown measures.

Ahead of the summit, the Home Secretary announced that £9.86 million is being allocated to the National Crime Agency to improve its ability to tackle perpetrators seeking to offend against children via the Dark Web. An additional £3.36 million is being committed to further improve our understanding and tackle all aspects of the child sexual abuse threat. We will also launch a £2.8 million transformation fund to promote and embed best practice in Child Sexual Abuse victim support.

Following the Summit, we have sought to engage stakeholders within communities who could support in identifying vulnerable children, by delivering communications that highlight how to spot the signs of abuse and neglect, as well as where to report concerns. The aim is to improve our collective ability to detect and respond to a range of harms, including at home.

The Home Office will distribute £7.8 million in emergency support for charities helping vulnerable children who have been impacted by the coronavirus outbreak. We are working closely with other government departments to identify an approach for disbursing the proportion of the £360 million charities funding allocated directly from government departments to vulnerable children's charities, with the aim to implement the approach as soon as possible.

■ Police

Sir John Hayes:

[\[53297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to increase the number of police officers.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government has committed to increasing the number of police officers by 20,000 over the next three years.

We are giving police forces £700 million this year to help with the recruitment of the first 6,000 additional officers by the end of March 2021.

Police recruitment remains a priority during the COVID-19 outbreak to ensure forces remain resilient during and following this national crisis. New online police assessment centres are being rolled out by the College of Policing and we have refreshed and relaunched our national recruitment campaign to ensure the door remains open for anyone who wants to join the police and make a difference in their community.

■ Police: Demonstrations

Sir Mike Penning:

[\[53328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to (a) protect and (b) subsequently test police officers who are involved in policing demonstrations where demonstrators are failing to abide by the Government's social distancing measures; and if she will make a statement.

Kit Malthouse:

Our emergency services are doing a fantastic job keeping us safe, using their professional judgement to protect our NHS and save lives. We are committed to ensuring the police have the powers, resources and equipment they need to do their crucial work.

The Government recognises the importance of Personal Protective Equipment for all of those on the frontline. As of 29 May, the National Police Co-ordination Centre

(NPoCC) have distributed 345,733 masks to police forces across the country over the last two weeks. In total, 20,098,314 pieces of PPE have been procured and will be delivered over the following weeks. Over the course of this week, NPoCC is also set to supply over 200,000 masks and continue to receive additional stock to support forces.

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) have confirmed that police currently have a good supply of PPE and they are working to oversee its distribution to forces. The NPCC have issued guidance to all forces on the use of PPE tailored to their unique role to ensure officers and staff are protected sufficiently.

Testing continues to be available to all symptomatic police officers. This enables staff to be able to determine if they should remain isolated or can come back to the workplace in the immediate term. This is vital for our frontline resilience in areas such as policing, fire and Border Force.

■ **Prisoners: Repatriation**

Sir John Hayes:

[\[53299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to remove foreign national offenders during the covid-19 outbreak.

Chris Philp:

Removals of foreign national offenders and those who have no lawful basis to stay in the UK are still taking place where routes are available, and Immigration Enforcement are following the latest guidance from Public Health England.

■ **Serious Violence Taskforce**

Mr David Lammy:

[\[12829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the serious violence taskforce last met.

Mr David Lammy:

[\[12830\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the serious violence taskforce is next planned to meet.

Kit Malthouse:

The Serious Violence Taskforce was established in 2018 to oversee the implementation of the Serious Violence Strategy. It last met on 26 June 2019.

The Government remains incredibly grateful for the work of the Taskforce which brought together Ministers, senior leaders and key partners. The Taskforce influenced additional action and investment in this area, for example through the creation of the new £200m Youth Endowment Fund, the consultation on the new duty on agencies to reduce serious violence and the launch of the Independent Review of Drugs Misuse.

The Government's Manifesto set out an ambitious package of reforms to deliver on the people's priorities and tackle violent crime and safeguard people's streets and neighbourhoods. The Prime Minister and Home Secretary are driving this with a new cross-Whitehall Crime and Justice Taskforce to ensure we use every lever at our disposal to fight crime.

We will consider the future role for the Serious Violence Taskforce in delivering these priorities, within this context.

■ Slavery: Victims

Carolyn Harris:

[53505]

To ask Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many potential (a) adult and (b) child victims of modern slavery have been identified since the lockdown due to the covid-19 outbreak was introduced on 23 March 2020.

Victoria Atkins:

The Home Office publishes quarterly statistics on the number of referrals made to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for adults and children which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>.

Statistics for the first quarter (Q1) of 2020 were published on 4th June. These include the number of referrals made to the NRM for adults and children between 1st January and 31st March 2020.

■ Undocumented Migrants

Bill Wiggin:

[51640]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many illegal migrants have arrived in the UK by boat in May 2020.

Chris Philp:

People crossing the Channel to enter the UK have come from a safe country – usually France – and so there is no reason why they need to make this trip in order to claim asylum. Those fleeing persecution should stay in the first safe country they enter.

The number of migrants arriving in the UK crossing the Channel by small boats for the months of January to March 2020 is approx. 450. These are provisional figures based on operational management information. The figures for April and May have not passed through a data quality check and cannot be assured. The final figures for all months will be published at a later date, once they have been verified and fully quality assured.

The UK continues to work closely with France and other countries to return migrants who have entered the UK by small boat in order to provide a strong deterrent against these dangerous crossings.

■ Visas: Albania and Poland

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:

[\[53550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on what date (a) Albanian and (b) Polish authorities will be granted permission to restart the processing of UK visas.

Kevin Foster:

UK visa applications are processed by the Home Office, not other national authorities.

The decision on when to re-open the UK visa application centres in Poland and Albania, which are operated by the Home Office's commercial partner TLS, will be made as soon as the Home Office and TLS are satisfied TLS are able to deliver the service safely for both staff and customers, and in compliance with local government guidelines relating to Covid-19.

■ Windrush Generation: Compensation

Helen Hayes:

[\[52275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the level of potential delay in issuing payments under the Windrush Compensation Scheme as a result of the covid-19 outbreak; and what steps she is taking to ensure that applications to that scheme continue to progress during the covid-19 lockdown.

Priti Patel:

We are processing claims as quickly as possible, but all claims are different, and the time taken will depend on many factors, including the complexity of the case. We are committed to working with the claimant to ensure all possible information is taken into account and this will have an impact on the length of time it takes to process the claim. Wherever possible, we will make interim payments on parts of the claim that are straightforward to determine, such as immigration fees, thereby speeding up the provision of compensation. We recently published statistics on the payments made under the Windrush Compensation Scheme at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-compensation-scheme-data-may-2020>. These show a clear increasing trajectory of payments: £362,997 paid in the first 12 months of the scheme, of which £300,799 was paid in the most recent three months of that period, which includes the initial period of the covid-19 lockdown. The Windrush Compensation Scheme continues to operate throughout the covid-19 lockdown. Business continuity measures are in place which allow claims to continue to be processed. Payments continue to be made.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION**■ Members: Security****Martyn Day:**[\[54963\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Perth and North Perthshire, representing the House of Commons Commission, what assessment he has made of the security risk to hon. Members congregating in open areas of the parliamentary estate as a result of the arrangements for physical divisions during the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

Pete Wishart:

Whilst the Commission does not comment in public on security matters, an assessment of the security risks to hon. Members was made before physical divisions resumed, with ongoing assessments also in place. The security of hon. Members is of the highest importance and suitable mitigations have been put in place to minimise any potential risks.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Buildings: Insulation****Mike Amesbury:**[\[55117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to his Department's Building Safety Programme: Monthly Data Release, published on 14 May 2020, if he will publish local authority data in the format of Table 3 in that document for all (a) social sector buildings identified with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet building regulations, (b) social sector buildings identified with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet building regulations yet to be remediated, (c) private sector buildings identified with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet building regulations and (d) private sector buildings identified with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet building regulations yet to be remediated.

Mike Amesbury:[\[55119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to page 10 of his Department's Building Safety Programme: Monthly Data Release published on 14 May 2020, in which regions the 13,500 to 17,200 dwellings in the 180 private blocks with aluminium composite material cladding systems yet to be remediated are.

Mike Amesbury:[\[55120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to page nine of his Department's Building Safety Programme: Monthly Data Release published on 14 May 2020, in which regions the 6,400 dwellings in social sector blocks with aluminium composite material cladding systems yet to be remediated are.

Christopher Pincher:

We are considering what further information can be published in the Building Safety Programme Monthly Data Release for different geographical areas by sector, including regions and local authorities, without risking the identification of buildings with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet building regulations in these areas. This reflects the position of the Government not to reveal the identity of high-rise residential buildings with unsafe ACM cladding systems on public safety grounds.

Mike Amesbury:[\[55118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he made of the (a) number of blocks (b) cost per block and (c) cost per dwelling of removing dangerous non-ACM cladding when calculating the £1 billion Building Safety Fund.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government is providing £1 billion through a new Building Safety Fund to help meet the costs of unsafe non-ACM cladding remediation. The size of the fund reflects Government's expectation that, as for ACM cladding remediation, a significant number of building owners will fund this work themselves, through those originally responsible for the defects and through warranty claims before seeking Government funding or passing on costs to their leaseholders.

■ LGBT People: Temporary Accommodation**Caroline Lucas:**[\[53372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many LGBTIQ+ specialist refuges and hostels there are in England.

Luke Hall:

My Department does not hold central data on the number of specialist refuges in England.

However, I can confirm that we do support specialist refuges, including LGBTIQ+ specialist refuges, which provide safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse and their children. During 2020/21 we have committed funding to support safe accommodation services, including, £16.6 million to 75 local authority-led projects, and a further £10 million emergency funding to support safe accommodation charitable providers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

On 5 June we announced that £8.1 million of this emergency support funding will be granted to 103 successful charity bids, supporting a total of 147 charities providing domestic abuse safe accommodation of which 42 organisations are providing specialist support to diverse groups. The remaining funding remains open for bids and we would welcome applications from those providing vital specialist support.

Local Government Finance: Staffordshire**Jack Brereton:**[\[54233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the allocation of an additional £474 million of Government funding to local authorities in Staffordshire in response to the covid-19 outbreak, if he will publish (a) the expenditure of that funding by local authority area and (b) the budget headings under which that funding was so expended.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Councils are on the front line as we tackle this pandemic, and we have now made £3.2 billion available to local authorities through an un-ringfenced grant so they can address pressures in response to Covid-19.

It is important that we carefully monitor the pressures they are facing. Across both rounds of our Covid-19 financial monitoring survey we received data from every single authority asked. We are extremely grateful for their continued collaboration, which enables us to understand pressures at a national and local level. A summary of the data provided to us by councils in England will be available in due course.

We know from the first two rounds of monitoring that the majority of the money is being allocated to supporting those most vulnerable in society, as we would expect. Other service areas that money is being allocated to environmental costs (which includes death management) and housing which includes homelessness and rough sleeping.

Local Government: Coronavirus**Steve Reed:**[\[55688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what (a) powers and (b) guidance has been given to Local Authorities to enable local lockdowns in the event of an increase in covid-19 cases in their local area.

Mr Simon Clarke:

My Department has been working with the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) and the Department of Health and Social Care to develop a framework for the local management of further outbreaks. In addition, all upper tier local authorities have been asked to develop local outbreak control plans based on the existing statutory responsibilities of their Directors of Public Health. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, alongside other relevant Departments, is considering whether further powers are required for local authorities to manage future outbreaks in line with these plans.

■ Local Plans

Jake Berry: [53414]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will ask the Planning Inspectorate to clarify the exceptional circumstances that justify changes to green belt boundaries in the local plan creation process.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government revised the National Planning Policy Framework in 2018, clarifying the exceptional circumstances test for local authorities who are proposing altering the Green Belt boundary through their local plan. Local authorities need to demonstrate that all other reasonable options for meeting identified development needs have been examined, including those criteria given in paragraph 137, and will need to consider all available evidence and local circumstances in making this assessment.

Jake Berry: [53415]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what reasonable steps should be taken by a local authority to ascertain the supply of land available for housing as part of the local plan creation process.

Christopher Pincher:

It is essential for Local Planning Authorities to have up-to-date Local Plans, which provide a vision for their area and identify a supply of deliverable sites to address housing needs.

Each Local Planning Authority should establish the land available for housing in its area by undertaking a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, this is set out in paragraph 67 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and more detailed Guidance is provided within the National Planning Practice Guidance website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment>.

Jake Berry: [53416]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what consideration should be made by the Planning Inspectorate of emerging neighbourhood plans during the examination phase of local plan creation.

Christopher Pincher:

During the examination phase, the role of a Planning Inspector is to assess whether the local plan has been prepared in line with the relevant legal requirements, and whether it meets the tests of 'soundness' contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. An emerging neighbourhood plan and the evidence that underpins that plan, can be considered by the inspector where relevant to the preparation of the local plan. Government planning guidance makes clear that it is important for local plans to make appropriate reference to neighbourhood plan policies or proposals.

Jake Berry: [54097]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will issue guidance to (a) Rossendale Borough Council and (b) other local authorities on the

release of land from the Green Belt in a Local Plan under paragraph 137 of the national planning policy framework.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government revised the National Planning Policy Framework in 2018, clarifying the exceptional circumstances test for local authorities who are proposing altering the Green Belt boundary through the local plan process. Local authorities need to demonstrate that all other reasonable options for meeting identified development needs have been examined, including those criteria given in paragraph 137, and will need to consider all available evidence and local circumstances in making this assessment.

■ **Marriage: Ceremonies**

Kevin Brennan:

[\[55664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to enable faith venues that are approved for the registration of marriages to hold small wedding ceremonies with only the couple, celebrant and witnesses in attendance.

Luke Hall:

We want to allow people to hold small weddings as soon as we can, but this must be done safely. Working with other departments, we will consider how small wedding ceremonies could take place safely in due course. We are working in partnership with faith leaders, through our Places of Worship Taskforce, to develop guidance that will enable the phased and safe reopening of places of worship.

■ **Road Traffic Offences: Fines**

Tim Loughton:

[\[55654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what progress he has made on enabling local authorities to issue fines for (a) inconsiderate driving and (b) pavement parking.

Mr Simon Clarke:

These are important issues about which the Hon Member should contact the Department for Transport for further information.

■ **Shops and Markets: Coronavirus**

Sajid Javid:

[\[53391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department has taken to encourage communities to support local businesses as shops and outdoor markets begin to re-open as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

Mr Simon Clarke:

This Government is fully committed to supporting the businesses and communities that make our high streets and retail markets successful as the nation responds to the impacts of the Covid-19 outbreak. Now more than ever, it is vital that we continue to help our local economies by supporting town centres and markets to recover, adapt and evolve.

On 25 May government announced a new £50 million fund, Reopening High Streets Safely Fund, to support councils across England to aid the safe reopening of high streets and other commercial areas.

This makes use of recent EU flexibilities to respond quickly and flexibly to the impacts of Covid-19 to help local businesses to reopen safely and ensures existing jobs are safeguarded and High Street business closures, in particular on the High Street, are minimised.

Helping towns and cities develop safe trading environments, particularly in high streets, will be key to kick starting the economy, getting people back to work, businesses trading and helping to reinvigorate communities.

The Fund provides support to local businesses on high streets across England helping them to put in place a number of extra social distancing measures that will allow them to reopen safely and confidently.

Government has also established the High Streets Task Force who will now more than ever play a vital role in supporting the recovery of our local economies. The Task Force will support local leaders in their work revitalising their high streets and town centres by providing proactive support to local areas to develop data-driven innovative strategies and connect local areas to relevant experts.

Government appreciates how much people cherish their high streets and retail markets, they are the centres of their community and we will continue to work with them and key stakeholders to monitor the impacts of the current situation and ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Africa and South Asia: Locusts****Ian Lavery:****[54111]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the effect of recent locust swarms in Africa and South Asia on food security in those regions.

James Duddridge:

We are deeply concerned about the locust outbreak in Africa and South Asia, and the devastating impact on food security in those regions. It is destroying crops, livelihoods, and essential food supplies, compounding the effects of existing humanitarian disasters and putting millions of people at risk of food insecurity.

To date the UK has provided £5 million to FAO's regional appeal for surveillance, control and coordination activities. Additionally, DFID Sudan has provided £2 million bi-laterally and DFID Pakistan £1 million to FAO's response in-country. The Department for International Development (DFID) has significant humanitarian and development programmes in the affected regions that are adapting to support vulnerable communities in response to the outbreak. The Desert Locust Control Organisation for Eastern Africa, based in Nairobi, has also been using a DFID-funded super computer to predict movements of locusts and geographically target the response.

Our support is having an immediate impact. We continue to monitor the situation closely and stand ready to help further.

Ian Lavery:

[54112]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the effect of recent locust swarms in Africa and South Asia on those regions' ability to respond to the covid-19 pandemic.

James Duddridge:

We are deeply concerned about the locust outbreak in Africa and South Asia, which is compounding existing humanitarian need caused by the residual effects of humanitarian disasters, conflicts and the COVID-19 pandemic. It is affecting the regions' ability to respond to these crises by destroying livelihoods and essential food supplies, putting millions of people at risk of further insecurity during the pandemic.

The UK is supporting the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) Regional Emergency Appeal for the locust outbreak and has contributed £5 million for the spraying of pesticides on the ground and by air. Additionally, DFID Sudan has provided £2 million bi-laterally and DFID Pakistan £1 million to FAO's response in-country.

We are also playing a leading role in the global response to COVID-19, working with international partners to slow its spread and pledging £764 million of UK aid globally to end the pandemic. Additionally, the UK is providing up to £150 million to the International Monetary Fund's Catastrophe Containment Relief Trust to help developing countries, including many in Africa and South Asia, meet their debt repayments so they can focus available resources on tackling COVID-19. The UK has worked closely with G20 creditors and the Paris Club on a temporary suspension of debt repayments from countries that request relief, further boosting response capacities.

Finally, the UK is urgently redirecting existing programmes in Africa and South Asia to respond to the locust outbreak and the COVID-19 pandemic. Our support is having an immediate impact. We are closely monitoring the situation and stand ready to help further.

■ **Coronavirus: International Cooperation**

David Mundell:

[\[54039\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the Government's hosting of the Global Vaccine Summit 2020 on 4 June 2020, what steps she plans to take to help ensure that there is a globally coordinated response to the covid-19 pandemic.

Wendy Morton:

The UK is proud to have raised \$8.8 billion for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance at the Global Vaccine Summit on 4 June. The UK pledged £1.65 billion to Gavi for 2021 to 2025. The Gavi Alliance, which includes the World Health Organisation and UNICEF, will play a vital role in maintaining essential services, including routine immunisation, throughout the pandemic. Routine immunisation is the strongest shield against secondary outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases. The funding raised by all donors at the Global Vaccine Summit will enable Gavi to immunise 300 million more children and save up to 8 million lives by 2025. The UK has also reallocated \$60 million for Gavi's Covax AMC, to ensure access in the poorest countries to any COVID-19 vaccine.

The UK is a key supporter of the COVID-19 pandemic response. This includes a global health response led by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The UK is a key donor to the WHO and has already contributed £75 million to help the organisation lead international efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19 and end the pandemic.

■ **Department for International Development: Equality**

Sarah Olney:

[\[903062\]](#)

If she will publish an action plan on promoting gender mainstreaming across all her Department's work.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Support for women and girls is part of this government's mission. I will always champion gender equality in international development because that's the only way we will create a fairer, safer and more prosperous world, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Next year DFID will publish an implementation plan for its Strategic Vision for Gender Equality to set out our objectives and progress on ensuring women and girls are at the heart of everything DFID and its partners deliver. I'm proud of how far we've come but there's plenty more to do.

■ **Developing Countries: Coronavirus**

John Lamont:

[\[54998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what discussions she has had with representatives of international financial institutions on financing potential vaccinations and treatments for covid-19 in developing countries.

Wendy Morton:

The DFID Secretary of State regularly speaks with counterparts in the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) on a range of issues. DFID officials have also been working closely with the IFIs and have had initial conversations on the possibility of financing potential COVID-19 vaccines and treatments in developing countries. We also worked with the World Bank Group, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and others, to launch a brand-new scheme to ensure global vaccine production at the UK-hosted Global Vaccine Summit, on 4 June. The COVAX Advance Market Commitment for COVID-19 vaccines is aimed at incentivising vaccine manufacturers to produce sufficient quantities of a potential COVID-19 vaccine and to ensure future access for low- and middle-income countries. The UK has contributed over £48 million (\$60.6 million) to this initiative.

Fleur Anderson:[\[55128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department has allocated fifty per cent of Official Development Assistance to support the response of fragile states to the covid-19 pandemic.

James Cleverly:

DFID will continue to meet its commitment to spend 50% of its budget in Fragile and Conflict States.

■ Developing Countries: Poverty**Mrs Pauline Latham:**[\[903065\]](#)

How often her Department assesses the effectiveness of UK funding allocated to the World Bank on ending poverty throughout the world.

Nigel Adams:

The UK is a major funder of the World Bank, a crucial tool in our development work. My Department monitors and assesses the effectiveness of the World Bank continually. We formally review each funding stream to the World Bank Group annually and we publish our assessment online. Our latest assessment concluded that the International Development Association – the concessional arm of the Bank - is 'performing above expectations'. Amongst other things our money has contributed to the immunisation of 330 million children in the last 9 years.

■ Females: Equality**Daisy Cooper:**[\[54254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will include the vulnerabilities of women from religious minorities who are persecuted for gender and religion in her Department's March 2018 document entitled 2018 to 2030 Vision for Gender Equality.

Nigel Adams:

The persecution of religious minorities and non-religious people is acute and increasing in many countries; for women these violations often include gender-based violence, forced marriage and endemic marginalisation.

DFID's Strategic Vision for Gender Equality calls for a step change in our support to the most excluded and vulnerable women and girls, particularly those facing multiple exclusions, on the basis of their disability, age, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexuality, location or other characteristic.

Our UK Aid Connect programme is providing £12 million over 4 years to support a consortium of organisations, including faith and human rights groups, to develop effective approaches to promote tolerance and freedom of belief, including gender equality. The programme will explore gender sensitive processes and segregated data for the monitoring of hate speech against religious minorities at local, national and global levels. The work will ensure the leadership involvement and visibility of women from minorities in coalitions.

The UK has also stepped up our advocacy on freedom of religion or belief, through our diplomatic network. We regularly raise individual cases bilaterally and highlight discriminatory legislation and practices in multilateral fora.

■ Overseas Aid: Coronavirus**Fleur Anderson:**[\[55129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what support her Department is providing to (a) local markets, (b) SMEs and (c) the informal economy in fragile and conflict affected states during the covid-19 pandemic.

James Duddridge:

We have adapted existing bilateral health, humanitarian, economic and social protection programmes across 35 countries and regions as part of our COVID-19 response. We are assessing secondary impacts on local agriculture and food markets in fragile and conflict affected states, and helping to mitigate these through multilateral initiatives such as the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP).

As a shareholder and leading donor to the Multilateral Development Banks, we have been working with them to ensure that they are rapidly providing much-needed working capital to SMEs and supply chains that workers and farmers in developing countries depend on. This includes \$8 billion of fast-tracked support from the International Finance Cooperation.

We are also exploring how DFID's private sector development finance programmes can respond and complement this support. For example, CDC is supporting its existing portfolio of investee companies, and their workforces, to weather the crisis, and is looking to make new investments that provide systemic liquidity to companies, including SMEs. We are also working to support businesses with supply chains in

developing countries to ensure their most vulnerable workers and suppliers are prepared for the anticipated economic and social shocks.

Fleur Anderson:

[55130]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how overseas aid is being used to mitigate the economic effect of the covid-19 pandemic by supporting people in the informal economy in fragile places.

James Duddridge:

The poorest and most fragile countries have limited economic tools to respond to the global economic downturn. We are working through the International Financial Institutions and our bilateral programmes to ensure Governments and businesses in fragile states can access affordable financing and advisory support; and to urgently establish safety nets to protect the most vulnerable.

DFID currently supports social protection and/or humanitarian cash transfer programmes in 35 countries, including Fragile and Conflict Affected States, which support people who are vulnerable to the economic impact of COVID-19.

We are also advising 20 of the poorest cities in the world to strengthen their response to COVID-19, by identifying urban areas and informal settlements, including slums, that are particularly vulnerable due to dense populations and lack of access to water and sanitation.

Fleur Anderson:

[55131]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how Overseas Development Assistance is helping communities manage social tensions that are being exacerbated by the covid-19 pandemic.

James Cleverly:

The UK is taking steps to ensure that both our immediate responses to COVID-19 and long-term recovery efforts do not exacerbate social tensions and instead help to build peace, improve governance and strengthen social cohesion. We are encouraging our implementing partners to demonstrate accountability, strengthen local ownership and leadership and adopt inclusive, conflict sensitive approaches. We are further working with partners, governments, media providers, civil society and local leaders to counter mis- and disinformation.

We particularly recognise the importance of working with local women's rights and women-led organisations to deliver more effective and safer responses, and believe that greater engagement of local partners ensures continuity and builds social cohesion as efforts shift to the medium and longer term recovery.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ Arms Trade: Inspections****Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**[\[52343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which sites used by holders of general export licences for military goods have not been inspected by her Department under Article 31 of the Export Control Order 2008 in each of the last 36 months apart from the BAE site at Warton.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

HM Government supports responsible defence industries, which make a major contribution to our prosperity. Licensing controls are a vital service to industry, protecting the reputation and legitimacy of business.

Inspections of records under section 31 are in relation to a company's use of general licences. The purpose of inspections is to get assurance that users of general licences meet the terms and conditions of their licences.

The scope of the general licences includes only items and destinations that are consistent with the Consolidated Criteria. Those published by the Department for International Trade have all been pre-assessed for risk and agreed by all relevant departments that they can be published. Our compliance checks are focused where higher risks of non-compliance lie.

An answer detailing the sites that have not been inspected in the past 36 months can only be provided at disproportionate cost, as my Department would have to manually review every existing and surrendered open licence registration.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:[\[52347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, when her Department last used its powers under Article 31 of the Export Control Order 2008 to undertake inspections of (a) the Raytheon sites at (i) Glenrothes and (ii) Harlow, (b) the MBDA sites at (i) Stevenage, (ii) Loughton and (iii) Henlow, (c) the BAE site at Samlesbury and (d) the Rolls Royce factory at Bristol; and what the outcome was of each of those inspections.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

HM Government supports responsible defence industries, which make a major contribution to our prosperity. Licensing controls are a vital service to industry, protecting the reputation and legitimacy of business.

The obligation is for a business to inform us of the address where records relating to exports made under general licences are kept. As such we are not able to ascertain where records may be held for specific sites and there is no requirement under the legislation that businesses provide that information.

The purpose of inspections is to get assurance that users of general licences meet the terms and conditions of the licences they use. Whilst the outcome of compliance inspections is commercially sensitive, the Hon. Gentleman may still find it helpful to know that the following inspections took place:

- (a) Raytheon (i) Glenrothes – 23 November 2016 (ii) Harlow – 5 November 2015
- (b) MBDA (i) Stevenage – 31 August 2017 (ii) Lostock – 19 October 2017 (iii) Henlow – no records held at this site
- (c) BAE at Samlesbury – 5 April 2017
- (d) Rolls Royce at Bristol – 18 September 2017

■ **Medical Equipment: Trade Barriers**

Emily Thornberry: [\[53336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what discussions she has had with her counterparts in (a) New Zealand and (b) Singapore on their proposals at the WTO to seek global agreement on removing trade barriers to medical supply chains.

Emily Thornberry: [\[53337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she supports the efforts led by New Zealand and Singapore at the WTO to seek global agreement on removing trade barriers to medical supply chains.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

The United Kingdom has taken a leading role in advocating for open supply chains throughout the crisis. We welcome the similarly proactive approach taken by Singapore and New Zealand, including on removing trade barriers to medical supply chains.

My Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade has had discussions with her counterparts in Singapore and New Zealand, discussing our international response and the importance of minimising trade disruption. The United Kingdom will continue to work with global partners as part of the global Covid-19 response.

■ **Paracetamol: India**

Emily Thornberry: [\[53333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent discussions she has had with her Indian counterpart on securing the continued supply of paracetamol to the UK.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

My Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade has held a number of discussions with her Indian counterpart, Minister Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry, including at the recent Extraordinary G20 Trade Ministerial meetings.

In these discussions, the Secretary of State has stressed the importance of making sure supply chains remain open and that any trade barriers introduced in response to Covid-19 are proportionate, transparent and time limited. The significance of export approval for essential shipments of medical supplies and medicines bound for the United Kingdom from India was also raised.

I am pleased to say that the Government of India has now removed export restrictions on paracetamol to the United Kingdom.

■ **Protective Clothing: Turkey**

Emily Thornberry:

[\[53332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what involvement her Department had in the recent sourcing of 400,000 medical gowns from Turkey.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

The Department for International Trade in Turkey supported the delivery and airlift of this consignment of personal protection equipment (PPE) from Turkey that had been sourced directly by the NHS. My Department is engaged directly with a wide range of Turkish manufacturers over future high-volume orders of PPE.

■ **Riot Control Weapons: USA**

Stephen Farry:

[\[53663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how much (a) tear gas irritant ammunition, (b) tear gas riot control agents, (c) rubber bullets, and (d) riot shields were exported to the United States in the last year; and what recent assessment he has made of the likelihood of those exports being used in protests against police brutality in that country.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

My Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade and I have been sorry to see the violence that has taken place in the United States of America.

All export licence applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria ('Consolidated Criteria'). In reaching a decision, the Department for International Trade receives advice from a number of Departments including the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Together, we draw on all available information, including reports from NGOs and our diplomatic missions. The Consolidated Criteria provides a thorough risk assessment framework and requires us to think hard about the impact of exporting any equipment. These are not decisions my Department takes lightly, and we will not license the export of items where to do so would be inconsistent with the Consolidated Criteria.

Any licence granted by my Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade may be subject to conditions. In addition, in line with the Consolidated Criteria, my Department is able to review licences – and suspend or revoke as necessary – when circumstances require. There are currently nine extant licences that may be linked to law enforcement agencies. Six are Open Individual Export Licences ('OIELs'), which have potential end users that include law enforcement agencies. Three are Standard Individual Export Licences ('SIELs'), which have numerous potential end users that include law enforcement agencies. There are also 15 Open

General Licences ('OGLs') for which businesses can register that cover the export of anti-riot gear.

Much information is in the public domain already. We publish information on all export licences issued, refused and revoked on a quarterly and annual basis as official statistics on GOV.UK – at: gov.uk/government/collections/strategic-export-controls-licensing-data – and whilst data on actual exports is not required to be centrally held, the licences issued until the end of December 2019 are available.

Sir Charles Walker:

[54037]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the Government has powers to attach conditions to the granting of export licenses, in relation to sale and export of riot and crowd control equipment to the US and other countries which if not met could result in a license being cancelled; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

My Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade and I have been sorry to see the violence that has taken place in the United States of America.

All export licence applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria ('Consolidated Criteria'). In reaching a decision, the Department for International Trade receives advice from a number of Departments including the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Together, we draw on all available information, including reports from NGOs and our diplomatic missions. The Consolidated Criteria provides a thorough risk assessment framework and requires us to think hard about the impact of exporting any equipment. These are not decisions my Department takes lightly, and we will not license the export of items where to do so would be inconsistent with the Consolidated Criteria.

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■ Trade Agreements: Egypt

Emily Thornberry: [\[53338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent discussions on human rights she has had with her Egyptian counterpart during ongoing talks to replicate UK trading arrangements with Egypt.

Emily Thornberry: [\[53339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will make it her policy to insert a clause on human rights into any rollover of EU trade agreements with Egypt.

Emily Thornberry: [\[53340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent discussions on human rights she has had with her Cameroonian counterpart during ongoing talks to replicate UK trading arrangements with Cameroon.

Emily Thornberry: [\[53341\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will make it her policy to insert a clause on human rights into any rollover of EU trade agreements with Cameroon.

Emily Thornberry: [\[53342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent discussions on human rights she has had with her Singaporean counterpart during ongoing talks to replicate UK trading arrangements with Singapore.

Emily Thornberry: [\[53343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will make it her policy to insert a clause on human rights into any rollover of EU trade agreements with Singapore.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

The United Kingdom has a strong history of promoting our values globally. We will continue to encourage all states to uphold their international obligations and are clear that trade does not have to come at the expense of rights and responsibilities.

We are continuing our programme to replicate the effects of existing EU trade agreements with trading partners to ensure continuity for British businesses following the transition period. This includes aiming to replicate the effects of existing provisions on rights and responsibilities, in transitioned EU trade agreements. Work continues in a way that reflects the reality of the current situation and respects public health.

Ministers and senior officials always raise concerns over human rights and related responsibilities where appropriate and will continue to do so.

JUSTICE**■ Administration of Justice**

Richard Graham: [\[902974\]](#)

What plans his Department has to increase access to justice.

Alex Chalk:

Access to justice is a fundamental right and this government is committed to ensuring that everyone can get the timely support they need to access the justice system.

We announced our vision for resolving legal problems earlier and increasing access to justice through the Legal Support Action Plan, including the role technology can play in identifying legal problems.

Despite various real demands of Covid-19 on the MoJ, we have continued to prioritise a new £3.1m grant that will further enhance legal support for litigants in person over the next two years.

■ Aviation: Coronavirus

Darren Henry: [\[55054\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to enable marriages to take place as the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are lifted.

Alex Chalk:

We understand the frustration couples planning a wedding must be feeling, and as with all coronavirus restrictions we will look to ease them as soon as it is safe to do so.

■ Crimes against the Person: Emergency Services

Grahame Morris: [\[55675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average custodial sentence was for people convicted of assaulting an emergency worker in the most recent period for which figures are available.

Grahame Morris: [\[55676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many maximum 12-month custodial sentences have been given since the sentence for assaulting an emergency worker was doubled.

Chris Philp:

The Ministry of Justice has published information on the sentencing outcomes of court proceedings up to December 2019. The average custodial sentence length (ACSL) and the number of 12 month custodial sentences given for assaults on emergency workers can be found by using the Outcomes by offence data tool, available [here](#):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888664/outcomes-by-offence-tool-2019.xlsx

In the pivot table, filter the Offence field to '8.22 Assault of an emergency worker'. The ACSL for this offence is in row 54 and the custodial sentence length of 12 months is in row 62.

The figures given in the pivot table relate to defendants for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

Assaulting a police officer is wholly unacceptable and we need to make sure that the criminal law can reflect the seriousness with which we take these crimes.

Sentencing in individual cases is a matter for our independent Courts. The maximum penalty for an offence is set by Parliament and is designed to cover the most serious imaginable behaviours that may fall under that offence.

However, we continue to keep maximum penalties under review to ensure they reflect the seriousness of the offending behaviour. In 2018 we strengthened the law with the Assaults on Emergency Workers Act and doubled the maximum penalty for common assault to 12 months where it is committed against an emergency worker. The Government has committed to consult on increasing the maximum penalty from 12 months to 2 years for assaulting emergency workers.

■ Criminal Legal Aid Review

Zarah Sultana:

[52555]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the recommendations of the Law Society's submission to Criminal Legal Aid Review, published in February 2020.

Alex Chalk:

In order to focus on the most pressing issues for practitioners during the COVID-19 pandemic we agreed to temporarily pause our work on the Criminal Legal Aid Review in order to focus on short term sustainability issues. We will return to the review, which has a wider focus on long term sustainability of the criminal legal aid market as quickly as we can, while doing all we can to mitigate the current crisis and support justice recovery.

On 28 February 2020, as part of the review, we launched a consultation on policy proposals for the "Criminal legal Aid Review - An accelerated package of measures amending the criminal legal aid fee schemes". This consultation remains open and we continue to engage with various stakeholder and representative bodies and value the contributions being made. Once the consultation closes, the Government will

publish its response after carefully considering the issues raised by the Law Society and others who respond to the consultation.

■ Domestic Abuse: Coronavirus

Scott Mann:

[\[902964\]](#)

What additional financial support he is providing to help protect victims of domestic abuse during the covid-19 outbreak.

Alex Chalk:

We have announced an unprecedented £76 million extra funding to support survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, modern slavery and vulnerable children and their families. This includes £28 million for victims of domestic abuse.

This funding will help front line charities to provide support to those in need, including through virtual or telephone-based services.

This funding is part of comprehensive measures to support vulnerable people through the pandemic and we are working closely with local bodies, charities and other partners to ensure they get the support they need.

Christian Wakeford:

[\[902966\]](#)

What additional financial support he is providing to help protect victims of domestic abuse during the covid-19 outbreak.

Alex Chalk:

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This funding will help front line charities to provide support to those in need, including through virtual or telephone-based services.

This funding is part of comprehensive measures to support vulnerable people through the pandemic and we are working closely with local bodies, charities and other partners to ensure they get the support they need.

Dean Russell:

[\[902970\]](#)

What additional financial support he is providing to help protect victims of domestic abuse during the covid-19 outbreak.

Alex Chalk:

We have announced an unprecedented £76 million extra funding to support survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, modern slavery and vulnerable children and their families. This includes £28 million for victims of domestic abuse.

This funding will help front line charities to provide support to those in need, including through virtual or telephone-based services.

This funding is part of comprehensive measures to support vulnerable people through the pandemic and we are working closely with local bodies, charities and other partners to ensure they get the support they need.

■ Ministry of Justice: Pay

John McDonnell:

[53280]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the pay (a) minimum and (b) maximum is for each civil service grade in his Department below the Senior Civil Service (i) inside and (ii) outside the London area.

Due to the complexity of the accompanying table, the link below is to the web version of the answer:

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-02/53280>

■ Small Claims

Andy Slaughter:

[51719]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to ensure that the new small claims portal will not create an incentive for insurers to deny a claims liability as a result of the Government's decision not to establish an alternative dispute resolution mechanism.

Alex Chalk:

The government announced on 21 April 2020 that all work related to the implementation of the whiplash reforms has been paused and the implementation timetable has been moved to April 2021 because of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Generally, the online whiplash claims service is being designed to be simple and easy to operate for all users. Once we resume work on the whiplash reform programme, the government will continue its work with the Civil Procedure Rule Committee on new and revised Rules, Pre-action Protocol and Practice Direction to underpin the reforms and the system. This will include consideration of incentives and controls for all users of the online claims service where it is appropriate to do so.

Currently, motor insurers accept liability for damages in the majority of whiplash claims and we do not expect insurer behaviour to change after implementation. However, claimants will have the option to go to court to establish liability where this is necessary.

SCOTLAND**■ Rolls-Royce: Scotland**

Chris Elmore: [\[54205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what support the Government has offered to Rolls Royce in Scotland.

Mr Alister Jack:

The UK Government is committed to supporting companies through the COVID-19 crisis and has worked with many businesses across the economy to understand how best to do so, including Rolls-Royce.

The UK Government has been in close discussions with Rolls-Royce on the various business support schemes available to the business and its suppliers. Through the Aerospace Growth Partnership, the company has also fed into the UK Government's dialogue with the wider aerospace sector about business support.

Chris Elmore: [\[54206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what discussions he has had with the Scottish Government on support for Rolls Royce in Scotland.

Mr Alister Jack:

I have regular discussions with the Scottish Government on a number of policy issues. The UK Government regularly speaks with Rolls-Royce and has worked closely with the company in response to COVID-19.

We have discussed with Rolls-Royce the various UK Government business support schemes available to the company and its suppliers. Rolls-Royce has also been part of the Department's regular engagements with the wider aerospace sector about business support during the COVID-19 outbreak.

TRANSPORT**■ Airports: Coronavirus**

Paul Maynard: [\[53360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 26 May 2020 to Question 47234, on Aviation: Coronavirus, if he will list what support has been provided to each UK airport since the start of the covid-19 outbreak.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Government recognises the challenging times facing the aviation sector as a result of COVID-19, and has been engaging regularly with airports throughout the UK to understand the impact that COVID-19 is having on their financial position.

Businesses across the industry, including airports, have been able to draw on the unprecedented package of economic measures put in place during this time. This includes a Bank of England scheme for firms to raise capital, two business

interruption loan guarantee schemes for different sizes of business, Time to Pay flexibilities with tax bills, financial support for employees and VAT deferrals.

If airports find themselves in trouble as a result of coronavirus even following the Government's cross-economy wage and financial interventions, the Transport Secretary and Chancellor have confirmed 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.

Airports across the country are eligible and have accessed these schemes which has protected a substantial number of jobs across the industry. We do not comment on the commercial or financial matters of private firms and are therefore unable to say anything further.

■ Aviation: Coronavirus

Paul Maynard:

[\[53358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer 26 May 2020 to Question 47233, on Aviation: Coronavirus, what assessment the Government has made of the effectiveness of measures taken by (a) Singapore and (b) South Korea to help prevent the spread of covid-19 from air travel.

Kelly Tolhurst:

We are working very closely with both Singapore and South Korea through the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is also collaborating closely with their Singaporean counterparts.

Paul Maynard:

[\[53359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to Answer of 26 May 2020 to Question 47233, on Aviation: Coronavirus, what steps he is taking with (a) international partners, (b) ICAO and (c) IATA to establish a shared agenda on public health.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The UK has been working with a range of international partners to drive forward a shared agenda on public health and aviation through regular meetings and correspondence.

The UK is a member of the governing Council of ICAO and has played a leading role in the ICAO Civil Aviation Recovery Taskforce (CART), which was set up specifically to address the aviation industry's recovery from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The CART brought together states and industry, including IATA, to develop guidance for the restart. This guidance, including on public health measures for aviation, was published by ICAO on 2 June.

Jim Shannon:

[\[53430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the economic effect of covid-19 quarantine measures on (a) airline companies and (b) airports.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Department for Transport has ensured the economic impact assessment, led by the Treasury, reflects the impacts the measures will have on the transport sector and the wider economy, and ensured specific and targeted exemptions to mitigate the impact.

Jim Shannon:[\[53431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what representations he has made to the Home Secretary on the effect of covid-19 quarantine measures on the aviation industry.

Kelly Tolhurst:

Ministers have held extensive discussions about the effect of self-isolation measures on the aviation industry with the Home Secretary. This has included discussion of the exemption of key transport workers from the measures.

Jim Shannon:[\[53434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what representations he has made to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on mitigating the financial effect of covid-19 quarantine measures on the aviation industry.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Government continues to support businesses through one of the most generous economic packages provided anywhere in the world. If businesses find themselves in severe and urgent financial difficulties, even following these unprecedented support measures, then we remain open to discussion about bespoke financial support, but only as a last resort. Any intervention would need to be on terms to protect the interests of taxpayers.

The Department for Transport worked with the Treasury on its economic impact assessment to help it reflect the impacts the measures will have on the transport sector and the wider economy.

■ British Airways: Coronavirus**Gerald Jones:**[\[55097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with representatives of the International Airlines Group on the proposed redundancies at British Airways.

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.

■ Cycling: Road Signs and Markings

Alberto Costa:

[53475]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the provision of improved warning signage for vehicle users on prominent cycling routes.

Rachel Maclean:

The provision of traffic signs is the responsibility of local highway authorities and as such the Department has made no assessment of signs on the network. All traffic signs and road markings placed on a public highway must be either prescribed in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016, as amended, or authorised by the Secretary of State for Transport. The Department provides guidance to local authorities in the Traffic Signs Manual which can be viewed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-signs-manual>

■ Cycling: Safety

Alberto Costa:

[53476]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve road safety for cyclists on rural roads.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

In November 2018 we published the Government response to the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Safety Review which committed to update The Highway Code to improve safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders. One of the proposals under consideration is the inclusion of safe passing distances which would also benefit cyclists on rural roads.

In July 2019, the Government published the Road Safety Statement 2019: a lifetime of road safety. This includes a two-year action plan to address a range of road safety issues which will improve safety for all road users including cyclists, including establishing a working group to address rural road safety issues.

■ Driving Tests: Coronavirus

Dr Luke Evans:

[53640]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency to ensure that (a) driving theory tests and (b) driving practical tests are able to recommence for prospective drivers.

Rachel Maclean:

As the health and safety of staff and customers is key, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) has produced detailed standard operating procedures and is working closely with the Department for Transport to prepare for a safe return to testing.

At present, the DVSA's testing services are under review and it will announce details of resumption in due course.

■ Driving: Licensing**Julian Sturdy:**[\[53417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to support drivers that are required to renew their driving licence during the covid-19 lockdown but who are unable to apply online and have been advised not to apply by post.

Rachel Maclean:

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency announced on 4 June 2020 that drivers with a photocard driving licence due to expire between 1 February and 31 August 2020 will be granted a seven-month extension to their licence.

For those drivers who need to renew their entitlement to drive, the quickest and easiest way to do so is to use DVLA's online service. Drivers who are unable to use the online service should submit a paper application in the normal way. However, paper applications will take longer to process in the current circumstances.

■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Coronavirus**Thangam Debbonaire:**[\[53470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure the provision of medical examinations to maintain an adequate level of certified Heavy Goods Vehicle drivers.

Rachel Maclean:

The Government has temporarily waived the requirement for bus and lorry drivers to provide a medical report when renewing their licences. This change was announced on 17 April 2020 for those applying to renew licences that expire on or after 1 January 2020.

It remains a legal requirement for drivers to notify the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency of the onset or worsening of a medical condition that may impact their driving.

■ Public Transport: Coronavirus**Justin Madders:**[\[55701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what evidence he has received on the use of face coverings on public transport to help prevent the spread of covid-19 since 22 May 2020.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Department for Transport is working closely with scientific and medical advisors and Public Health England to continually review and update our guidance for passengers and operators, to reflect the evidence base as it develops.

The evidence suggests that wearing a face covering may protect others if you are infected but have not yet developed symptoms. In our guidance we continue to advise passengers that maintaining social distancing and washing their hands for at least 20 seconds remain critically important.

■ Transport: Coronavirus

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[53321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that transport workers receive sufficient personal protective equipment during the covid-19 outbreak.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Keeping transport workers and passengers safe is of paramount importance as we continue to scale up services across the transport network as part of the restart. The Department has held roundtables and meetings at all levels with operators across the transport sector in the response to COVID-19, including to support with the implementation of the Government's PPE plan published in April.

Public Health England guidance has been clear that there is very little scientific evidence of widespread benefit from personal protective equipment outside of health and social care settings. Guidance on cleaning of non-healthcare settings and shipping and sea ports and how PPE may be used in these contexts has been published in February and March respectively. The Department has worked with and continues to work with operators to ensure they can meet the PPE needs as set out in this guidance.

Throughout the response, the Department has worked with the sector to support with effective implementation of key measures of social distancing and good hand and respiratory hygiene in transport settings.

■ Travel: Coronavirus

Paul Maynard:

[\[53361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 26 May 2020 to Question 47235, on International Transport: Coronavirus, when he plans to publish a common international standard on screening measures for travel during the covid-19 outbreak.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Government has not published a common international standard on screening measures for travel during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the UK is a member of the governing Council of ICAO and has played a leading role in the ICAO Civil Aviation Recovery Taskforce (CART), which was set up specifically to address the aviation industry's recovery from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Guidance, including on common screening measures for air travel, was published by ICAO on 2 June.

Paul Maynard:

[\[53362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer 26 May 2020 on Question 47236, on International Transport: Coronavirus, what progress has been made with (a) the European Aviation Safety Authority, (b) the ICAO and (c) other international

bodies on establishing a common international standard on screening measures for travel during the covid-19 outbreak.

Kelly Tolhurst:

While the UK is no longer involved in the development of EASA rules, the UK is an active participant in the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC), through which it engages with European partners to discuss common measures for air travel during the Covid-19 pandemic. The UK is a member of the governing Council of ICAO and has played a leading role in the ICAO Civil Aviation Recovery Taskforce (CART), which was set up specifically to address the aviation industry's recovery from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Guidance, including on common screening measures, was published by ICAO on 2 June.

Paul Maynard:

[\[53363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 26 May 2020 to Question 47236, on International Transport: Coronavirus, when he plans to publish potential common international measures for travel during the covid-19 outbreak.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The UK is a member of the governing Council of ICAO and has played a leading role in the ICAO Civil Aviation Recovery Taskforce (CART), which was set up specifically to address the aviation industry's recovery from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Guidance, including on common international measures for air travel, was published by ICAO on 2 June.

Jim Shannon:

[\[53432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the Home Secretary on ensuring adequate consultations with representatives from (a) airlines, (b) ferry companies, (c) Eurostar, (d) ports and (e) airports on the implementation of quarantine measures during the covid-19 outbreak.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Department has worked in close collaboration with the Home Office to ensure adequate consultation with representatives of airlines, ferry companies, Eurostar, ports and airports regarding the implementation of quarantine measures during the Covid-19 outbreak. This has included identifying applicable exemptions from the self-isolation requirements.

Jim Shannon:

[\[53433\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he has taken with the Home Secretary to consult businesses on the exemptions list for covid-19 quarantine measures.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Department has worked collectively with the Home Office to ensure consultation with stakeholders, including discussions with senior industry figures across the travel sector. This has allowed the Department to understand the impact on their businesses and operations.

TREASURY**■ Airports: Non-domestic Rates**

Henry Smith: [\[53395\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of business rate reductions for airports in (a) Scotland and (b) Northern Ireland on airports in England.

Henry Smith: [\[53396\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of business rate relief for airports in England on the financial viability of those companies.

Henry Smith: [\[53397\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions his Department has had with representatives of airports on the potential effect on their businesses of a reduction in business rates at airports in England.

Henry Smith: [\[53398\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of a temporary reduction in business rates paid by airports in England on the finances of (a) Gatwick Airport, (b) airports in England and (c) the aviation sector.

Jesse Norman:

Business rates are devolved in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

The Government has provided enhanced support to the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors through business rates relief given the direct and acute impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on those sectors. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has published guidance for local authorities on eligible properties.

A range of further measures to support all businesses, including those not eligible for the business rates holiday such as airports, has also been made available. For example, the Government has launched the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to help firms keep people in employment, the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme offering loans of up to £5 million for SMEs through the British Business Bank backed by an 80% Government guarantee, and is deferring VAT payments for this quarter.

■ Bank Services: Coronavirus

Ben Lake: [\[53574\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that people can continue to access cash and banking services during the covid-19 outbreak.

John Glen:

The Government recognises that widespread access to cash remains extremely important to millions of people across the UK. The Government is working with the

financial regulators and industry to monitor access to cash, including the impact of Covid-19.

At the March 2020 Budget, the Chancellor announced that the Government will bring forward legislation to protect access to cash, which builds on industry initiatives.

LINK, the scheme that runs the UK's largest ATM network, has existing arrangements in place to protect free-to-use ATMs that do not have another free-to-use ATM or Post Office within 1 kilometre. They have also made £5 million available to fund ATMs at the request of communities with poor access to cash.

In response to Covid-19, banks, building societies, credit unions and Post Offices are working to maintain access to their services, including access to cash, while balancing the needs of their customers with the safety and welfare of staff. The Financial Conduct Authority have issued guidance to regulated firms, including on provision to allow a trusted third party to make payments on behalf of vulnerable customers who may be shielding or self-isolating.

■ Bank Services: Fraud

Mohammad Yasin:

[54209]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the efficacy of the Contingent Reimbursement Model Code for Authorised Push Payments in helping to protect consumers from authorised push payments scams; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

In March 2018, the Payment Systems Regulator (PSR) established a steering group of financial institutions and consumer representatives to develop a voluntary code of good practice to help protect consumers against authorised push payment (APP) scams.

At the end of February 2019, the steering group published the Contingent Reimbursement Model Code for APP Scams (the Code), which sets out the agreed principles for greater protection of consumers and the circumstances in which they will be reimbursed, making a significant step in delivering improved protections for consumers. The Code became effective on 28 May 2019 and customers of those payment service providers that are signatories (which includes all of the 6 largest banks and building societies) are protected under the Code from this date.

The Lending Standards Board (LSB), which is responsible for the Code, has committed to a first annual review of its operation later this year. The Government looks forward to reviewing these findings when they become available.

■ Cash Dispensing: Fees and Charges

Mr David Jones:

[\[54872\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he had with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on securing free access to cash through ATMs.

John Glen:

In line with the practice of successive administrations, details of ministerial discussions are not normally disclosed.

However, the Government recognises that free access to cash remains extremely important to the day-to-day lives of millions of people across the UK, as well as the impact that COVID-19 has had on cash usage.

At the March 2020 Budget, the Chancellor announced that the Government will bring forward legislation to protect access to cash. This will ensure that millions of people can get hold of the cash they need when they need it.

The Government continues to engage with the Payment Systems Regulator, who regulate LINK, the scheme that runs the UK's largest ATM network, and the financial regulators on access to cash.

■ Cash Dispensing: Urban Areas

Mr David Jones:

[\[54871\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of the decrease in the number of high street ATMs on (a) small businesses and retailers and (b) consumers.

John Glen:

The Government recognises the continued importance of cash for many retailers and consumers, particularly in light of COVID-19. That is why, at the March 2020 Budget, the Chancellor announced that the Government will bring forward legislation to protect access to cash. The Government will ensure that the approach reflects the needs of cash users across the economy.

With regard to ATMs, as of 2019, there were approximately 45,000 free-to-use ATMs in the UK. Although this is less than the peak number of free ATMs in 2017, this remains 13% higher than a decade ago. Furthermore, most ATMs are clustered together in areas of high demand and high footfall, particularly in retail centres and transport hubs. As of January 2020, 78% of all free-to-use machines were within 300 metres of the next, and 94% were within one kilometre of the next.

LINK, the scheme that runs the UK's largest ATM network, has put in place specific arrangements to protect remote free-to-use ATMs one kilometre or further from the next nearest free-to-use ATM or Post Office, including all high streets with five or more qualifying retailers. Furthermore, LINK has made £5 million available to fund requests for new ATMs from communities with poor access to cash.

The Payment Systems Regulator, which regulates LINK, is monitoring ATM market developments closely and has used its powers to hold LINK to account over its public commitments.

■ **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Private Education**

Olivia Blake: [\[53668\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many private schools, who are still charging fees, have accessed the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Jesse Norman:

Applications for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) opened on Monday 20 April. By midnight 31 May 2020, 1.1m employers had submitted claims to HMRC representing 8.7m furloughed employments and £17.5bn.

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.

■ **Government Securities: Coronavirus**

Sir Charles Walker: [\[53324\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a Coronavirus Recovery Bond with an above market, fixed coupon to help generate an income return for existing and new small scale investors and savers; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

The Government will continue to fulfil its financing requirements via its normal debt management operations. This includes the package of measures to provide the critical support needed by individuals, families and businesses in the wake of COVID-19, which as previously announced by the Chancellor will be fully funded through the Debt Management Office's (DMO's) core gilt programme.

The Government also raises finance through National Savings and Investments (NS&I), which operates in the retail sector and offers a number of savings products for retail customers, which can help generate income for small-scale investors. NS&I's core remit is to raise cost-effective financing for government. In effect, customers' deposits with NS&I are a form of Government borrowing, and the rates that NS&I offer impact the cost to Government of this borrowing. HM Treasury therefore has a close interest in whether borrowing through NS&I is cost effective when compared with other methods of government financing.

At present, the UK Government does not have any plans to introduce a special gilt in response to COVID-19, nor does it have any plans to introduce a special NS&I product. The Government remains open to the introduction of new debt instruments, but would need to be satisfied that any new instrument would meet value-for-money criteria, enjoy strong and sustained demand in the long-term and be consistent with wider fiscal objectives.

■ Newspaper Press: Coronavirus

Caroline Lucas:

[53370]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much financial support has been provided from the public purse to (a) news providers who belong to the Independent Community News Network and (b) other news providers via (i) the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, (ii) the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, (iii) Government-backed loans, (iv) the deferral of the next quarter of VAT, (v) the scrapping of VAT on e-publications and (v) the £35 million public information campaign entitled All-in, All together.

Kemi Badenoch:

The four government backed loan schemes have seen over £40bn lent to hundreds of thousands of businesses, whilst, as of midnight 7th June, 8.9 million jobs had been furloughed through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), with a total of £19.6bn claimed, and 2.6 million claims had been made through the Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), with a total value of £7.5 bn. The VAT deferral is worth over £30 billion or 1.5% of GDP with £22.4bn deferred by 251,000 businesses so far.

The Government has published aggregate application and approval figures on the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS), Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) and Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs) since 12 May but does not hold specific breakdown information relating to collective sectors or organisations which have accessed these schemes, including the Independent News Network and other news providers. The Government is actively considering what further data can be made available in the future. HMRC will publish Official Statistics covering the CJRS and the SEISS on 11 June.

■ Non-domestic Rates

Naz Shah:

[55698]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether business rate relief has been paid to businesses that are registered in tax havens.

Jesse Norman:

On 17 March the Chancellor announced a business rates holiday for businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, irrespective of rateable value, so that all eligible businesses will pay no business rates for 12 months. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has published guidance for local authorities on eligibility. Business rates are administered by local authorities and any information on ratepayers will be collected and held by the relevant local authority.

The Government's current support measures are well-targeted at the businesses and individuals who most need support, including foreign companies with businesses and property who employ people in the UK.

■ Self-employment Income Support Scheme

Siobhain McDonagh:

[\[53287\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people with annual trading profits from £50,000 to £60,000 are not eligible to access support under the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme.

Jesse Norman:

The SEISS, including the eligibility requirement that an individual's trading profits must be no more than £50,000 and at least equal to their non-trading income, is designed to target those who most need it, and who are most reliant on their self-employment income.

Those with average profits above £50,000 may still benefit from other support, and individuals may have access to a range of grants and loans depending on their circumstances. 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.

Applications for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) opened on 13 May. By midnight 31 May 2020, HMRC had received 2.5m claims representing a total of £7.2bn claimed.

SEISS 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 update in due course on the types of data available and timescales for publication.

■ Self-employment Income Support Scheme: Maternity Leave

Ellie Reeves:

[\[53573\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that self-employed women that qualify for 30 hours free childcare scheme will be able to access that scheme in the event that Self-Employment Income Support Scheme calculations bring their total income below the threshold for qualifying as a result of a period of maternity leave over the last three years.

Jesse Norman:

To be eligible for Tax Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare, both parents need to earn at least the equivalent of 16 hours per week at the National Living Wage. The Government introduced a temporary measure to ensure that those who are unable to meet this requirement due to loss of income as a result of Covid-19 will maintain their entitlement.

■ Tax Avoidance

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[\[53314\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he has taken to assess the financial effect of the 2019 loan charge on people facing repayment costs during the covid-19 outbreak.

Jesse Norman:

Taxpayers who are liable to pay the Loan Charge have until 30 September 2020 to submit their Self-Assessment return for 2018-19 including details of their Loan Charge liability.

HMRC have made a clear commitment to support all taxpayers who need help to manage their disguised remuneration (DR) liabilities, including those affected by COVID-19. This includes those due to pay the Loan Charge as well as those settling their DR affairs with HMRC. Taxpayers do not have to pay everything in one go. Where a taxpayer cannot pay in full on time, HMRC will seek to agree a payment by instalments with them. The payment plan agreed will be based on what they can afford and there is no upper limit on how long HMRC can potentially spread payments.

HMRC have set up a helpline to support any businesses and self-employed taxpayers concerned about paying their tax, due to COVID-19.

■ Treasury: Pay

John McDonnell:

[\[53282\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the pay (a) minimum and (b) maximum is for each civil service grade in his Department below the Senior Civil Service (i) inside and (ii) outside the London area.

Kemi Badenoch:

Treasury's pay ranges as of 1st August 2019 are as follows:

RANGE	LONDON PAY RANGE (£) AS OF 1 AUGUST 2019 MIN - MAX		NATIONAL PAY RANGE (£) AS OF 1 AUGUST 2019 MIN - MAX	
Range E2	61,200 - 70,000		58,200 - 67,000	
Range E	51,000 - 64,498		48,000 - 61,498	
Range D Experienced	36,800 - 45,700		33,800 - 42,700	
Range D	32,000 - 36,800		29,000 - 42,700	
Graduate entry salary	28,500		-	
Range C	26,000 - 31,000		23,000 - 28,000	
Range B	23,000 - 25,000		20,000 - 22,000	

RANGE	LONDON PAY RANGE (£) AS OF 1	NATIONAL PAY RANGE (£) AS OF
	AUGUST 2019 MIN - MAX	1 AUGUST 2019 MIN - MAX
Apprentice & Student single salary spot rate (£)		
GES Sandwich / Summer Students	22,500	-
Range C Apprentice	23,600	20,160
Range B Apprentice & Diversity Students	19,800	17,300

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Equality and Human Rights Commission: Grants

Philip Davies:

[\[53350\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what the (a) amount, (b) recipient and (c) purpose of each grant distributed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission since 2016 was.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is an independent public body and grants that it makes under Section 17 of the Equality Act 2006 decisions are matters for the Commission itself. I have therefore asked the Commission's Chief Executive Officer to write to my Hon friend with the information requested. I will place a copy of the letter in the libraries of both Houses.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Cycling

Paul Maynard:

[\[51827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason her Department's Cycle to Work scheme offers only interest free loans and not the additional reductions in the cost of bicycles as offered by other Government departments.

Mims Davies:

DWP offers its employees access to two schemes: an advance of salary to purchase a bicycle and a Cycle to Work scheme, which allows employees to sacrifice part of their salary in exchange for a discounted bicycle and safety equipment. This initiative is governed by the Department for Transport and is similar to schemes run by other Government Departments.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: ICT

Martyn Day:

[\[52235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to (a) reduce the amount of manual processing on paper it carries out and (b) make those processes digital.

Mims Davies:

The Department is continually looking for opportunities to reduce the amount of manual processing with paper. As well as wider strategic digital transformation programmes such as our Health Transformation Programme, we also undertake more tactical activities introducing customer portals and the introduction of Robotic Process Automation. For local printing in isolation, we run a “Transforming Print, Paper and Post” programme identifying opportunities for colleagues to avoid printing within our offices.

■ Funeral Payments

Jonathan Reynolds:

[\[51936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claims for Funeral Expenses Payments there have been in each of the last 10 weeks.

Mims Davies:

The number of Funeral Expenses payment claims in England and Wales is provided in the table below.

NUMBER OF FUNERAL EXPENSES PAYMENTS CLAIMS RECEIVED, W/C 23/03/20 TO W/C 25/05/20

Week Commencing	Number of Claims
23/03/2020	310
30/03/2020	410
06/04/2020	350
13/04/2020	440
20/04/2020	800
27/04/2020	940
04/05/2020	1,480
11/05/2020	1,470
18/05/2020	1,290
25/05/2020	1,040

Notes:

1. The number of claims have been rounded to the nearest 10.
2. The information provided is Management Information. It is not quality assured to the same extent as Official / National statistics.

Jonathan Reynolds:

[51937]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of claims for funeral expenses payments were awarded payments in each of the last 10 weeks.

Mims Davies:

Funeral Expenses Payments make an important contribution towards the costs of a funeral for claimants on certain benefits or tax credits or a Support for Mortgage Interest loan and we have continued to make these payments throughout the pandemic.

However, the data requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Jonathan Reynolds:

[51938]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the (a) average payment and (b) total value of payments awarded to successful Funeral Expenses Payment claimants were in each of the last 10 weeks.

Mims Davies:

Funeral Expenses Payments make an important contribution towards the costs of a funeral for claimants on certain benefits or tax credits or a Support for Mortgage Interest loan and we have continued to make these payments throughout the pandemic.

However, the data requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Jonathan Reynolds:

[51939]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans she has to amend the eligibility criteria for Funeral Expenses Payment claimants.

Mims Davies:

There are no current plans to amend the eligibility criteria for the Funeral Expenses Payment scheme, which is for those in receipt of qualifying means-tested benefits or tax credits.

■ **Health and Safety Executive: Bristol**

Thangam Debbonaire:

[52135]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Health and Safety Executive inspectors are operating in Bristol.

Mims Davies:

There are currently 40 full-time equivalent (FTE) Inspectors based in Bristol.

■ Health and Safety Executive: Telephone Services

Preet Kaur Gill:

[52327]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will establish direct line to the Health and Safety Executive for hon Members to report concerns that have been raised by constituents.

Mims Davies:

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has a robust system in place for anyone needing to report health and safety matters. Contact arrangements to report matters to HSE can be accessed via our website:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm#>

To deal with the additional volume of Covid-19 related concerns HSE is receiving, they encourage the use of their established contact arrangements to ensure health and safety concerns are assessed by risk rather than by the method of reporting.

■ Homelessness: Young People

Zarah Sultana:

[52553]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to Centrepoin't's Chance to Move On campaign, what plans her Department has to bring forward legislative proposals to include homeless people aged under 25 in (a) Coventry South constituency and (b) the UK in the Shared Accommodation Rate exemption for homeless people.

Will Quince:

Currently those aged 25-34 who have spent 3 months in a homeless hostel for the purposes of rehabilitation/re-settlement are exempt from the shared accommodation rate throughout the UK. As announced in the Spring Budget earlier this year, the Government will amend legislation to extend this exemption to those under 25.

As well as legislation, the change to the shared accommodation rate exemption will require amendments to local authority and universal credit IT systems therefore it will take time to implement.

In the meantime, for individuals who may require more support and whose circumstances may make it difficult for them to share accommodation, Discretionary Housing Payments are available.

Since 2011 the Government has provided over £1bn to local authorities to help support vulnerable claimants with housing costs. In addition, at the spending round last year, we announced an extra £40 million for DHPs in 2020/21 in England and Wales, helping to tackle affordability pressures in the private rented sector.

Housing Benefit and Universal Credit**Seema Malhotra:****[52003]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the number of households that had (a) Housing Benefit and (b) Universal Credit capped in (i) March 2020 and (ii) April 2020 in each Region and Local Authority of the UK.

Mims Davies:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

The published Benefit Cap statistics are currently available to February 2020. Statistics for the number of households capped in Housing Benefit and Universal Credit in March 2020 and April 2020 will be published on the sixth of August. This release will also contain data on households capped up to May 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/benefit-cap-statistics>

Industrial Health and Safety**Anthony Browne:****[53654]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of extending to all employers irrespective of staff numbers the obligation to undertake a work-related risk assessment.

Mims Davies:

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires all employers (irrespective of staff numbers) to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work. They also require employers to assess the risks to the health and safety of persons not in their employment arising out of the conduct of their undertaking, in order to identify the measures that are needed to comply with relevant health and safety regulations. Employers with five or more employees are required to record the significant findings of their assessment.

Social Security Benefits**Stephen Timms:****[55659]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 4 June to Question 51540, on Social Security Benefits, if she will publish the equality impact assessment on the potential effect of the benefit cap in relation to the recent increase to (a) the standard allowance of universal credit and (b) local housing allowance.

Mims Davies:

The Secretary of State has complied with her duties under the Equality Act 2010 in respect of the recent policy changes and the potential impacts of the interaction with other policies. There is no requirement to record this in the form of an equality impact assessment and therefore, we do not intend to publish the analysis.

Patrick Grady:

[\[55708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what equality impact assessments her Department has undertaken on people who have been refused access to social security benefits as a result of being subject to No Recourse to Public Funds restrictions with in relation to (a) race and (b) other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Justin Tomlinson:

I can confirm that there have been no equality impact assessments undertaken. Non-UK nationals and family members who are issued with a residence permit with a NRPF condition are not eligible to access taxpayer-funded benefits such as Universal Credit, Child Benefit or housing assistance for the duration of their leave. Public funds does not include contributions-based benefits and the State Pension. DWP has no powers to award taxpayer-funded benefits to an individual whose Home Office immigration status specifies no recourse to public funds.

■ **Social Security Benefits: Children**

Alison Thewliss:

[\[53465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of trends in the level of provision of support for a maximum of two children through the benefits system following the covid-10 outbreak.

Will Quince:

The Government has committed to annual statistics releases related to the operation of the policy to provide support for a maximum of two children. Statistics related to the period up to April 2019 are available on GOV.UK. Further statistics related to the period up to April 2020 will be published this summer.

■ **Social Security Benefits: Students**

Paul Maynard:

[\[51819\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason income from student maintenance was disregarded for the purposes of calculating Child Tax Credits.

Paul Maynard:

[\[51820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason student maintenance income is taken into account for universal credit purposes but not for child tax credit purposes.

Will Quince:

Tax credits are designed to be closely aligned with the tax system, and therefore generally only take into account taxable income. As student loans are not liable to income tax, they are not included in the calculation of income for tax credits purposes.

■ Universal Credit

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[\[54921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants of universal credit are repaying an advance payment.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 9 June 2020]: Universal Credit advance repayments are made gradually over 12 months, and deductions are capped at 30% of claimants' standard allowance. This is further to the reduction of the overall maximum level of deductions from 40% to 30% of the standard allowance since October 2019.

From October 2021, the repayment period will be extended from 12 months to 24 months and the reduction of the deductions cap from 30% to 25%.

For those who find themselves in unexpected hardship, advance repayments can be deferred for up to three months in certain cases.

For Universal Credit payments due in February 2020, 43% (1,068,000 claims) had a deduction for an advance repayment.

Notes: 1. Claim numbers may not match official statistics caseloads due to small methodological differences

2. Claim numbers are rounded to the nearest 1,000.

3. Figures are provisional and are subject to retrospective change as later data becomes available.

■ Universal Credit: Advertising

Kate Osamor:

[\[52276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to her Answer of 13 May 2020 to Question 43081, for what reason the Government Communications Service was instructed to undertake the investigation into the circumstances in which her Department's Communications Director authorised the advertisements entitled Universal Credit Uncovered in The Metro.

Will Quince:

It is commonplace for the Government Communications Service (GCS) to review communications projects undertaken by individual government departments. Following the ruling by the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) it was agreed that further information on engagement with the ASA would be beneficial for all communications teams across government. It was subsequently agreed that the GCS would review the partnership with The Metro. The review found that DWP had not intentionally misled the public through the partnership, while recognising the importance of continuing to work closely with the ASA to inform campaigns and establish best practice.

Kate Osamor:

[\[52277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Government Communications Service's internal review of the circumstances in which her Department authorised the Universal Credit Uncovered adverts in The Metro, for what reason the Tier One and Tier Two internal clearance process has been redacted from the copy placed in the Library.

Will Quince:

As the request was to publish the review in the Library, which is accessible to the public, personal details were redacted. If required I can share a revised version with you that includes names and job titles for everyone at Senior Civil Service grade and above, as is common practice.

Kate Osamor:

[\[52278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Government Communications Service's internal review of the circumstances in which her Department authorised the Universal Credit Uncovered adverts in The Metro, how many staff members from the Government Communications Service were involved in that review by civil service grade.

Will Quince:

The review was undertaken by two members of staff from the Government Communications Service, both at Senior Civil Service band 2 grade. These two members of staff are independent to DWP, as is standard practice for reviews by the Government Communications Service.

■ Universal Credit: Coronavirus

Mr Stephen Morgan:

[\[48592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of the effect of the two child limit in universal credit on the financial wellbeing of people affected by that limit.

Will Quince:

The Government has committed to annual statistics releases related to the operation of this policy. Statistics for 2018/19 can be found on GOV.UK. Statistics related to 2019/20 will be published in the summer.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Abortion: Down's Syndrome

Fiona Bruce:

[\[14717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many abortions took place after the diagnosis of Down's Syndrome in each of the last 10 years; and at what weeks gestation those abortions took place.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 13 February 2020. The correct answer should have been:

Caroline Dinenage:

The number of legal abortions which took place in England and Wales after the diagnosis of ~~where~~ Down's Syndrome **was mentioned as a medical condition on the HSA4 abortion form** in each of the last 10 years by week of gestation is attached. Information on abortions for club foot, hammer toe or tarsal coalition is not held in the format requested.

Attachments:

1. ~~Abortion figures for Down's Syndrome.xlsx~~
2. **PQ14717 (corrected).xlsx**

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Business Update

Minister for London and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets) (Paul Scully): [\[HCWS280\]](#)

I am today announcing the scope of the Independent Review into the Post Office Horizon IT System and Trials which the Prime Minister committed to on 26th February 2020. This followed Post Office Ltd reaching a settlement, in December 2019, of £57.75m to conclude a long-running case brought against it by a group of postmasters over issues related to Post Office's Horizon IT system.

The longstanding dispute and subsequent trials relating to the Post Office Horizon IT system have had a hugely negative impact on affected postmasters and their families. These events have deeply affected postmasters' lives: their livelihoods, their financial situation, their reputations and, for some, also their physical and mental health. In his judgments in the "Common Issues" and "Horizon Issues" trials, Mr Justice Fraser identified significant failings within Post Office Ltd over nearly two decades, particularly in relation to the treatment of postmasters and in its management culture.

Under its new CEO, Nick Read, Post Office Ltd has admitted it got things wrong in relation to the Horizon case and has apologised. It has also started to take steps to reset the relationship with postmasters. These are important moves in the right direction. However, given the very serious impacts this case has had on many individual postmasters, more needs to be done.

Government wants to be fully assured that through the review there is a public summary of the failings that occurred at Post Office Ltd, drawing on the judgments from the Horizon case and by listening to those that have been most affected; that lessons have genuinely been learned; and that concrete changes have taken place at Post Office Ltd to ensure that this situation will never be repeated. For these reasons Government has decided to establish an Independent Review.

The Independent Review shall:

- Understand and acknowledge what went wrong in relation to Horizon, leading to the Group Litigation Order, by drawing on evidence from the Horizon judgments and affected postmasters' experiences and identify what key lessons must be learned for the future;
- Assess whether the Post Office Ltd has learned the lessons from the criticisms made by Mr Justice Fraser in the "Common Issues" and "Horizon Issues" trials and those identified by affected postmasters and has delivered or made good progress on the organisational and cultural changes necessary to ensure a similar case does not happen in the future;

- Assess whether the commitments made by Post Office Ltd within the mediation settlement – including the historical shortfall scheme – have been properly delivered;
- Assess whether the processes and information provided by Post Office Ltd to postmasters are sufficient to i) enable both parties to meet their contractual obligations; and ii) to enable postmasters to run their businesses. This includes assessing whether Post Office Ltd's related processes such as recording and resolving postmaster queries, dispute handling, suspension and termination are fit for purpose. In addition, determine whether the quality of the service offer for postmasters and their relationship with Post Office Ltd has materially improved since the conclusions by Mr Justice Fraser; and
- Examine the governance and whistleblowing controls now in place at Post Office Ltd and whether they are sufficient to ensure that the failings that led to the Horizon case issues do not happen again.

The Review will be led by an independent chair who will be announced in due course alongside final timings and terms of reference for the Review.

The Review shall set out Post Office Ltd's actions in response to the findings of Mr Justice Fraser. While avoiding a re-examination of the findings made by Mr Justice Fraser through the lengthy court proceedings, it must use these and the experiences of affected postmasters as the basis for its work. The Review should not encroach on the work of the Criminal Case Review Commission and the Court of Appeal. The Review should make any recommendations it sees fit, including actions that may, in its view, be appropriate as a result of its findings. The final report will be laid in the Libraries of both Houses upon completion of the review.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Coronavirus update

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Matt Hancock): [\[HCWS281\]](#)

On 22 May the Government announced £300m additional funding for local authorities to support them to develop and action their plans to reduce the spread of the virus in their area as part of the launch of the wider NHS Test and Trace Service. This funding will enable local authorities to develop and implement tailored local COVID-19 outbreak plans through for example funding the recruitment of additional staff where required.

Today we are updating the house on the detailed allocation of these monies which has been made on the basis of the 2020/21 Public Health Grant allocations. This allocation formula has been chosen as that which best reflects the public health needs in local authorities.

This funding is for local authorities in England only. This means an additional £57 million will be provided by HMT via the Barnett formula for the devolved administrations (£29

million for the Scottish Government, £18 million for the Welsh Government, and £10 million for the Northern Ireland Executive).

AUTHORITIES TO WHICH GRANT IS TO BE PAID	AMOUNT OF GRANT TO BE PAID
Barking and Dagenham	£1,566,647
Barnet	£1,599,177
Barnsley	£1,568,553
Bath and North East Somerset	£849,159
Bedford	£806,281
Bexley	£902,348
Birmingham	£8,438,988
Blackburn with Darwen	£1,366,942
Blackpool	£1,693,874
Bolton	£1,997,675
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	£1,808,624
Bracknell Forest	£385,454
Bradford	£3,870,360
Brent	£1,993,129
Brighton and Hove	£1,862,524
Bristol, City of	£3,032,572
Bromley	£1,369,923
Buckinghamshire	£1,954,838
Bury	£1,080,413
Calderdale	£1,233,390
Cambridgeshire	£2,493,304
Camden	£2,460,643
Central Bedfordshire	£1,156,291
Cheshire East	£1,533,331
Cheshire West and Chester	£1,513,306

AUTHORITIES TO WHICH GRANT IS TO BE PAID	AMOUNT OF GRANT TO BE PAID
City of London	£146,484
Cornwall	£2,387,297
County Durham	£4,498,138
Coventry	£2,041,190
Croydon	£1,998,175
Cumbria	£1,717,862
Darlington	£778,834
Derby	£1,807,712
Derbyshire	£3,859,136
Devon	£2,618,508
Doncaster	£2,233,745
Dorset	£1,287,650
Dudley	£1,941,764
Ealing	£2,261,924
East Riding of Yorkshire	£1,024,000
East Sussex	£2,534,832
Enfield	£1,582,042
Essex	£5,783,212
Gateshead	£1,513,527
Gloucestershire	£2,221,773
Greenwich	£2,159,691
Hackney	£3,100,891
Halton	£948,538
Hammersmith and Fulham	£2,020,099
Hampshire	£4,789,993
Haringey	£1,862,362

AUTHORITIES TO WHICH GRANT IS TO BE PAID	AMOUNT OF GRANT TO BE PAID
Harrow	£1,020,258
Hartlepool	£825,809
Havering	£1,022,848
Herefordshire, County of	£845,091
Hertfordshire	£4,506,303
Hillingdon	£1,629,656
Hounslow	£1,467,891
Isle of Wight	£700,230
Isles of Scilly	£11,935
Islington	£2,430,588
Kensington and Chelsea	£1,932,848
Kent	£6,311,401
Kingston upon Hull, City of	£2,235,503
Kingston upon Thames	£940,711
Kirklees	£2,381,215
Knowsley	£1,595,940
Lambeth	£2,919,086
Lancashire	£6,367,420
Leeds	£4,141,249
Leicester	£2,489,071
Leicestershire	£2,309,000
Lewisham	£2,267,070
Lincolnshire	£3,069,554
Liverpool	£4,088,731
Luton	£1,425,693
Manchester	£4,836,535

AUTHORITIES TO WHICH GRANT IS TO BE PAID	AMOUNT OF GRANT TO BE PAID
Medway	£1,592,918
Merton	£964,982
Middlesbrough	£1,566,024
Milton Keynes	£1,065,306
Newcastle upon Tyne	£2,185,756
Newham	£2,843,060
Norfolk	£3,717,780
North East Lincolnshire	£1,049,417
North Lincolnshire	£855,156
North Somerset	£868,716
North Tyneside	£1,140,250
North Yorkshire	£2,022,805
Northamptonshire	£3,270,065
Northumberland	£1,528,975
Nottingham	£3,126,717
Nottinghamshire	£3,802,915
Oldham	£1,560,230
Oxfordshire	£2,858,487
Peterborough	£1,017,883
Plymouth	£1,402,003
Portsmouth	£1,637,748
Reading	£901,002
Redbridge	£1,279,157
Redcar and Cleveland	£1,076,223
Richmond upon Thames	£858,104
Rochdale	£1,591,757

AUTHORITIES TO WHICH GRANT IS TO BE PAID	AMOUNT OF GRANT TO BE PAID
Rotherham	£1,518,012
Rutland	£120,148
Salford	£1,975,758
Sandwell	£2,276,836
Sefton	£1,995,065
Sheffield	£3,101,989
Shropshire	£1,126,797
Slough	£689,507
Solihull	£1,040,717
Somerset	£1,925,972
South Gloucestershire	£863,029
South Tyneside	£1,250,300
Southampton	£1,571,231
Southend-on-Sea	£887,492
Southwark	£2,521,368
St. Helens	£1,328,091
Staffordshire	£3,634,365
Stockport	£1,473,704
Stockton-on-Tees	£1,310,997
Stoke-on-Trent	£2,084,370
Suffolk	£2,789,363
Sunderland	£2,219,966
Surrey	£3,477,690
Sutton	£920,329
Swindon	£930,733
Tameside	£1,419,817

AUTHORITIES TO WHICH GRANT IS TO BE PAID	AMOUNT OF GRANT TO BE PAID
Telford and Wrekin	£1,162,281
Thurrock	£1,050,883
Torbay	£886,457
Tower Hamlets	£3,220,464
Trafford	£1,156,759
Wakefield	£2,247,805
Walsall	£1,650,559
Waltham Forest	£1,478,904
Wandsworth	£2,541,671
Warrington	£1,136,884
Warwickshire	£2,137,781
West Berkshire	£540,345
West Sussex	£3,178,715
Westminster	£2,890,797
Wigan	£2,392,101
Wiltshire	£1,586,902
Windsor and Maidenhead	£435,650
Wirral	£2,733,018
Wokingham	£499,857
Wolverhampton	£1,920,236
Worcestershire	£2,752,192
York	£733,896
Total	£300,000,000