



Daily Report

Friday, 12 June 2020

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 12 June 2020 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:35 P.M., 12 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

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins:

[[54298](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 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.

Nadhim Zahawi:

I refer the hon Member to the answer given today to Question UIN [54314](#).

■ Economic Situation

Rachael Maskell:

[[54150](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to support local economies in broadening their economic base.

Paul Scully:

It is clear that the UK economy will face significant challenges as a result of COVID-19. It is important to ensure that decisions to support the economy in the short term also support our longer term economic vision for a stronger, fairer, greener economy that builds on UK strengths in science, international relations and ease of doing business.

We recognise that some sectors and regions are likely to be harder hit than others, so we will continue work on the levelling up agenda, building on the strengths of local places and creating new opportunities for long-term economic growth in parts of the country that have been worst affected.

Government will work with places across England to build on the development of their Local Industrial Strategies to define a local vision for economic recovery and renewal. Officials in the Cities and Local Growth Unit will work with places to understand the full scale of the challenges they face in the short- to medium-term, through the MHCLG-led Economic Recovery Working Group.

Achieving Net Zero also remains a priority and we will consider how transitioning to a carbon neutral economy and creating new sources of competitive advantage in green technology and sustainable business can be achieved.

■ **Local Enterprise Partnerships: Coronavirus**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[54154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the provision of additional funding for Local Enterprise Partnerships to support the local regeneration of the economy.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) continue to play a crucial role in driving economic growth across the country, helping to build a country that works for everyone. That is why Government has invested heavily through the Local Growth Fund, allowing LEPs to use their local knowledge to unlock economic growth and regeneration opportunities.

The March 2020 Budget confirmed up to £387 million in 2021 and 2022 for local areas to continue with existing priority Local Growth Fund projects.

■ **Offshore Industry: Carbon Emissions**

Alex Cunningham:

[\[54911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what his policy is on achieving a transition to a net zero carbon economy for workers in the offshore oil and gas industry.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Government is currently in discussion with the industry about our manifesto commitment to deliver a transformational oil and gas Sector Deal. This recognises that the sector has an important role to play as the UK moves to a net zero economy and is already strongly focussed on being part of the solution to the challenges that the transition will bring. I expect this Deal to focus on supporting jobs and maintaining skills, as well as new technologies and approaches that can help us decarbonise our economy.

On 11 June, I attended the Oil and Gas Authority's Maximising Economic Recovery Forum with industry leaders to discuss first proposals from the oil and gas industry for a Sector Deal, as well as the challenges posed by COVID-19, and the sector's recovery.

■ **Offshore Industry: North Sea**

Alex Cunningham:

[\[54912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 21 April 2020 to Question 34978 on Offshore Industry: North Sea, on what dates since 1 March 2020 (a) Ministers and (b) Officials in his Department discussed employment matters in the offshore oil and gas industry with trade unions in that industry.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Oil and Gas Authority as the regulatory body for the UK's upstream oil and gas industry meets during the year with trade union leaders and are in regular contact with them outside of these meetings.

BEIS Ministers and officials have had no direct meetings with trade unions on these issues since 1 March. However, I will be attending the virtual MER UK Forum on 11 June to which trade union leaders are also invited to participate. This forum allows for an open exchange of information on the challenges facing the industry and its workforce stemming from the COVID-19 crisis and the low oil price.

■ Ofgem: Judicial Review**Dr Alan Whitehead:**[\[53992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many times decisions by Ofgem have been subject to judicial review in (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020; and what the subjects were of those reviews.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The information is provided below:

- 2018 – challenge concerned GEMA's decision in relation to changing the charges for certain generators to access the electricity network. Judgement in favour of GEMA in summer 2018
- 2018 – challenge by licensee to a direction that had been issued to them by GEMA (to take specified steps in the context of a randomised controlled collective switch trial). Concluded in 2018. Judgement in favour of GEMA in 2018.
- 2018 – challenge brought in Scotland against GEMA's rejection of an application for accreditation under the Feed-in Tariffs Scheme. Judgement in favour of GEMA in 2018.
- 2019 – challenge to GEMA decision by an offshore wind generator that the physical failure of one of the offshore transmission owner's (OFTO) subsea electricity cables should be treated as an Income Adjusting Event under the OFTO licence. Judgement in 2019 against GEMA.
- 2019 – challenge by a licensee against GEMA's retail price cap decision. Judgement in 2019 against GEMA.
- 2019 – challenge relating to whether GEMA had certain powers under the Domestic Renewable Heat Scheme. GEMA were co-defendants with BEIS. Judgement in November 2019 in favour of GEMA. Application for permission to appeal was refused in 2020.

To date, no judicial reviews have been carried out in 2020.

■ Public Houses and Social Clubs

Ian Lavery: [54114]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many pubs and social clubs were operating in (a) the UK, (b) England, (c) the North East, (d) Northumberland and (e) Wansbeck on 20 March 2020.

Paul Scully:

BEIS does not hold this information. According to data from the ONS, as of March 2019 there were 30,885 pubs and bars in the UK[1]. ONS data for March 2017 shows that there were 38,935 pubs and bars in the UK. 33,045 of these were in England, 1,065 were in the North East and 255 were in Northumberland[2].

[1]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/aboutus/transparencyandgovernance/freedomofinformationfoi/numberofrestaurantstakeawayscafesbarsandpubsintheuk>

[2]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitysizeandlocation/adhocs/008951pubsandbarsindistrictsoftheuk2010to2017>

■ Tourists: Coronavirus

Alexander Stafford: [54282]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to improve (a) contract terms, (b) insurance cover, (c) ABTA and ATOL arrangements and (d) other financial protections available to holidaymakers.

Paul Scully:

Package travel agencies are required to comply with The Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018, which protect consumers who have bought package holidays. Consumers are entitled to a refund if forced to cancel a package holiday due to unavoidable and extraordinary circumstances, which should be issued within 14 days, depending on the nature of the contract in place. Packages must also be backed by insolvency protection schemes. DfT is in regular contact with the regulator, the sector and consumer groups and is working to ensure consumers are protected while recognising the pressure travel businesses are facing. The Government is also in continual dialogue with the insurance sector to understand and influence its contribution to handling Covid-19.

■ Unemployment: Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell: [54148]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to prevent an increase in unemployment in (a) York and (b) England as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Paul Scully:

The government has announced a package of support for businesses to help with their ongoing business costs and prevent an increase in unemployment in recognition of the disruption caused by Covid-19. This package of support includes the **Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF)** and the **Small Business Grant Fund (SBGF)**.

The SBGF and RHLGF have supported many thousands of small businesses with their ongoing business costs in recognition of the disruption caused by Covid-19. As of 7 June, £10.23 billion has been paid out to over 954,000 business properties under the two schemes, and the City of York Council has paid grants to 3,280 business premises, totalling £43,675,000.

In addition, on 1 May, the Business Secretary announced that up to £617 million is being made available to Local Authorities in England to allow them to provide discretionary grants. The Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund is aimed at small businesses with ongoing fixed property-related costs but not liable for business rates or rates reliefs.

We are working closely with all local authorities to get remaining funding to businesses as quickly and efficiently as possible.

■ Waste Disposal: Applications**Alex Sobel:**[\[55018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made an assessment of the implications for his policies of EU plans to establish a Clean Hydrogen Alliance; and whether he is taking steps to ensure that UK businesses can engage with that group.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

We recognise that the scale up and demonstration of hydrogen's potential in meeting Paris commitments is a global challenge. We are an active member of Mission Innovation and the International Partnership for Hydrogen and Fuel Cells in the Economy.

Since the UK has left the European Union, we are seeking to engage and cooperate with the EU on hydrogen through normal diplomatic channels, and therefore the UK will not attend EU meetings on this topic other than in exceptional circumstances. Whilst the UK is leaving the EU single market, it remains an important part of the gas supply system for North West Europe. The UK can expect to work cooperatively with its neighbours to sustain this mutually beneficial relationship into the future as the methane gas market is decarbonised, potentially leading to a European hydrogen market.

CABINET OFFICE■ **Black Lives Matter: Publicity**

Owen Thompson: [54160]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government is taking to raise awareness of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Chloe Smith:

I refer the Hon Member to the statement of 8 June by my Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister, published on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-minister-message-on-black-lives-matter>

■ **Cabinet Office: Buildings**

Rachel Hopkins: [54314]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer on 15 May 2020 to Question 43779 on Civil Servants, at how many multi-hub locations employees of his Department work 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.

Chloe Smith:

Supporting the Government's objective to provide great places to work, enabling co-working through the Hub's agenda and driving efficiencies by minimising vacant accommodation, the Government Property Agency manages a number of multi-let properties on the Whitehall Estate.

Details of multi-hub locations in London occupied by Cabinet Office, together with other Departments and agencies, are provided in the attached schedule.

Attachments:

1. GPA multi-hub locations [PQ 54314 - GPA properties.pdf]

■ **Cabinet Office: ICT**

Martyn Day: [52233]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps his Department is taking to (a) reduce the amount of manual processing on paper it carries out and (b) make those processes digital.

Chloe Smith:

The Cabinet Office does not carry out significant manual processing on paper.

■ Capital Investment: Linlithgow and East Falkirk

Martyn Day:

[\[54167\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much Government investment has been made in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency in each year since 2010.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ54167.pdf]

■ Care Homes: Kingston upon Hull

Dame Diana Johnson:

[\[54043\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many covid-19 deaths have been recorded in care homes in Hull since the start of the outbreak.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ54043 (1).pdf]

■ Coronavirus: Death

Rachael Maskell:

[\[54954\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish (a) the (i) number and (ii) type of underlying health conditions among and (b) the socio-economic status of people who have died from covid-19.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ54954.pdf]

Stuart Anderson:

[\[55034\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans he has in place to estimate the proportion of people who have passed away from covid-19 compared with other primary causes.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ55034.pdf]

■ Debts**Martyn Day:** [\[55089\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of household debt in (a) Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency, (b) Scotland and (c) the UK in each year since 2015.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ55089.pdf]

■ Debts: Young People**Martyn Day:** [\[54956\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what information his Department holds on the average debt of people aged 18 to 25 in (a) the UK, (b) Scotland and c) Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ54956.pdf]

■ Dominic Cummings**Stephen Farry:** [\[54277\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, to whom did Dominic Cummings report to in his role as Special Adviser during the period when the Prime Minister was incapacitated with covid-19.

Chloe Smith:

The Prime Minister was still in office; special advisers stayed in post, and remained accountable to their appointing Minister.

■ Elections: Voting Methods**Martyn Day:** [\[54974\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make it his policy to introduce the option of advance physical voting at elections.

Chloe Smith:

There are no plans to make such a provision.

■ Employment: Linlithgow and East Falkirk

Martyn Day: [\[57281\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of people in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency in employment who are aged between (a) 50 to 59, (b) 60 to 69 and (c) over 70 years old.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ57281.pdf]

■ EU Nationals: Linlithgow and East Falkirk

Martyn Day: [\[54957\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many EU nationals are resident in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ54957.pdf]

■ Low Pay: Linlithgow and East Falkirk

Martyn Day: [\[55090\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many (a) women and (b) men working in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency earn less than £10 per hour.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ55090.pdf]

■ Newspaper Press: Advertising

Caroline Lucas: [\[53371\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much public health and NHS advertising has been placed with (a) members of the Independent Community News Network and (b) other news providers since 23 March 2020.

Chloe Smith:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given to PQ [46692](#) on 29 May 2020.

■ Prime Minister: Nurseries**Alison Thewliss:** [\[52123\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what emergency childcare provision is available to staff working in 10 Downing Street.

Chloe Smith:

10 Downing Street is an integral part of the Cabinet Office. All Civil Servants that work at the Cabinet Office are able to access parental support policies, such as Parental Leave and Flexible Working.

With due consideration to COVID-19, Civil Servants are able to manage childcare arrangements with the support of paid special leave and flexible working, where alternative provisions cannot be found.

■ Registration of Births, Deaths, Marriages and Civil Partnerships**Nick Fletcher:** [\[55060\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what discussions he has had Cabinet colleagues on allowing registry office ceremonies to resume by 2 July 2020.

Sajid Javid: [\[55674\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the weddings industry on the timescale for easing covid-19 restrictions to allow small weddings to take place.

Penny Mordaunt:

Further to the answer given to PQs [54003](#), [54280](#) and [54102](#) on 8 June 2020, the Government understands the huge significance of weddings to couples planning to get married. We are working to ease restrictions safely to enable weddings to take place.

■ Self-employed: Linlithgow and East Falkirk**Martyn Day:** [\[55085\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people declared themselves as self-employed in each of the last three years in Linlithgow and East Falkirk.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ55085.pdf]

■ Working Hours

Martyn Day:

[\[55088\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of people in employment which primarily requires working at night in (a) Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency, (b) Scotland and (c) the UK in the last 12 months.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ55088.pdf]

DEFENCE

■ Ministry of Defence: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins:

[\[54309\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer on 15 May 2020 to Question 43779 on Civil Servants, at how many multi-hub locations employees of his Department work 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.

Jeremy Quin:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to her on 11 June 2020 by the Minister of State at the Cabinet Office to Question 54314.

Attachments:

1. Cabinet Office: Buildings [Hansard Extract 54314 Friday 12 June.docx]

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Broadband: Voucher Schemes

Chi Onwurah:

[\[54109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the gigabit broadband voucher scheme in each region of the UK.

Matt Warman:

To date the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme (the Scheme) has connected 25,394 homes and small businesses with a further 18,324 already in the pipeline. Vouchers have been issued to premises across each nation and region of the United Kingdom using funding from the Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN) programme and the Rural Gigabit Connectivity (RGC) programme. Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK),

who administer the Scheme, work with local bodies and devolved administrations in the UK to ensure that every region has oversight of the Scheme in their area.

On 14 May 2020 we announced that we would no longer accept any new voucher requests associated with the LFFN funded part of the Scheme because the £68.5m of available budget had been fully committed - 10 months sooner than expected - such has been the huge popularity of the scheme. Suppliers have 12 months to complete a connection from the point at which a voucher is issued therefore the final connection is not expected until May 2021. A full benefits and evaluation analysis will be completed after the final connection has been made.

In this financial year, £71m of funding remains available for the RGC funded part of the scheme. We expect to continue to be able to accept requests and issue vouchers for eligible rural premises until 31 March 2021 with connections being made up until March 2022. Similarly, a full benefits and evaluation analysis will be completed after the final connection has been made.

■ **Small Businesses: Cybercrime**

Martyn Day:

[\[54171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to help small and medium-sized enterprises protect themselves against cyber-attack.

Matt Warman:

Through the National Cyber Security Strategy the Government is helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across the economy and society improve their digital security.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) works closely with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) to help SMEs protect themselves, including promoting the uptake of the Cyber Essentials scheme through engagement with industry sectors and via police Regional Organised Crime Units, which engage with businesses locally.

The Cyber Aware campaign encourages the public and small businesses to take up secure online behaviours, including signposting businesses to guidance, such as the Small Business Guide, which helps firms protect themselves from the most common cyber attacks. The NCSC has also published a suite of guidance on home-working and digital business operations to support SMEs during the Covid-19 outbreak.

DCMS also is making sure SMEs have access to the skilled people they need, and the NCSC offers a free online training package, Top Tips for Staff.

EDUCATION

■ Children: Coronavirus

Dr Matthew Offord:

[55643]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether schoolchildren will be required to wear face masks on school transport and buses during the covid-19 outbreak.

Nick Gibb:

On 4 June, the Government announced that, as of Monday 15 June, face coverings should be used on public transport. This does not mean surgical masks, which we must keep for clinical settings. It means the kind of face covering you can easily make at home. There will be exceptions to the rule for some children, disabled people and those with breathing difficulties.

We do not require children to wear face coverings on school transport, but they can wear one if they wish. School transport is provided specifically for the purpose of ensuring that children can attend school. It is limited to children travelling to school, and their travel assistants where necessary. Children do not travel on school transport at the same time as members of the public. The transport is arranged by local authorities for a planned number of children which means demand for services can be managed in a way which is not possible on public transport. This will allow children to maintain a 2 metre distance from other children not in their household, wherever possible. Additionally, school transport often carries the same children on a regular basis, which helps to reduce any risk of transmission.

Children should follow the Department for Transport's guidance on wearing face coverings when travelling on public transport. The guidance is available here:

www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers.

■ Children: Day Care

Steve Brine:

[54905]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many Ofsted registered (a) nurseries and (b) childminders have closed in each of the last 12 months.

Vicky Ford:

This is a matter for Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman. I have asked her to write to my hon. Friend and a copy of her reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

■ Department for Education: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins:

[54303]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, 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.

Nick Gibb:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer my hon. Friend, Chloe Smith gave on 12 June 2020 to Question [54314](#).

■ Schools: Mental Health

Dr Lisa Cameron:

[[54124](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to provide schools with flexibility under the national curriculum to meet the emotional and mental health needs of staff and pupils when schools reopen as part of the easing of covid-19 restrictions.

Nick Gibb:

Schools and colleges continue to be best placed to make decisions about how to support and educate all their pupils during this period, based on the local context and staff capacity.

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 pupil who may need additional support so they are ready to learn. They should also assess the stage pupils have reached in the school curriculum and the adjustments that may need to be made.

No school will be penalised if they are unable to offer a broad and balanced curriculum to their pupils during this period.

Our planning framework for schools advises them to prepare wellbeing support, and the primary planning guide sets out further guidance on managing pupil and staff wellbeing and mental health as schools open more widely:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools#managing-pupil-and-staff-wellbeing-and-mental-health>.

The Department has signposted resources on supporting and promoting mental wellbeing among a list of resources to help children to use at home:

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

BBC Bitesize have worked with the Department to provide content with substantial focus on mental health, wellbeing and pastoral care.

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, including bereavement support. This advice is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>.

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

■ Schools: Repairs and Maintenance

Luke Pollard:

[54246]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has issued new guidance to schools and multi-academy trusts on the (a) design and (b) layout of (i) building, (ii) rebuilding and (iii) refurbishment projects as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Nick Gibb:

The Government has not issued such guidance to schools and multi-academy trusts as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

However, to help nurseries and schools to plan, prepare and adapt existing spaces for the return of more children, the Department published a range of detailed guidance on how to implement protective measures. The guidance can be found at the following GOV.UK link:

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

This includes the main protective measures guidance, which can be found directly 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>.

■ Universities: Scotland

Chris Elmore:

[54203]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of limits on the number of English students who can attend Scottish universities from 2020 on the higher education sector.

Michelle Donelan:

Student number controls for English-domiciled students in Scotland are a direct response to the financial threat posed by the COVID-19 outbreak and they form a key part of the package of measures to stabilise the admissions system.

These controls are a temporary measure and will be in place for one academic year only. Student number controls for institutions in Scotland only apply to the number of English-domiciled entrants who will be supported with their tuition fees through the Student Loans Company. They are set at a level which will allow every institution to take more first year English students than they took last year. The funding of English-domiciled students is not a devolved matter, and it is right and fair that this policy should apply as consistently as possible wherever they are studying in the UK.

Ministers will continue to work closely with the devolved administrations on strengthening and stabilising the higher education system following the COVID-19 outbreak.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Barbecues**

Jake Berry: [54901]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to protect (a) Areas Of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (b) the West Pennine Moors and other moorland areas and (c) National Parks from fires caused by the use of disposable barbecues.

Jake Berry: [54902]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will bring forward legislative proposals for a seasonal ban on the use of disposable barbecues away from the home in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, moorland areas and National Parks to help prevent fires after prolonged periods of dry weather.

Rebecca Pow:

We are clear that everyone should follow the Countryside Code. A key part of Government strategy is to get clear and consistent messages to the media which highlight the problem and promote better behaviour in the countryside and encourage a partnership response.

There are existing powers in legislation which can be used by authorities to regulate and prohibit the lighting of fires on Access Land in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and National Parks. Current 'Byelaw' legislation allows for local authorities to restrict and enforce the use of disposable barbecues in parks and public spaces. Government has no plans for additional legislative proposals to introduce a seasonal ban on the use of disposable barbecues.

Government is working with AONBs, National Park Authorities; and other Government departments to promote a series of guidance videos to educate users about travelling to and spending time outdoors safely in the wider countryside. This includes an updated Countryside Code which advises not to have barbeques or fires. This guidance is available at the following links:

Green space access: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-on-accessing-green-spaces-safely>

The Countryside Code: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code/the-countryside-code>

■ Beverage Containers: Recycling

Steve Brine: [54904]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to introduce the deposit return scheme for plastic bottles.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government committed in its manifesto to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers to incentivise people to recycle plastic and glass, and is 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 for drinks containers using further evidence and ongoing engagement with stakeholders. The scope of the scheme is being further developed and will be presented in a second consultation. The Government is reviewing its implementation timeline for the proposed introduction of the scheme, which will be announced in due course.

Biodiversity and Nature Conservation**Greg Smith:**[\[54263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to amend the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 after the transition period to increase the effectiveness of protections for vulnerable species and increase biodiversity.

Rebecca Pow:

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 will be amended at the end of the Transition Period under powers in the EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018. This will ensure that the regulatory framework in this area maintains existing environmental protections and that the UK continues to meet its international obligations.

We have no other plans to amend the Regulations.

Biodiversity: Coronavirus**Kerry McCarthy:**[\[54868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to published academic research on the link between destruction of natural habitats and the emergence of novel infectious diseases, what assessment he has made of the value of protecting biodiversity as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Rebecca Pow:

I refer to the answer I gave on 1 May 2020 (PQ 38461).

The Department has not yet made a full assessment of the link between the destruction of biodiversity and habitats on levels of emerging zoonoses. The recent 2019 IPBES Global Assessment Report on biodiversity and ecosystem services highlights this as a factor potentially exacerbating the emergence of infectious diseases in wildlife, domestic animals and people. We are continuing to review the evidence and the complex links between the destruction of natural habitats and infectious diseases, to enable us to take an informed view as soon as possible.

Birds: Pest Control

Greg Smith: [\[54260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many applications for individual licences were made in 2020 for the control of common pest and predatory corvids to conserve wildlife within European protected sites and 300m buffer zones; and how many of those have been granted.

Rebecca Pow:

Natural England has received approximately 160 applications to control Corvid species on or close to European protected sites. To date, 26 of these applications have been granted, 8 rejected, with 126 still to be determined or have been withdrawn. For some applications, not all corvid species for which a licence has been requested have been granted.

Chemicals: EU Law

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[54888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the amount of chemical safety information the UK will lose access to when it can no longer access the REACH database after the end of the transition period.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[54889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the financial effect on UK businesses of (a) replicating chemical safety dossiers that exist in the REACH database and (b) being required to register with two systems.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[54890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the number of chemicals that will require lower levels of safety information in a UK only chemical regulation system.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[54891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what comparative assessment his Department has made of the number of chemicals that will need to be regulated in (a) a UK only market and (b) the EU REACH regulations.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[54892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will publish the impact assessment on seeking associate membership of the European Chemicals Agency.

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 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. UK REACH maintains the core principle of EU REACH of “no data no market” to provide assurance that businesses understand the risks of chemicals they are using, and how to manage those risks, and to give UK regulators the information they need to manage risks to the environment and to UK consumers.

We will aim to keep the transition to UK REACH as simple and straightforward as possible. We are considering a range of measures to minimise the burdens and costs for businesses.

This includes the grace period provisions we have out in place to enable industry to comply with UK REACH through a phased transitional period. Defra's estimates of the costs to industry broadly align with those identified by industry, and we continue to explore a range of further steps to minimise the burdens on businesses. As part of that process we have been undertaking a focused evidence-gathering exercise to better understand costs and practical options to reduce burdens on industry. This has involved a number of key stakeholders including businesses of different sizes across the supply chain, trade associations and NGOs.

We are also looking to reduce the cost to business, through the ongoing negotiations between the UK and the EU for a Free Trade Agreement. In February, the Government published our approach to negotiating our future relationship with the EU. That includes a proposal for a chemicals annex as part of the EU Free Trade Agreement, to facilitate trade and encourage high levels of protection for the environment and human health. To support businesses to meet the separate regulatory requirements of the UK and EU markets, we aim to agree data and information sharing mechanisms with the EU, in line with the relevant provisions set out in UK and EU regulation and existing third-country mechanisms. On 19 May the Government published its draft Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) with the EU text. Negotiations are ongoing and progress will be kept under review.

The Government published “EU Exit: Long-term economic impacts” in November 2018. This paper provides estimates of the economic impact of a range of future trading relationships with the EU. Our commitment to having control of our own laws and on not remaining within the jurisdiction of the European Courts of Justice (ECJ), means that we are not seeking associate membership of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) and participation in EU REACH.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Buildings**Rachel Hopkins:** [\[54299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 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.

Victoria Prentis:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to PQ 54314 on 12 June 2020.

[<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-03/54314/>]

■ Fishing Vessels**John Redwood:** [\[53985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to expand the UK's fishing fleet in preparation for the cessation of the application of the EU Common Fishing Policy.

Victoria Prentis:

When the UK is an independent coastal state, we will be seeking a fairer share of quota for our fishing fleets across the UK. We will also have the opportunity to design a domestic set of fisheries policies more suited to our needs than under the Common Fisheries Policy. Decisions on fleet capacity (where in some cases we currently have an excess of capacity) depend on a wide variety of factors, including the level of quota available, and, most crucially of all, the long-term sustainability of our key stocks.

■ Fruit and Vegetables: Production**John Redwood:** [\[53987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans the Government has to expand growing vegetables and fruit in the UK to reduce food miles on imports.

Victoria Prentis:

The Government recognises the crucial role our horticulture industry plays in feeding the country. We are fortunate in the UK to have the climate, landscape, and entrepreneurial farmers and growers to enable us to produce world-class fruit and vegetables. We will always champion our farmers and growers, supporting them to provide a sustainable supply of healthy, home grown food produced to high environmental standards.

The Rural Development Programme for England Countryside Productivity Small Grant (CPSG) scheme provides grant support which helps farmers buy the

equipment they need to boost productivity and increase yields. Round 2 of CPSG, was launched in 2019 and included equipment such as direct drill, chlorophyll meters and fruit ripeness spectrometers to help support the productivity of the horticultural sector. A third round of CPSG is being planned for launch in autumn 2020.

The Agriculture Bill will provide powers to give financial support to anyone starting, or improving the productivity of, an agricultural, horticultural or forestry activity. Defra will continue working with the horticulture industry to consider the best way to support them, to allow them to grow and sell more fresh produce.

■ **Mink: Coronavirus**

Luke Pollard:

[\[55026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the risks to (a) human and (b) animal health from covid-19 in mink fur farms.

Victoria Prentis:

We are monitoring the situation carefully and have been in touch with the Dutch Authorities. The Fur Farming (Prohibition) Act was passed in England and Wales in 2000, with Sections 1 to 4 of the Act coming into force on 1 January 2003. Fur Farming was banned in 2002 in Northern Ireland and 2003 in Scotland, although there were no fur farms in either to ban at the time of these acts.

There are no mink farms existing in the UK. The risk to the UK population from these outbreaks is therefore negligible and the Dutch government is taking action on those farms that have been affected.

Nevertheless, we are keeping a close eye on the findings that mink can effectively maintain the virus which causes COVID-19.

Luke Pollard:

[\[55027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he plans to take to protect human and animal health following the publication of findings by the Dutch Government that mink fur farms could act as a long-term reservoir of covid-19.

Victoria Prentis:

We are monitoring the situation carefully and have been in touch with the Dutch Authorities. The Fur Farming (Prohibition) Act was passed in England and Wales in 2000, with Sections 1 to 4 of the Act coming into force on 1 January 2003. Fur Farming was banned in 2002 in Northern Ireland and 2003 in Scotland, although there were no fur farms in either to ban at the time of these acts.

There are no mink farms existing in the UK. The risk to the UK population from these outbreaks is therefore negligible and the Dutch government is taking action on those farms that have been affected.

Nevertheless, we are keeping a close eye on the findings that mink can effectively maintain the virus which causes COVID-19.

■ Seagulls: Pest Control

Greg Smith:

[\[54261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of restrictions imposed by Natural England on the ability of land managers to control the impact of gulls.

Rebecca Pow:

Herring and lesser black-backed gull populations have both declined in recent decades. An assessment carried out by Natural England (NE) has indicated that the scale of activity carried out under licences in recent years, were it to continue, would be above a sustainable level and would be likely to have a harmful impact on the population levels of both species. For this reason, it has been necessary to scale back the lethal control of these gull species.

In rural areas, where populations overall are known to be in decline, NE has set upper 'safe' number of birds that could be killed. Upper 'safe' levels have not been identified for lethal control in urban populations of gulls, as these are faring better.

Beyond a class licence for air safety, gull control is now via individual licence. In taking this decision, it was recognised that there would be an impact on the level of control particularly in rural areas, but this was considered necessary given the situation, so that licensed activity would need to be prioritised. NE considers the strength of need in each licence application individually but generally protecting human life and health is the overriding priority.

Any control to be undertaken under other purposes such as preventing serious damage and conserving wild birds and flora or fauna will need to be targeted. If applicants do not receive an individual licence, they may still be able to achieve some of their objectives by using alternative non-lethal measures.

■ UN Convention on Biological Diversity

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[54034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if the Government will take steps to negotiate a deal at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity which recognises the importance of protecting Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered species.

Rebecca Pow:

The UK's objective for 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity is to agree a framework that spurs action and the transformative changes needed for halting and reversing global biodiversity loss.

We will promote ambitious and practical targets, including targets to enhance ecosystem resilience and species recovery, supported by strengthened implementation mechanisms that are commensurate with the scale of the challenge.

■ **Wildlife: Licensing**

Greg Smith:

[\[54262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to work with stakeholders to ensure that the wildlife licensing system is fit for purpose.

Rebecca Pow:

The Department is in the process of carrying out a review of General Licences for certain bird species. This has involved extensive stakeholder engagement including a public survey which generated over 4,400 responses and a series of workshops with licence users and other stakeholders. The resulting General Licences will draw on a detailed assessment of the scientific literature, identified user needs and stakeholder views and knowledge. To further help stakeholders we intend to allow time for them to familiarise themselves with the new licences before the changeover takes place.

Greg Smith:

[\[54264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what comparative assessment he has made of the merits of a risk-based approach to wildlife licensing compared to one based on the EU interpretation of the precautionary principle.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government's policy on wildlife licensing already follows a risk-based approach. We believe that people should be free to manage wildlife within the law where they need to do so. Legislation provides statutory authorities with the parameters within which they may licence otherwise prohibited activities where there is a demonstrable need to do so. In taking a licensing decision the authorities balance a number of risks and issues before coming to a decision, involving taking a precautionary view of the risks where necessary in the circumstances.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ **British Indian Ocean Territory: Marine Protected Areas**

Patrick Grady:

[\[56035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 2 June 2020 to Question 49117, British Overseas Territories: Marine Protected Areas, when his Department plans to publish a Marine Protected Area Management Plan for the British Indian Ocean Territory.

Wendy Morton:

The UK Overseas Territories are constitutionally responsible for their marine environments and as such the UK Government will not be publishing Marine Protected Area Management Plan for the British Indian Ocean Territory.

■ Climate Change Convention: Glasgow**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [\[53993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many and what proportion of UK diplomats have been directly tasked with encouraging strong Nationally Determined Contributions from countries participating in COP 26 in November 2021.

James Duddridge:

Tackling climate change in collaboration with international partners is a high priority for this government, and COP26 will require a whole-of-government effort, including strong diplomatic engagement. All Heads of Mission have been instructed by the Foreign Secretary to make climate change a top priority and, supported by around 180 diplomatic staff in embassies around the world, four regional COP26 ambassadors and the 24 staff in the Climate Diplomacy Team in FCO, encouraging strong Nationally Determined Contributions from countries is a major part of that work.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Buildings**Rachel Hopkins:** [\[54297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 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.

Nigel Adams:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Answer given to PQ 54314 on 12 June 2020.

■ Gaza: Hamas**Alexander Stafford:** [\[55145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of Hamas's rule in Gaza on regional stability.

James Cleverly:

The UK remains concerned about the situation in Gaza and any actions by Hamas which increase instability. We utterly condemn rocket fire by Hamas and other militants in Gaza; Palestinians and Israelis deserve to live in safety and peace. We encourage the Palestinian Authority, Israel, regional and international actors to put forward long-term sustainable proposals, to resolve the threat posed to Israel's security by Hamas, and see the Palestinian Authority's return to government functions in Gaza. This will help to improve the dire humanitarian and economic situation in the region.

■ Iran: Arms Trade

Alexander Stafford:

[\[55143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for regional security in Iran of the expiration of the UN conventional arms embargo on Iran in October 2020.

James Cleverly:

The UK remains committed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a reciprocal deal that lifts sanctions in exchange for tough nuclear limits. Iran has broken the nuclear limits in the JCPOA and we are working to bring Iran back into compliance through the deal's Dispute Resolution Mechanism.

UNSCR 2231, which underpins the JCPOA, includes a number of clauses designed to allow sanctions to expire on fixed dates: the UN conventional arms embargo is due to expire in October 2020. The EU arms embargo and UN ballistic missile restrictions will remain in place until 2023. We are consulting partners on the broader implications of the UN arms embargo expiry for Iran as well as the region, and encourage all states to implement national export control best practice.

We have repeatedly set out concerns about Iranian destabilising behaviour, including proliferation to non-state actors. UNSCRs 1540, 2216 and 1701, which prohibit the proliferation of weapons to the Houthis and Lebanese Hizballah, will remain in place after the arms embargo expires.

■ Marine Environment: Treaties

John Lamont:

[\[54997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that a new UN high seas treaty to protect ocean biodiversity and conservation is negotiated in 2020.

James Duddridge:

The FCO and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs have been closely involved in the negotiation of a new Implementing Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction - the BBNJ Agreement - as an important step forward in addressing the challenges that the ocean faces. The UK is pressing for an ambitious Agreement. It will be a key mechanism in enabling the designation of at least 30 per cent of the global ocean as Marine Protected Areas by 2030.

Unfortunately, due to the impacts of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), the fourth session of the Inter-Governmental Conference, scheduled for 23 March to 3 April in New York, was postponed. The UK is supportive of re-scheduling the fourth session for the earliest possible opportunity that will enable all delegations to be present for the negotiations in New York. The UK also strongly supports

intersessional work, which is vital to ensure that we maintain momentum towards the successful conclusion of these important negotiations.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Blood Cancer: Coronavirus

Henry Smith: [\[53399\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people with blood cancer have been removed from the shielding list by (a) clinicians and (b) GPs in England.

Henry Smith: [\[53400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what evidence his Department based its decision on for the removal of blood cancer patients from the covid-19 shielding list.

Jo Churchill:

The shielded patient list is dynamic – general practitioners and specialists continue to make clinical judgements based the shielding criteria, that may result in those who had initially been advised to shield from COVID-19 no longer being advised to do so. Doctors have also been provided with guidance to support these decisions, which should be made following discussion with the patient and taking into account their individual clinical circumstances.

Information on the number of patients removed from the shielded patient list is not held centrally.

■ Body Bags

Mr Peter Bone: [\[38881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of body bags available for use by (a) the NHS and (b) funeral directors.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 27 April 2020]: The Government published 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): personal protective equipment (PPE) plan' on 10 April. It incorporates guidance on who needs PPE and when they need it, routes to ensure those who need it can get it at the right time and sets out actions to secure enough PPE to last through the crisis. PPE includes aprons, eye protectors, face masks, gloves, gowns, hand hygiene, clinical waste bags and body bags.

In addition to making PPE available to National Health Service trusts, primary care and adult social care, we are also delivering PPE to all Local Resilience Forums (LRFs). These multi-agency LRF partnerships are made up of representatives from local public services, including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, the Environment Agency and others. This enables LRFs to respond to urgent local spikes in need across the adult social care system and other front-line services,

including mortuary and funeral services where providers are unable to access PPE through their usual routes.

■ **Cancer: Health Services**

Catherine West:

[\[52305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure cancer services can restart in safe settings during the covid-19 outbreak.

Jo Churchill:

In response to COVID-19, 21 Cancer Alliances across England now have arrangements in place for cancer hubs. These are hospitals dedicated to cancer care away from hospitals dealing with the virus to keep often vulnerable cancer patients safe.

Essential and urgent cancer treatment has continued throughout the pandemic period, and we are now working on the restoration and recovery of all cancer services.

As part of the restoration of services, NHS services will continue to identify ring-fenced diagnostic and surgical capacity for cancer, as well as delivering treating patients in cancer hubs, to ensure that referrals, diagnostics and treatment are brought back to pre-pandemic levels.

■ **Care Homes: Protective Clothing**

Clive Lewis:

[\[52266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what supply chains for personal protective equipment are available to independent care homes that are not able to be part of NHS procurement channels.

Jo Churchill:

We are working around the clock to give the social care sector and wider National Health Service the equipment and support they need to tackle this outbreak.

We have made personal protective equipment (PPE) available to designated wholesalers for onward sale to social care providers and delivered further PPE to local resilience forums (LRFs) to help them respond to urgent local spikes in need across the adult social care system and some other front-line services, where providers are unable to access PPE through their usual, or dedicated wholesaler routes.

The National Supply Disruption Response operates a 24-hour helpline that can also respond to emergency PPE requests.

Finally, we are rolling out a PPE Portal to help primary and social care providers to order critical PPE. This been tested with the sector and is now being scaled up nationally over the coming weeks. During this phase of the roll-out, general practitioners, small residential social care services (care homes with 24 beds or fewer), and small domiciliary care providers will be invited to register on the portal.

The full weight of the Government is behind this effort and we are working closely with industry, social care providers, the NHS, and the army to ensure the right equipment continues to be delivered.

■ **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

Jonathan Ashworth: [52000]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) advice or (b) guidance on the easing of covid-19 social distancing measures has been issued to clinically vulnerable people who have been shielding.

Jo Churchill:

On 1 June the shielding guidance was updated to advise that those shielding may wish to consider spending time outdoors once a day. This can be with members of their own household or, for those shielding alone, with one person from another household. For those who do choose to go outside, particular care should be taken to minimise contact with others and they should follow social distancing guidelines.

More information can be found on GOV.UK at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

Henry Smith: [53401]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to ensure that clinical criteria will be in place before further changes are made to the covid-19 shielding list.

Jo Churchill:

The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for England, working with the CMOs of the devolved administrations and other senior clinicians, commissioned NHS Digital to produce a list of vulnerable people at “high risk” of complications from COVID-19, who should be shielded for at least 12 weeks.

The next review point for the social distancing measures will take place the week commencing 15 June. As part of this, we will consider the next steps for shielding beyond 30 June. We will also review the risks for the clinically extremely vulnerable and assess whether the shielding period needs to be extended or whether it is possible for the shielding guidance to be eased further. We will base our assessment on clinical advice from our medical experts, and the best data available about the prevalence of COVID-19 in the community.

Munira Wilson: [54259]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the responses of organisations that submitted evidence to the Public Health England review of disparities in risks and outcomes of covid-19 released on 2 June 2020.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 8 June 2020]: The Government commissioned Public Health England (PHE) to analyse how different factors can impact on people's health outcomes from COVID-19. The resulting report was published this week.

Separately, PHE has also been engaging with a significant number of individuals and organisations within black, Asian and minority ethnic communities over the past couple of months to hear their views, concerns and ideas about the impact of COVID-19 on their communities. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP) will be building on and expanding that engagement as she takes work forward to better understand the drivers behind the ethnicity analyses in the PHE report.

■ Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups**Stephen Farry:**[\[53662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference the findings in the report published by Public Health England on 2 June 2020 entitled Disparities in the risk and outcomes of covid-19, what steps he plans to take to reduce health inequalities for BAME groups.

Jo Churchill:

Racial disparities in the health of the nation are unacceptable. Following the publication of Public Health England (PHE)'s report, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP) has been asked to urgently review the findings and better understand the drivers behind them. As part of this, we will look very closely at the health inequalities aspects of PHE's report and further action needed to address them.

We remain committed to levelling up and spreading opportunity around this country, which will be an essential part of the economic and social recovery from this crisis.

■ Coronavirus: Patients**Stella Creasy:**[\[51929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people have been removed from the covid-19 shielded patients list and notified of that removal by text message.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 4 June 2020]: General practitioners and hospital specialists have been asked to review their shielded patient lists based on clinical judgement and an assessment of everyone's needs. They have also been provided with guidance to support these decisions, which should be made following discussion with the patient and taking into account their individual clinical circumstances.

Information on the number of patients removed from shielded patient lists is not held centrally.

■ Coronavirus: Protective Clothing

John Redwood: [\[51508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of personal protective equipment used by the NHS is now produced in the UK.

Jo Churchill:

There has been limited domestic manufacture of personal protective equipment (PPE) to date. Lord Deighton is leading the Government effort to unleash the potential of British industry to manufacture PPE for the health and social care sectors. We have identified opportunities and sourced new supply channels for materials to make PPE at pace, enabling new manufacturing to commence. The Government is also working to support the scale-up of engineering efforts for small companies capable of contributing to supplies.

The Government has signed contracts to manufacture over 2 billion items of PPE through United Kingdom-based manufacturers, including aprons, facemasks, visors and gowns and has already taken delivery of products from new, certified UK manufacturers. These will contribute to the national effort to meet the unprecedented demand for PPE.

Clive Lewis: [\[52265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that there is an adequate supply personal protective equipment in the event of a second covid-19 peak later in 2020.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 4 June 2020]: We are working around the clock to give the National Health Service and social care sector the equipment and support they need to tackle this outbreak.

The Government is working to expand supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) from overseas, improve domestic manufacturing capability and expand and improve the logistics network for delivering it to the front line. The Government has recently signed contracts for the manufacture of over 2 billion items of PPE through United Kingdom-based manufacturers, including aprons, facemasks, visors and gowns.

Rachael Maskell: [\[54159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether each glove from a pair of gloves is counted as an individual piece of personal protective equipment for the purposes of statistics that his Department collates on such equipment.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 8 June 2020]: Gloves are provided individually in boxes of 200, and as such are counted individually. This is standard practice within the National Health Service supply chain as gloves are supplied individually and can be used one, two, or four at a time depending on clinical need.

■ Coronavirus: Quarantine

Rosie Cooper:

[51737]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to update the guidance given to people that are shielding in response to the covid-19 outbreak as 12 week threshold since receiving their letters approaches.

Nick Fletcher:

[52606]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the covid-19 outbreak, whether people who are shielding will have to continue to do so after June 2020.

Jo Churchill:

On 1 June the shielding guidance was updated to advise that those shielding may wish to consider spending time outdoors once a day while following social distancing guidelines.

The Government continues to review the emerging evidence and we will continue to listen to medical advisers on the level of clinical risk the virus presents to different groups of people at different points in time.

At each review point for the social distancing measures, we will review the risks for the clinically extremely vulnerable and assess whether the shielding period needs to be extended or whether it is possible for the shielding guidance to be eased further.

The next review will take place the week commencing 15 June. As part of this, we will consider the next steps for shielding beyond 30 June. We will write to all individuals on the shielded patient list with information about next steps on shielding advice and the support that will be available to them after this review point.

■ Coronavirus: Social Distancing

Sir Christopher Chope:

[53290]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 27 May 2020 to Question 44954, on Coronavirus: Social Distancing, if he will place in the House of Commons Library the study on respiratory droplet characteristics and dispersion that informed the precautionary measures; and if he will make a statement.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 8 June 2020]: The study on respiratory droplet characteristics and dispersion is available to view at the following link:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7128962/>

■ Dental Services: Pregnancy

Mike Amesbury:

[52426]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has plans to extend the dental coverage provided in medical exemption certificates for

pregnant women who have been unable to receive dental treatment during covid-19 outbreak.

Jo Churchill:

No decisions have been made on whether to extend exemptions from dental charges for maternity or other grounds for exemption following the peak pandemic period.

Pregnant women and new mothers who have given birth within the last 12 months are exempt from dental charges. Urgent dental treatment continued to be provided through the peak pandemic period from over 550 urgent dental centres. Any urgent treatment a pregnant woman or new mother needed during this period therefore should have been available.

NHS England and NHS Improvement announced on 28 May that NHS dental practices will be able to begin to see patients again from 8 June, with the aim of increasing levels of service, as fast as is compatible with maximizing safety. A copy of the letter that was published can be found at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/Urgent-dental-care-letter-28-May.pdf>

■ Health Services: Protective Clothing

Rosie Cooper:

[51736]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether Government guidelines on personal protective equipment (PPE) for health care workers were based on PPE availability.

Jo Churchill:

Public Health England (PHE) has published clear guidance on personal protective equipment (PPE) for health and social care workers. This was written and reviewed by all four United Kingdom public health bodies and informed by National Health Service infection prevention control experts. It is consistent with World Health Organization guidance PHE has also published guidance on 'Considerations for acute personal protective equipment (PPE) shortages'. This covers sessional use, reuse and alternatives to standard PPE when there are severe shortages of supply.

■ Motor Neurone Disease: Coronavirus

Mr Kevan Jones:

[51647]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason motor neurone disease (MND) was removed from the extremely vulnerable list; if he will publish the evidential basis for that decision; and if he will make an assessment of for what reason Northern Ireland regards MND patients as extremely vulnerable, but England does not.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 4 June 2020]: Expert doctors in England identified specific medical conditions that, based on what we knew about the virus so far, placed someone at greatest risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Motor neurone disease has never

been on the list of specific medical conditions as it was determined that it would not be included as there are many stages to the disease, with varying levels of severity.

General practitioners and hospital clinicians have the discretion to add individual patients to the list based on a clinical assessment of their needs. Anyone with motor neurone disease who is concerned about whether or not they should be shielding, should contact their doctor to discuss.

The Northern Ireland Executive, through its Department of Health, is responsible for decisions in Northern Ireland.

■ **New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group: Wales**

Liz Saville Roberts:

[\[49088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the New and Emerging Respiratory Threats Advisory Group recommendation in June 2019 on surgical gowns was shared with the Welsh Government.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 2 June 2020]: The recommendations of the New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group (NERVTAG) on personal protective equipment (PPE) procurement are publicly available and can be accessed online.

The contents of the pandemic influenza stockpile were based on the recommendations of NERVTAG. Following advice from the NERVTAG committee on the inclusion of gowns in the stockpile, the NERVTAG sub-committee for PPE was asked to confirm the specification (sterile non/sterile) for the market analysis. This was received by Public Health England in November 2019 and the market analysis was being finalised prior to seeking policy and financial approval from the Department, Welsh Government, Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Assembly. Once approval was received the procurement exercise would have commenced in early 2020. However, in light of the COVID-19 outbreak the focus shifted to procuring gowns for immediate distribution to the National Health Service and social care.

■ **NHS: Coronavirus**

Dr Lisa Cameron:

[\[41066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of Cancer Research UK's call for widespread testing of NHS staff and patients to create covid-19-free hospitals and to prevent unnecessary cancer deaths.

Jo Churchill:

In response to COVID-19, 21 Cancer Alliances across England now have arrangements in place for cancer hubs. These are hospitals dedicated to cancer care away from hospitals dealing with the virus to keep often vulnerable cancer patients safe.

A letter was issued to trusts on 29 April 2020 detailing the Second Phase of Response to COVID-19. This letter sets out that:

Local systems and Cancer Alliances must continue to identify ring-fenced diagnostic and surgical capacity for cancer, and providers must protect and deliver cancer surgery and cancer treatment by ensuring that cancer surgery hubs are fully operational. Full use should be made of the available contracted independent sector hospital and diagnostic capacity locally and regionally. Regional cancer Senior Responsible Officers must now provide assurance that these arrangements are in place everywhere.

■ NHS: Protective Clothing

Daniel Zeichner: [52056]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance was provided to NHS hospitals on face fit tests for people wearing FFP3 masks between February and May 2020.

Jo Churchill:

Where respiratory protective equipment is required, the COVID-19 infection prevention and control guidance states that fit testing is necessary. This information has been included in all published versions of the COVID-19 infection prevention and control guidance since 10 January 2020. The COVID-19: infection prevention and control guidance is available to view at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control>

■ Ophthalmic Services

Rosie Cooper: [51739]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will ensure that eye clinic liaison officers are available in all ophthalmology departments; and what steps he is taking to ensure that patients with sight loss can access the support they need for retaining their independence.

Jo Churchill:

The Government fully appreciates the impact that sight loss can have on a person's life and the importance of information being available for those newly diagnosed with sight loss, in addition to access to appropriate support and rehabilitation services.

Eye clinics and their staff, including eye clinic liaison officers, are commissioned and funded by individual clinical commissioning groups, on the basis of local assessments of need.

The Care Act 2014 requires that where a person, including those with sight loss, has care and support needs, these must be met by their local authority.

■ Ophthalmology: Coronavirus

Julian Knight: [\[52089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when optician practices will be able to reopen during the covid-19 outbreak.

Jo Churchill:

NHS England and NHS Improvement issued guidance on 1 April suspending all routine National Health Service eye care services, during the height of the pandemic. Essential services such as the remote provision of glasses needed by patients to function, have continued to be provided, from a limited number of optical practices.

Around 350 optical practices are commissioned to provide urgent/emergency eye care services by clinical commissioning groups as part of moving services out of hospital. These have also continued to be provided.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are now urgently considering when it will be appropriate to return to the full provision of the NHS sight testing service.

■ Podiatry: Community Health Services

Alex Norris: [\[52383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to help expand community podiatry services to tackle levels of diabetic foot ulceration and amputation as a result of the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 4 June 2020]: NHS England and NHS Improvement wrote to providers of community services on 19 March to ensure that diabetic foot clinics for high risk diabetic and vascular patients are maintained during the COVID-19 outbreak.

There is no plan to expand community podiatry services at this time.

■ Protective Clothing: Procurement

Julian Sturdy: [\[48405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of personal protective equipment for the health service was sourced from domestic suppliers in 2019.

Julian Sturdy: [\[48406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of personal protective equipment for the health service has been sourced from domestic suppliers in each of the last five months.

Helen Hayes: [\[48563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what comparative assessment his Department has made of the number of UK and overseas companies awarded

Government procurement contracts for the supply of personal protective equipment during the covid-19 outbreak.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 2 June 2020]: There has been limited domestic manufacture of personal protective equipment (PPE) to date. Lord Deighton is leading the Government effort to unleash the potential of British industry to manufacture PPE for the health and social care sectors. We have identified opportunities and sourced new supply channels for materials to make PPE at pace, enabling new manufacturing to commence. The Government is also working to support the scale-up of engineering efforts for small companies capable of contributing to supplies.

The Government has signed contracts to manufacture over 2 billion items of PPE through United Kingdom-based manufacturers, including aprons, facemasks, visors and gowns and has already taken delivery of products from new, certified UK manufacturers. These will contribute to the national effort to meet the unprecedented demand for PPE.

Robert Largan:

[\[52618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of Lord Deighton's progress on leading the Government's efforts to increase domestic manufacturing of personal protective equipment.

Jo Churchill:

Lord Deighton is the Government's adviser on personal protective equipment (PPE) and as part of this he is leading the Government effort to encourage British industry to manufacture PPE. The Government is successfully building up United Kingdom manufacturing and has signed contracts for the manufacture of over 2 billion items of PPE through UK-based manufacturers, including aprons, facemasks, visors and gowns.

■ Shingles: Vaccination

Chris Green:

[\[52080\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to introduce specific plans after the covid-19 outbreak to encourage eligible patients through proactive measures, such as call and recall, to attend primary care to get the shingles vaccine.

Jo Churchill:

People in the age group eligible for the shingles vaccine are required to take particular care to avoid situations where they are at higher risk of acquiring COVID-19 and are therefore not currently being actively called for immunisation by their general practitioner (GP). However, if they are attending the GP practice for other reasons and it is clinically appropriate to offer shingles vaccine, they will be given the vaccine.

Maintaining routine vaccination services during COVID-19 and recovering delivery of our national immunisation programme are high priorities for the Government and the

health and care sector but need to be considered in light of social distancing and shielding measures. An immunisation recovery plan is being drawn up by NHS England and NHS Improvement, taking into account risk assessment advice from Public Health England, which will include proactive use of call/recall.

■ Vaccination

Chris Green:

[\[52083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of providers outside of primary care providing immunisation services and support catch-ups with patients to relieve pressure on primary care.

Jo Churchill:

Providers other than primary care make a valuable contribution to the national immunisation programmes, for example, some maternity services provide pertussis and flu vaccinations, and most school-aged vaccinations take place outside of primary care.

The 2019 National Health Service review of vaccinations and immunisations delivery sought to explore how to increase uptake of vaccinations and consider if vaccines could be safely and efficiently delivered by providers other than general practice, building on the contribution of community pharmacies to seasonal influenza coverage, and the possibility to widen the range of health professionals who deliver vaccinations.

Any changes in delivery models would be carefully considered with due regard to patient safety, data flows, impact on outcomes and contractual requirements.

■ Vaccination: Schools

Chris Green:

[\[52082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase workforce capacity to support the school vaccination programme in 2020 and catch up vaccination programmes.

Jo Churchill:

NHS England and NHS Improvement are working to restore school-age vaccination programmes that have paused due to school closures. This planning is based on local need and will include an assessment of the workforce capacity needed to restore these services, as well as consideration as to whether an increase to the current workforce is required.

The operational planning also includes working with schools to consider other steps to increase capacity, such as vaccinating during the school holidays, where necessary.

HOME OFFICE**■ Asylum: Linlithgow and East Falkirk**

Martyn Day: [\[54179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons asylum applicants who reside in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency who have outstanding asylum applications are not provided with a timeframe for completion of those applications.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office does not provide applicants with a timeframe for completion of asylum decisions irrespective of where they reside in the UK.

The Home Office is committed to ensuring that asylum claims are considered without unnecessary delay, to ensure that individuals who need protection are granted asylum as soon as possible and can start to integrate and rebuild their lives, including those granted at appeal.

Where a decision on an application for asylum cannot be taken within six months of the date it was recorded, as stated in the Immigration Rules paragraph 333A, the applicant can write to the to request a time frame.

■ Immigrants: Finance

Rachael Maskell: [\[54944\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people in (a) England and (b) York have no recourse to public funds in the most recent period for which figures are available.

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.

Kate Osamor: [\[54983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of people with dependants under the age of 18 who have No Recourse to Public Funds attached to their immigration status.

Kate Osamor: [\[54984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of individuals with limited leave to remain in the UK that have no recourse to public funds attached to their immigration status.

Kate Osamor: [\[54985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of applicants with dependants under the age of 18 who are on the 10 year route to settlement with no recourse to public funds attached to their leave to remain application.

Kate Osamor:

[54986]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether local welfare provision is classified as a public fund for immigration purposes.

Chris Philp:

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

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. Access to benefits and other publicly funded services reflects the strength of a migrant's connections to the UK.

The Home Office publish a range of statistics on entry clearance visas, and extensions of leave in the UK in the quarterly Immigration Statistics (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>). However, these do not show the number of people subject to NRPF.

Local welfare provision is not classed as a public fund for immigration purposes as set out in the Immigration Rules on GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-index>.

The Home Office is working closely with other government departments to support people, including migrants with NRPF, through this pandemic. We have announced a range of measures to ensure people can stay safe and many of these are available for those with a NRPF condition, such as protection for renters from evictions, a mortgage holiday for those who need it.

I can confirm the assistance being given under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Self-employed Income Support Scheme are not classed as public funds and are available to all those in work or self-employment respectively, including those with NRPF status and those on zero-hour contracts. Statutory sick pay and some other work-related benefits are also not classed as public funds and so are also available to all.

The Government has outlined the support available to migrants, including those with NRPF, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-get-support-if-youre-a-migrant-living-in-the-uk>.

■ Migrant Camps: France

Caroline Lucas:

[54078]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 May 2020 to Question 41962 on Migrant Camps: France, what work the UK-France Migration Committee is conducting under the terms of the Sandhurst Treaty; and whether the (a) protection needs of individuals in the area and (b) improvement of reception conditions form part of discussions with the French authorities on the identification and relocation of vulnerable migrants in northern France.

Chris Philp:

The UK-FR Migration Committee is responsible for overseeing cooperation between the two countries on addressing illegal migration, including oversight and implementation of the Sandhurst Treaty. The Committee currently meets remotely due to current travel restrictions, and works to address current pressures at our shared border and to agree new action where necessary.

Articles 2-4 of the Sandhurst Treaty outline our joint commitment to (i) continued implementation of the Dublin process (ii) facilitating the transfer of unaccompanied minors under national relocation schemes, and (iii) improving access to French domestic asylum procedures; these topics therefore form part of the ongoing dialogue between the UK and France.

As noted in the previous response, the identification and relocation of vulnerable migrants on French territory remains the domestic responsibility of the French government, who continue to work to transfer those residing in camps into reception centres.

Ports: Coronavirus**Jim Shannon:**[\[53435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what criteria her Department will use to determine the lifting of covid-19 quarantine measures at UK ports of entry.

Kevin Foster:

Public health will always come first. The government will carefully assess the impact of these measures in preventing transmission of coronavirus in the UK.

The need for the restrictions, and the requirements imposed, will be reviewed in line with social distancing measures, currently every three weeks. The first review will be in the last week of June.

The Government will consider factors such as SAGE advice, the domestic and international incidence of Covid-19, the level of infection and transmission, emerging scientific evidence for antibody and other screening methods being appropriate for international travel health measures, economic impact, and initiatives being trialled to ensure safe travel.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**Buildings: Energy****Daisy Cooper:**[\[54253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of enabling local authorities to retain their power to require higher energy performance standards for new houses.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government remains committed to meeting its target of net zero emissions by 2050 and recognises the important contribution that the energy efficiency of buildings has to make in meeting it. In October 2019, we launched the first stage of a two-part consultation on Part L and Part F of the Building Regulations. We proposed an ambitious uplift in the energy efficiency of new homes through the introduction of a Future Homes Standard from 2025. We expect that homes built to the Future Homes Standard will have carbon dioxide emissions 75-80 per cent lower than those built to current Building Regulations standards, which means they will be fit for the future, with low carbon heating and very high fabric standards.

As a stepping stone to the Future Homes Standard, we have consulted on a meaningful and achievable increase to the energy efficiency standards for new homes in 2020. The preferred option set out in consultation is a standard that should result in a 31 per cent reduction in emissions, compared to current standards.

We have proposed a stringent minimum standard for energy efficiency, to be applied across the country, to address issues of ambition, consistency, offsetting and targeting. This means that there may no longer be any need for local planning authorities to set higher standards at a local level. Our research suggests that few local planning authorities set higher standards, but those who do often set a 19 per cent improvement over 2013 standards. Our 2020 proposals will see a 31 per cent improvement over 2013 standards. In some local areas carbon offsetting schemes form part of the energy efficiency framework for buildings; and in others energy efficiency standards are targeted at specific kinds of building work. A single, national standard may minimise any confusion and uncertainty for local planning authorities, and better support the growth of supply chains of key products required to deliver the Future Homes Standard.

The Future Homes Standard consultation closed on 7 February. The responses we received will be considered carefully, and a Government response will be published in due course.

■ House Insurance**Mike Amesbury:**[\[55021\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what the outcome was of the round table meeting on 13 May 2020 between his Department and the Association of British Insurers on reducing the costs of building insurance.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government is aware that concerns about cladding have caused insurance premiums to rise for some tall buildings – and that this is causing significant difficulties for affected leaseholders. It is imperative that building owners and managing agents engage with brokers early and are as upfront as possible to ensure they can get the coverage they need. Government is continuing to engage with the insurance industry to find solutions to this issue.

Housing: Construction

Alex Sobel: [\[55012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to ensure that housing developers follow planning regulations and are granted permission to build only structures that meet planning standards as a result of his reforms to the planning system.

Christopher Pincher:

National planning policy is clear that proposed development of poor design that fails to improve the character and quality of an area should be refused, and that the quality of approved development should not be diminished by subsequent changes to the permitted scheme. It is the role of local planning authorities' enforcement teams to ensure that development is built in accordance with the planning permission granted.

Housing: Coronavirus

Afzal Khan: [\[55121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what scientific advice his Department received in advance of updated the guidance entitled, Government advice on home moving during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Christopher Pincher:

The Department was determined that the housing market should re-open safely and we worked closely with Public Health England in developing this guidance.

Local Government Finance: Coronavirus

Anthony Mangnall: [\[55040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what further support he will allocate to Parish Councils who have used a large proportion of their budgets responding to the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr Simon Clarke:

We applaud the assistance that many parish councils are providing to their local communities in the current crisis. The government does not have powers to offer financial support to parish councils, which are funded through a precept collected from within the overall council tax paid by the residents of the parish. We encourage parish councils to speak to their principal authority.

Multiple Occupation: Coronavirus

Robbie Moore: [\[55063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether under covid-19 lockdown measures landlords of houses in multiple occupation are able to move tenants into properties where other tenants are residing.

Christopher Pincher:

On 13 May we announced that anyone in England could now move home as long as they followed the advice at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-advice-on-home-moving-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>.

This includes those moving into an occupied House in Multiple Occupation (HMO): during viewings, HMO tenants should stay out of indoor common areas, such as kitchens, bathrooms or sittings areas. They could remain inside their own private room with the doors closed.

Tenant safety should be landlords' and letting agents' first priority in this or any other move.

■ Parking: Private Sector**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[54016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many private parking operators have had their access to DVLA data blocked since the introduction of the Parking (Code of Practice) Act 2019.

Mr Simon Clarke:

We are currently working to implement the Parking (Code of Practice) Act 2019. The British Standards Institution (BSI) have convened a stakeholder group to write the Code, comprising representatives from the parking industry, consumer groups, standards bodies and the retail sector. A first draft of the Code has now been produced. It will be subject to a public consultation in the coming months place to give the parking industry, the public and other interested parties the opportunity to have a say.

■ Rented Housing: Coronavirus**Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[54194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what representations he has received from landlords and tenants organisations on a potential extension to the protection given to renters during the covid-19 outbreak.

Christopher Pincher:

We regularly engage with a range of stakeholders on different issues relating to the private and social rented sector.

On Friday June 5 2020 the Government announced that the current suspension of evictions from social or private rented accommodation will be extended by 2 months until 23 August 2020. This means that no action to evict a tenant will proceed before 24 August 2020. The emergency measures in the Coronavirus Act, which require landlords to give at least 3 months' notice to evict tenants, are unaffected by this and remain in place until 30 September 2020.

We will also continue to work with the judiciary, legal representatives and the advice sector on arrangements, including new rules, to ensure that when the moratorium on

evictions ends, the courts are better able to address the need for appropriate protection of all parties, including those shielding from coronavirus. This is to ensure that judges have all the information necessary to make just decisions and that the most vulnerable tenants can get the help they need.

■ **Waste Disposal: Applications**

Mike Amesbury: [\[55020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many applications were submitted to the Building Safety Fund on (a) the first day that scheme went live and (b) in the first five days of that scheme going live.

Christopher Pincher:

Registration for the Building Safety Fund opened 1 June, while the application process will open in July 2020. During the first day of registration we received 135 completed registration forms and as of midnight on 4/5 June, we have received 329 completed registration forms.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ **Department for International Development: Buildings**

Rachel Hopkins: [\[54305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer on 15 May 2020 to Question 43779 on Civil Servants, at how many multi-hub locations employees of her Department work 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.

Nigel Adams:

I refer the Hon. member to the answer given to PQ 54314 on 11 June 2020.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ **Coronavirus: Israel**

Greg Smith: [\[55047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she is taking to facilitate exports from Israeli companies that are developing technologies to tackle covid-19.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

The British Embassy in Tel Aviv is following Israeli research and innovation related to COVID-19 closely, including in the technology sector. We have facilitated exchanges between United Kingdom and Israeli public health and scientific experts to discuss testing, epidemic management strategies, treatments and vaccine research, as well as cooperation on medical equipment.

■ Medical Equipment: Israel

David Simmonds:

[55146]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she is taking to ensure that the UK benefits from Israeli thermal scanning technologies to detect covid-19.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

The British Embassy in Tel Aviv is following Israeli research and innovation related to COVID-19 closely, including in the technology sector. We have facilitated exchanges between United Kingdom and Israeli public health and scientific experts to discuss testing, epidemic management strategies, treatments and vaccine research, as well as cooperation on medical equipment.

■ Riot Control Weapons: Exports

Rachael Maskell:

[54947]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, to which countries the UK exports (a) rubber bullets, (b) riot shields and (c) tear gas.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

The Government publishes Official Statistics (on a quarterly and annual basis) about export licences granted, refused and revoked to all destinations on GOV.UK. These reports contain detailed information on export licences issued, refused or revoked, by destination, including the overall value, type (e.g. Military, Other) and a summary of the items covered by these licences. These can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/strategic-export-controls-licensing-data>.

The data currently provides details of licences up to 31 December 2019. Information about the period 1 January to 31 March 2020 will be published on 14 July 2020 and data covering the period 1 April to 30 September 2020 will be published in October 2020.

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 licensing any equipment for export. 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.

■ Trade Agreements: Dispute Resolution

John Spellar: [\[55859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many cases have been taken against the UK under investor-state dispute settlement provisions and what the outcome was of those cases.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

The United Kingdom has never had an investor-state dispute settlement case against her that proceeded to arbitration.

The United Kingdom has more than 90 Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) in force with countries across the world. HM Government has made clear that our investment policy will continue to protect the United Kingdom's right to regulate in the public interest.

JUSTICE

■ Community Rehabilitation Companies: Coronavirus

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[54879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the effect of the level of investment by community rehabilitation companies in (a) remote videoconferencing, (b) equipment and training for staff home working and (c) other forms of infrastructure on (i) staff health, safety and welfare, (ii) probation client safety and welfare, (iii) public health and (iv) the efficient performance of the services those organisations are contracted to provide during the covid-19 outbreak.

Lucy Frazer:

As of week commencing 23rd March, all Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) have been operating under the obligations within their Exceptional Delivery Models (EDM). As a result CRCs have adapted to an alternative way of working, albeit on a temporary basis, in order to adhere to the social distancing measures announced by the Prime Minister. All CRCs have a responsibility to ensure the health and wellbeing of their staff and service users during the pandemic.

CRCs have invested in greater use of mobile technology to maintain levels of contact with offenders in the community in a safe and efficient manner, including the use of videoconferencing facilities such as Skype and WhatsApp. Staff are working from home and limiting unnecessary travel unless in exceptional circumstances. CRCs have been instructed to prioritise their caseload and continue to carry out face to face interventions for those in their cohort deemed at highest risk where it is safe and practicable to do so. Group sentence delivery including Unpaid Work and Accredited Programmes has been temporarily suspended. This is to safeguard both staff and service users, and the wider general public, from the risk of COVID infection.

The EDMs are subject to robust assurance and compliance activities, which are carried out by the Authority on a regular basis to ensure that CRCs continue to

operate to their contracted obligations and continue to deliver front line probation services to protect the public.

■ **Judges: Public Appointments**

Dr Matthew Offord:

[54896]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people were appointed as Queen's Counsel in each of the last five years, by ethnicity.

Alex Chalk:

As detailed in QCA's annual reports into the QC competitions, and published on the QCA website, the breakdown of BAME and non-BAME application is below.

2015-6 competition:

9 BAME applicants were appointed, out of a total of 107 appointments.

2016-7 competition:

16 BAME applicants were appointed, out of a total of 113 appointments.

2017-8 competition:

18 BAME applicants were appointed, out of a total of 119 appointments.

2018-9 competition:

13 BAME applicants were appointed, out of a total of 108 appointments.

2019-20 competition:

22 BAME applicants were appointed, out of a total of 114 appointments

■ **Nitrous Oxide: Prosecutions**

Philip Davies:

[54052]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prosecutions for the use of nitrous oxide have been brought in each year since the introduction of the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.

Chris Philp:

The Ministry of Justice has published data on the number of prosecutions and convictions in England & Wales up to December 2019. This data is available in the Principal offence proceedings and outcomes by Home Office offence code data tool available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888344/HO-code-tool-principal-offence-2019.xlsx

Select the pull down for 'Detailed Offence', and in the field search bar type 'psychoactive substance' and select all the options that appear.

The total number of prosecutions under the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 in each year since 2016 can be found in row 31 of the pivot table.

To identify the number of prosecutions specifically for use of nitrous oxide under the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 would require a manual search of court records as this level of detail (specific substance) is not held within the courts proceedings database; which would be of disproportionate cost.

■ Offences against Children: Prison Sentences

Mark Pritchard: [\[54876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of automatic custodial sentences for people convicted of sexual offences against children.

Mark Pritchard: [\[54877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing the tariffs of custodial sentences for people convicted of committing sexual offences against children.

Mark Pritchard: [\[54878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of discretionary life sentences for people that have been convicted of the rape of minors.

Chris Philp:

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 provides for a range of sexual offences, including specific sexual offences committed against children. The sentences available to the courts for offences against children are significant, and reflect the seriousness of the offending. Several of these offences, such as rape, already carry a discretionary life sentence.

Sentencing in individual cases is entirely a matter for the independent courts, taking into account the circumstances of the offence and the offender, and relevant sentencing guidelines. We currently have no plans to change the penalties available for these offences in statute.

■ Prison Accommodation: Construction

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[54065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much was spent on the construction and maintenance of temporary accommodation cells in prisons in England and Wales in (a) March, (b) April and (c) May 2020; and how much funding has been allocated to those purposes for each of (i) June, (ii) July, (iii) August, (iv) September, (v) October and (vi) November 2020.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[54066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans his Department has made on the future use or decommissioning of the temporary accommodation cells constructed in prisons in England and Wales to reduce overcrowding during the covid-19 outbreak.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government has invested in the temporary expansion of the prison estates as part of measures to implement cohorting; allowing staff to isolate prisoners with symptoms, shield the vulnerable and to quarantine new arrivals.

The total spend on acquisition costs along with installation and associated costs, in providing temporary accommodation cells in England and Wales as at the end of May 2020, totalled £4.25m (cash terms, inc. VAT). With no spend in March, £0.16m in April and £4.09m in May.

The use of, and expenditure on, this temporary accommodation is being kept under careful review and it will remain in place until it is no longer required.

■ Prison Accommodation: Technology**Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[54067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 7 May 2020 to Question 41404, on Prison Accommodation: Technology, what plans his Department has for the roll-out of in-cell digital technology across the prison estate in England and Wales.

Lucy Frazer:

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on prison regimes, which has included the temporary suspension of social visits, has necessitated the use of a range of different technology options across the justice system.

As previously noted, we have complemented the existing in-cell telephony programme with the deployment of secure mobile phones which can be used across those establishments without access to telephones within cells. Both these methods allow those who are self-isolating to maintain links outside of their cell. We have also begun to roll-out secure video calls across prisons to help prisoners maintain contact with their families.

In-cell technology, such as tablets and laptops, has the potential to support the rehabilitative work that already takes place in prison by providing in-cell access to education and other rehabilitation opportunities. Our strategy is informed by the 2007 Farmer Report which highlights the needs of providing contact with families and the link between lack of contact and negative impacts on mental health and potential violence.

We currently have in-cell digital technology in two adult male establishments and we are looking to roll-out in-cell technology for young people in Young Offender Institutes (YOIs) - HMP Feltham, HMP Werrington, HMP Wetherby and Cookham Wood YOI. We are continuing to deploy in-cell telephones across prisons in England and Wales.

■ Prison Officers: Ethnic Groups**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[54897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoner officers are employed on the prison estate, by ethnicity.

Lucy Frazer:

We have committed to increasing the diversity of our workforce and our target is to hire 14% of recruits from a BAME background by December 2020.

We have also conducted an independent review of the prison officer recruitment process and are implementing improvements to reduce the time and cost to hire, increase the diversity of new recruits and ensure we attract the right people with the right skills.

The number of band 3 to 5 prison officers in public sector prisons, by ethnicity as of 31st March 2020 is given in the following table.

Table 1- Number of Band 3 to 5 Prison Officers ¹ in post in public sector prisons, by Ethnicity ² , as at 31st March 2020

ETHNICITY	HEADCOUNT
Asian ³	332
Black	623
Mixed	360
Other Ethnic Group	100
White	16,681
Unknown	4,264
Total	22,360

Notes

1.Includes Band 3-4 / Prison Officer (incl specialists), Band 4 / Supervising Officer and Band 5 / Custodial Managers.

2.Race is a self-declared, optional field.

3.Includes Chinese

■ Prisoners' Discharge Grants

Ms Lyn Brown:

[54056]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether he plans to increase the discharge grant to £80 for all prison leavers as a result of the increase in the grant for prisoners granted early release under the End of Custody Temporary Release scheme.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[54057]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the £46 discharge grant in enabling prison leavers to live in the community until other legal sources of income become available to them.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[54058]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, on what basis the enhanced £80 discharge grant level was calculated for people released under the End of Custody Temporary Release scheme.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[54059]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the purpose is of the discharge grant for (a) prison leavers released under the End of Custody Temporary Release scheme and (b) other prison leavers.

Lucy Frazer:

Where prisoners have reached the end of the custodial element of their sentence, the Discharge Grant is paid to eligible prisoners upon their release from prison. The Discharge Grant is entirely separate from the Subsistence Grant, which is payable to those who are eligible for release under the End of Custody Temporary Release (ECTR) scheme only.

The purpose of both the Discharge Grant and the Subsistence Grant is to help prison leavers on release, so that they are supported while accessing other legal sources of income such as applying for benefits.

The higher rate of the Subsistence Grant is set at £80 to reflect the more limited amount of time prisoners have had to prepare for their release under the ECTR scheme and therefore the possibility that they would not have received the full amount of time and resources they would usually have had to prepare for release.

There are currently no plans to increase the Discharge Grant, but we will continue to keep this under review.

■ **Prisoners' Release: Coronavirus**

Ms Lyn Brown:

[54060]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the advice and support in relation to public health guidance given to young adult prison leavers during the covid-19 outbreak.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[54061]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of levels of awareness, understanding and compliance with public health guidance among young adult prison leavers.

Lucy Frazer:

The Government takes the health and safety of all prisoners, including young adults, very seriously. COVID-19 presents a unique set of challenges that we must address to keep prisoners safe. To mitigate these, we are operating a National Response Model in prisons and an Exceptional Delivery Model across probation.

Good practice on basic hygiene and tackling the virus through social distancing is being promoted by staff, and via communication aids such as posters, throughout the

secure estate. Support for young adults who have been released from custody also takes into account Public Health England guidance, and probation services are being delivered through increased supervision via telephone or other digital channels, in place of face-to-face appointments. In addition, support for this cohort continues to be informed by evidence-based information, which recognises that Young Adults have distinct needs relating to their maturity and development.

Bespoke guidance for staff on helping young adults to follow and understand the COVID-19 health guidance has also been made available to Her Majesty's Prisons and Probation (HMPPS) Staff. Probation staff are using this to inform how they have their initial discussions about following the Covid-19 health guidance and to check the young person's understanding and compliance with it.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[54062]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) young adult, (b) other female and (c) other male prison leavers have been released during the covid-19 outbreak without an address to go to.

Lucy Frazer:

We are working closely across Government to ensure that all individuals released at risk of homelessness receive necessary support to help them secure somewhere to live.

We have invested an additional £22m per annum over the remaining life of the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) contracts to deliver an enhanced Through the Gate resettlement service to people leaving prison to prepare them for release. The enhanced service includes the requirement that CRCs complete specific, tailored, tasks to help prisoners to secure and maintain settled accommodation, gain employment and manage debt and their financial affairs. We have put in place an 'Exceptional Delivery Model' (EDM) for CRC services during the current Covid-19 crisis, and have established seven National Probation Service and CRC Homelessness Prevention Taskforce Teams. There are six in England and one in Wales.

Additionally, Government has now decided that because of public health concerns and public protection considerations, there is a need to provide accommodation for a larger cohort of prison leavers. The Ministry of Justice has secured appropriate funding for a time-limited period to support the provision of accommodation for all individuals released from prison at risk of homelessness. The scheme will run until 26th June at which point it will be reviewed, taking account of the situation at that time.

The table below provides the number of offenders released from custody by accommodation circumstance on the first night. The data covers the period 23 March-30 April 2020.

	OFFENDERS RELEASED FROM CUSTODY	ROUGH SLEEPING	OTHER HOMELESS***	UNKNOWN ACCOMMODATION CIRCUMSTANCE
Young Adults*	1289	17	68	188
Other Males**	5933	198	642	933
Other Females**	592	26	63	88

*Young adults are offenders between 18 and 24

** Other male and females are offenders 25 and over

*** "Other homeless" refers to individuals who identify as homeless but have not been identified as sleeping rough. In some cases, it is not recorded whether an individual that is identified as homeless is rough sleeping

Please note, offenders not managed by either the National Probation Service or a Community Rehabilitation Company (including those offenders subject to electronic monitoring) are not included in the dataset. Release on temporary licence (RoTL), End of Custody Temporary Release (ECTR), releases where the offender is subject to same-day recall to custody, and release from unsupervised short sentences are also not included.

Navendu Mishra:

[55058]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners from Stockport have been released under the Early Prison Release scheme during the covid-19 outbreak; and how many prisoners released during that period are resident in Stockport.

Lucy Frazer:

On 4 April, this Government announced the End of Custody Temporary Release scheme (ECTR). This scheme enables risk-assessed prisoners, who are within two months of their release date, to be temporarily released from custody, as part of the national approach to managing public services during this challenging period. No high-risk offenders, including those convicted of violent or sexual offences, anyone of national security concern or a danger to children, will be considered for release, nor any prisoners who have not served at least half their custodial term.

To date, no offenders released under this scheme have been released to addresses in Stockport.

■ Prisoners' Release: Mobile Phones**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[54063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of (a) young adult, (b) other female and (c) other male prison leavers were given a mobile phone and a credit package during (i) April and (ii) May 2020.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[54064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many mobile phones will be available for prison leavers over the next three months.

Lucy Frazer:

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, probation is operating under an Exceptional Delivery Model (EDM) which prioritises public protection and offender management in the community. All Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) across probation are operating EDMs during the current exceptional period. As a result, certain activities are reduced and resources are focused on managing the high risk and very high risk of harm offenders. Basic mobile phones have been purchased by the CRCs in order to maintain contact with offenders in the community who do not have access to a phone of their own, while they adhere to social distancing measures. The phones are only capable of voice communication and text communication and do not have internet access.

As of 5 June, the total number of phones allocated to those in the community and on release from prison was 1,138. CRCs have purchased 8,095 phones with an additional 4,226 expected to be bought. We do not hold data on the number of phones allocated broken down by gender and age as requested. It is not possible to confirm how many phones will be allocated from June to August, but any demand from prison leavers who need a phone will be met.

■ Prisoners: Coronavirus**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[54068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners who were (a) new entrants, (b) inter-prison transfers and (c) recalls were not isolated within a reverse cohorting unit for 14 days before any mixing with the remainder of the prison population during May 2020.

Lucy Frazer:

Prisons in England and Wales have closely followed guidance issued by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and public health authorities to protect prisoners and staff. Building on best available evidence to protect the most vulnerable and reduce transmission of infection, new cohorting strategies were developed by HMPPS (advised by public health authorities) and implemented from 31 March.

Since 31 March, all inter-prison transfers have required approval by the HMPPS command structure before any transfer has taken place. Decisions by the HMPPS

command structure to approve transfer have taken into account the capacity of reverse cohorting units to ensure any prisoners transferred between prisons, are able to be held separately from the remainder of the general population for 14 days. All new receptions into prison from court and recalls have similarly only been accepted into local prisons where there is adequate space for them to be held separately for 14 days. We do not record the number of prisoners processed through establishment reverse cohorting units centrally.

■ Prisoners: Death

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[54894\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) remand and (b) convicted prisoners have died on the prison estate in each of the last five years, by ethnicity.

Lucy Frazer:

Please see the attached table showing the number of prisoners who have died on the prison estate, by sentence type and ethnicity, from 2015 to 2019. Our condolences are with the family and friends of the prisoners who have died.

These figures are derived from the HMPPS Deaths in Prison Custody database. As classification of deaths may change following inquest or as new information emerges, numbers may change from time to time.

We have accepted and acted upon the vast majority of recommendations from Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) investigations into deaths in custody, and regularly disseminate the PPO's thematic reports and lessons learned bulletins.

The Ministerial Board on Deaths in Custody is taking forward a programme of work aimed at minimising deaths in custody, and better supporting families if a death does occur.

Attachments:

1. Table [Copy of PQ 54894.xlsx]

■ Prisoners: Employment

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[54071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of prisoners undertaking paid employment in the community through Release on Temporary License in England and Wales have lost their employment since the restricted regime in prisons was introduced.

Lucy Frazer:

Data on release on temporary licence (ROTL) is published quarterly and data covering March will be published in July, data covering April to June will be published in October.

Prisons have been facing a significant challenge to minimise the impact of COVID-19 and have been working closely with Public Health England (PHE). Without action, PHE expected the infection curve would occur faster in prisons than in the general

population, putting staff and prisoners at risk and overwhelming local NHS services. As part of a range of measures to avoid this and also to reflect the current public health restrictions on non-essential travel, on 24 March Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) suspended ROTL, except for key workers, such as those in essential transport and delivery roles, or for compelling, compassionate reasons.

ROTL is a valuable resettlement tool but it also involves prisoners leaving and returning to prison from the community on a daily basis and so presents particular risks at this time. The need for the suspension is kept under review and fuller access to ROTL will be provided when and where it can be facilitated safely.

■ Prisoners: Marriage

Philip Davies: [\[54875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners have married since 23 March 2020.

Lucy Frazer:

The information requested is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ Prisons: Coronavirus

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[54072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what monitoring his Department is undertaking of any pattern of increase in incidents in (a) individual custodial facilities and (b) across the custodial estate in England and Wales of (i) self-harm, (ii) attempted suicide, (iii) suicide, (iv) violence between prisoners, (v) attacks on prison staff and (vi) mental health crises since the extended implementation of restricted regimes in response to the covid-19 outbreak.

Lucy Frazer:

We are closely monitoring the impact of restricted regimes in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. This is taking place at both individual establishment and estate-wide level, and includes an oversight of the levels in the male and female estates and youth estate. Data on self-harm and assaults for this period is not yet available. Quarterly figures up to 31st March 2020 will be published on 30th July.

Safety continues to be a priority during the current crisis, and we recognise that circumstances regarding COVID-19 may increase the risk of self-harm and violence for some prisoners.

The most recent quarter up to 31st March saw the number of deaths decrease to 63, down from 74 in the three months to December 2019. We are learning from any recent deaths and will continue to monitor the impact of restricted regimes on the number of self-inflicted deaths across the estate.

Information about the risks of isolation has been shared with Governors and we will continue to work to monitor and mitigate these as far as possible. We are continuing

to provide care and support to people at risk of self-harm or suicide through ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork) case management and provide a range of distraction packs and in-cell activities. We are also working with the Samaritans to ensure that the Listener peer support scheme continues to function effectively.

Lee Anderson:

[55036]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department will take to protect prison staff from covid-19 when prison visits are resumed.

Lucy Frazer:

Our National Framework, which sets out how we will take decisions about easing coronavirus-related restrictions in prisons, has been published on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

Social distancing and hygiene are the most effective means to reduce transmission and we are providing access to the right cleaning and hygiene products in prisons. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is critical to protect staff and those in our care where close contact is necessary and unavoidable. Our current PPE supplies are good, and we are making preparations and keeping demand for PPE under regular review as we progress our plans. We are consulting with unions and stakeholders on our strategy to ensure staff are confident in our gradual easing of restrictions and to keep prisoners informed.

For visits specifically, we are developing safe working practices that adhere to public health guidance. This is challenging but as with the adaptations being made in society we will need to consider safe distancing, separation between those that should not have contact, temperature testing of visitors prior to entry and effective hygiene arrangements.

■ Probation: Finance

Ms Lyn Brown:

[54069]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of financial losses by third sector organisations on the viability of the Dynamic Framework for commissioning of outsourced probation services.

Lucy Frazer:

Voluntary and third sector organisations play a critical role in supporting rehabilitation and helping offenders turn their lives around. The Ministry of Justice is working closely with Clinks, the umbrella group for third sector organisations in criminal justice, to ensure we harness the full range of expertise and experience in the sector as part of the future probation system. We are also engaging with the Crown Representative for VCSEs and directly with many organisations in the sector.

Our plans for a Dynamic Framework will allow the National Probation Service to directly commission services in a way that encourages the participation of smaller suppliers and is responsive to the needs of local areas. We know that Covid-19 has had a significant impact on many third sector organisations which mean some may

have limited capacity to participate in competitive processes. However, our engagement with the sector in the last couple of months makes us believe there is real benefit in launching these competitions to provide potential future opportunities for the market. Moreover, other commissioners will be able to use the Dynamic Framework for services once it is up and running.

■ Road Traffic Offences: Convictions

Andrew Griffith:

[\[55081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many convictions there have been under section 42 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 for non-compliance with Regulation 97 of the Road Vehicles Regulations 1986 in (a) Sussex and (b) England.

Chris Philp:

The Ministry of Justice has published data up to December 2019. The number of convictions under section 42 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 for non-compliance with Regulation 97 of the Road Vehicles Regulations 1986 in (a) Sussex and (b) England since 2015 are provided in the accompanying table.

Attachments:

1. Table [PQ 55081_table.xlsx]

■ Youth Custody: Females

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[54070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of implementing a strategy for the health, welfare, education and rehabilitation of girls within the youth custodial estate in England and Wales.

Lucy Frazer:

There are relatively few girls in the youth secure estate, however it is important to ensure that their needs do not get overlooked as these girls tend to have a range of complex needs.

This is why the Youth Custody Service (YCS) is undertaking a specific programme of work to improve the way establishments support girls. This is implemented through a Girls Delivery Plan which outlines key activity to further improve services.

The YCS is also in the process of developing an evidence-based Girls Strategy in partnership with NHS England. The Centre for Mental Health has been commissioned to build an evidence base on the needs of girls in youth custody and how they can best be met. This will include consultation with service users, staff and key stakeholders. Their recommendations will be used to develop a YCS Girls Strategy which will shape activity over the coming years.

NORTHERN IRELAND**■ Northern Ireland Office: Buildings****Rachel Hopkins:**[\[54313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to the Answer on 15 May 2020 to Question 43779 on Civil Servants, at how many multi-hub locations employees of his Department work 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.

Mr Robin Walker:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given by the Minister for the Cabinet Office on 12 June 2020 (UIN 54314).

SCOTLAND**■ Armed Forces: Scotland****Andrew Bowie:**[\[54214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what discussions his Department has had with the Ministry of Defence on ensuring there is no further reduction of the military footprint in Scotland.

Mr Alister Jack:

I and my officials are in regular contact with the Ministry of Defence to discuss the military footprint in Scotland. I am pleased that RAF Lossiemouth and Faslane are collectively receiving around £1.5bn of investment which demonstrates the UK Government's long term commitment to having a significant military presence in Scotland.

■ Domestic Visits: Linlithgow and East Falkirk**Martyn Day:**[\[54181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many times he has visited Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency in an official capacity since assuming office.

Mr Alister Jack:

I have not yet visited Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency in my capacity as Secretary of State for Scotland.

Martyn Day:[\[54971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, when he next plans to visit Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency.

Mr Alister Jack:

I currently have no plans to visit Linlithgow and East Falkirk in my capacity as Secretary of State for Scotland.

I would consider any invitation from the Hon. Member to visit the Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency very carefully at the appropriate time.

■ **Fisheries: Scotland**

Andrew Bowie: [\[54212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what steps his Department has taken with other Government Departments to develop UK fishing policy for when the transition period ends.

David Duguid:

Under the devolution settlement, fisheries policy is largely a devolved matter, however, I and my Department are in regular contact with Defra and other government departments to ensure that Scottish fishing interests have been and continue to be clearly represented. The Transition Period will not be extended. At the end of this year, for the first time in 40 years, we will be free to decide who can access our waters and on what terms.

Andrew Bowie: [\[54213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what steps officials in his Department have taken with officials in (a) other Government departments and (b) the Scottish Government to ensure that Fisheries Protection Scotland is fully prepared to prevent illegal incursions into UK waters around Scotland after the UK has left the Common Fisheries Policy.

David Duguid:

Fisheries protection and enforcement is a devolved matter in Scotland but the UK Government is very aware that its effectiveness is dependent upon close cooperation between the fisheries protection and other maritime security functions of the UK Government, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the NI Executive. Officials in the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland have helped facilitate that close cooperation.

■ **Scotland Office: Buildings**

Rachel Hopkins: [\[54312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to the Answer on 15 May 2020 to Question 43779 on Civil Servants, at how many multi-hub locations employees of his Department work 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.

Mr Alister Jack:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer given by the Minister for the Cabinet Office on 12 June 2020 (UIN 54314).

TRANSPORT**■ Aviation: Coronavirus**

Andrew Griffith: [\[55068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his Spanish counterpart on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and Spain without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Andrew Griffith: [\[55069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his Italian counterpart on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and Italy without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Andrew Griffith: [\[55070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his French counterpart on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and France without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Andrew Griffith: [\[55071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his German counterpart on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and Germany without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Andrew Griffith: [\[55072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his Greek counterpart on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and Greece without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Andrew Griffith: [\[55073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his Cypriot counterpart on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and Cyprus without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Andrew Griffith: [\[55074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his Croatian counterpart on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and Croatia without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Andrew Griffith: [\[55075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his Bulgarian counterpart on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and Bulgaria without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Andrew Griffith:

[\[55076\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the US Administration on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and the US without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Andrew Griffith:

[\[55077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his Portuguese counterpart on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and Portugal without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Andrew Griffith:

[\[55078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his Icelandic counterpart on the potential for an air bridge permitting air travel between the UK and Iceland without a quarantine being imposed on inbound travellers to the UK.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Secretary of State for Transport has had no such discussions with the Governments of those specific states about the potential for creating an air bridge with said countries. However, the Government is working closely with industry to explore this concept. This includes work with the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), airlines and airports.

■ Bus Services and Taxis: Coronavirus

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

[\[54014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the review published by Public Health England on 2 June 2020 entitled Disparities in the risk and outcomes of covid-19, what steps he is taking to increase protections against covid-19 for (a) taxi drivers and (b) bus drivers in (i) the West Midlands and (ii) the UK.

Rachel Maclean:

On 12 May, the Government published guidance for passengers and transport operators to help them keep themselves and their staff safe, including how social distancing rules should be interpreted to do this. The Department is working with transport providers, their representative groups, and local authorities across England as they seek to implement this guidance. This guidance will be kept up-to-date as restrictions on travel change.

As the Prime Minister announced on 10 June, the Government will be expanding targeted testing of occupations and groups at higher risk, including those individuals working in front line jobs, which bring them regularly into close contact with the public. This will help us learn more about who is at higher risk and how the virus is spread.

■ Department for Transport: Buildings

Rachel Hopkins: [\[54304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer on 15 May 2020 to Question 43779 on Civil Servants, at how many multi-hub locations employees of his Department work 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.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

I refer the Hon. member to the answer given to PQ 54314 on 12 June 2020.

■ Driving Tests: Coronavirus

John Lamont: [\[54994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of driving tests that have not taken place as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Rachel Maclean:

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) estimates that over 400,000 driving tests, have not been conducted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This data is based on the DVSA's original forecast of driving test demand that covers March 2020 up to the present day.

■ Electric Scooters: West Midlands

Stuart Anderson: [\[55033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress he has made on the roll-out of e-scooter trials in the West Midlands.

Rachel Maclean:

The Department is accelerating trials of rental e-scooters that will assess their safety and the impacts they have on the road. We will soon lay regulations to enable trials. We are working with local authorities to develop their delivery plans for trials, including with authorities in the West Midlands.

■ Govia Thameslink Railway: Coronavirus

Dawn Butler: [\[54021\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many employees the Govia Thameslink Railway franchise have contracted covid-19.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

There are 7,389 GTR employees, of these GTR has been notified of 18 cases where staff have received a positive test result for Covid 19. In addition, there are another 4 cases where employees have suspected Covid-19, however this has not yet been confirmed through testing.

Dawn Butler:

[\[54022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many and what proportion of employees of the Govia Thameslink Railway franchise that have contracted covid-19 are from a BAME background.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

GTR confirm that of the 18 employee cases, 6 employees self-reported as being from a BAME background.

Dawn Butler:

[\[54025\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on what date the Govia Thameslink Railway franchise provide protective visors for staff in each station on that franchise.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

GTR is currently trialling the use of visors. Before it can issue visors to employees, GTR must first of all ensure that the use of a visor will not affect or inhibit the ability of employees to complete their duties safely.

Dawn Butler:

[\[54026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what health surveillance procedures are in place at Govia Thameslink Railway franchise, to identify (a) sick, (b) asymptomatic and (c) vulnerable employees.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

GTR is one of a small number of train operators with an in-house Occupational Health team, and the only operator with its own Chief Medical Officer. Under normal circumstances GTR would identify these through pre-employment medicals, statutory periodic medicals, any employee referrals to the team from line managers and more ad-hoc health surveillance.

Since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, the Occupational Health team has offered a direct nurse telephone advisory service for employees and a dedicated 'Covid referral system' for managers to request specialist advice in regards to employees they manage.

■ Hong Kong: Veterans

Alex Sobel:

[\[55016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he (a) has made an assessment of the implications for his policies of EU plans (i) for large-scale investment in green hydrogen and (ii) to increase the number of hydrogen refueling stations and (b) plans to introduce those schemes in the UK.

Rachel Maclean:

We want to utilise the UK's high-quality engineering and manufacturing capability to ensure we are a global leader in hydrogen fuel cell powered transportation. Our approach to delivering long-term ambitions for greener transport is technology neutral and we are supporting hydrogen where the market favours its use. Our £23m

Hydrogen for Transport Programme is increasing the uptake of fuel cell electric vehicles and growing the number of publicly accessible hydrogen refuelling stations. The programme is delivering new refuelling stations and upgrading some existing stations as well as deploying hundreds of new hydrogen vehicles. The Government is supporting public and private sector fleets to become early adopters through the £2m FCEV Fleet Support Scheme. In addition, £6.4m of the Low and Ultra-Low Emission Bus Scheme funding has been invested in more than 60 hydrogen buses operating in Birmingham and around Gatwick. The Office Low Emission Vehicles and the Advanced Propulsion Centre are also funding a wide range of innovation projects in hydrogen vehicles. Government is also committed to supporting innovation in the hydrogen supply chain from production to end use. The £20m BEIS Hydrogen Supply Programme aims to accelerate the development of low carbon bulk hydrogen solutions. The £20m BEIS Storage at Scale Programme aims to demonstrate innovative large-scale energy storage. Two BEIS industry funded programmes are also investigating the feasibility and safety of a hydrogen grid network.

■ **London Underground: Coronavirus**

Dawn Butler:

[\[54867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will collate statistics on the number of London Underground workers by station at which those workers were based who have died of covid-19.

Rachel Maclean:

My thoughts are with those who have sadly died with Covid-19 and their families and friends at this difficult time. As transport in London is devolved to the Mayor of London and delivered by Transport for London (TfL), it is TfL that is best placed to provide information regarding the number of London Underground workers who have died of Covid-19.

■ **Mayor of London and Transport for London**

Elliot Colburn:

[\[54257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, who has been (a) present and (b) given apologies for all meetings between his Department and (i) Transport for London and (ii) the Mayor of London and Office of the Mayor of London from 1 January 2020 to date.

Rachel Maclean:

Ministers and officials at the Department for Transport meet regularly with representatives of the Mayor's office and Transport for London to discuss a wide range of topics. During the COVID 19 outbreak these meetings have necessarily increased, and are often held daily. Due to the frequency of these meetings, it would be impractical to provide a definitive list of attendees and apologies for all of these meetings.

■ Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties**John Spellar:** [\[53999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 27 May 202 to Question 48265 on Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of reintroducing paper licence discs.

Rachel Maclean:

The abolition of the paper vehicle tax disc has delivered significant savings for the taxpayer and businesses since its removal in 2014.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), the police and other enforcement authorities use data from the DVLA's vehicle register to confirm that vehicle excise duty has been paid. Over £6 billion is collected annually. The Government has no plans to reinstate the paper vehicle tax disc.

■ Public Transport: Coronavirus**Alex Sobel:** [\[55015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that public transport remains accessible for blind and partially sighted people during every stage of the covid-19 lockdown.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Government remains committed to delivering inclusive transport for all passengers. Our expectation is that transport operators should continue to assist disabled passengers who need assistance, including those with sight loss, as they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. I made this clear in my open letter to the rail industry on 8 April 2020.

I am also meeting regularly with key disability stakeholders, including Guide Dogs, to hear directly from them about the experiences of disabled people using transport. This means we will be able to take action quickly if we find that passengers are not receiving the assistance to which they are entitled.

On 12 May, the Department published guidance for transport operators that will help organisations, agencies and others (such as self-employed transport providers) understand how to provide safer workplaces and services for themselves, their workers and passengers across all modes of private and public transport. It outlines measures to assess and address the risks of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the transport sector across England. The Department will review the guidance as the measures change, and will consider the needs of disabled people in this process.

■ Railway Stations: Reston**John Lamont:** [\[54995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with the Scottish Government on the reopening of Reston station.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The promotion of railway infrastructure projects in Scotland is a matter for the Scottish Government but the new timetable that Network Rail is developing for the East Coast Main Line will make provision for stops at the proposed new stations at Reston and East Linton.

Railways: Ashfield**Lee Anderson:****[55038]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of reopening the Maid Marion Line to passengers in Selston and the rural parts of Ashfield.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

I can confirm that the Department for Transport has received the expression of interest for the Maid Marian line for the Restoring Your Railway Ideas fund. Full applications now need to be submitted by the deadline of 19 June 2020. All bids will be assessed on their merit.

Railways: Coronavirus**Dawn Butler:****[54023]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to help conduct risk assessments for rail franchises to protect vulnerable staff.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

We have been clear that our priority remains the safety of staff and passengers. We have issued comprehensive guidance to employers on the steps they should take to make their workplaces COVID-secure, which outlines measures to assess and address the risks of coronavirus in the transport sector across England. Employers should conduct risk assessments and, in collaboration with employees, identify workplace risks, including those to people classed as clinically vulnerable and extremely vulnerable. All guidance documents are available on the government website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>.

Dawn Butler:**[54024]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what guidance he has issued to rail franchises on the use of PPE in the workplace.

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.

Dawn Butler: [\[54866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will collate statistics on the number of employees in the rail industry by rail franchise who have died of covid-19.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The industry collates the number of railway workers who have died with COVID-19. The latest figures indicate a total of 10 workers employed by Network Rail and Train Operating Companies have regrettably passed away.

■ Road Traffic: Noise

Andrew Griffith: [\[55079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what (a) progress has been made on and (b) the preliminary results are of the acoustic camera trials announced in June 2019 to monitor traffic noise.

Rachel Maclean:

The acoustic camera trial is completed and the results are awaiting publication. Preliminary indications are that the device can identify individual vehicles in certain circumstances and assign noise levels to them but further development is needed to improve accuracy.

The technology has the potential to identify excessively noisy vehicles, however, there are still difficulties in measuring noise in an uncontrolled environment to be overcome.

■ Taxis: Coronavirus

Mike Amesbury: [\[55022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what guidance he is issuing to local authorities on supporting the safety of taxi and private hire drivers during the covid-19 outbreak.

Rachel Maclean:

On 12 May, the Department for Transport issued guidance to transport operators to help organisations, agencies and others (such as self-employed transport providers) understand how to provide safer workplaces and services for themselves, their

workers and passengers across all modes of private and public transport. The Department for Transport has also contacted all licensing authorities in England and other sector stakeholders to highlight this guidance and set out its implications for the taxi and private hire vehicle trade.

As the Prime Minister announced on 10 June, the Government will be expanding targeted testing of occupations and groups at higher risk, including those individuals working in front line jobs, which bring them regularly into close contact with the public. This will help us learn more about who is at higher risk and how the virus is spread.

■ **Tolls: Greater London**

Elliot Colburn:

[\[54258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what representations he has received from (a) Transport for London and (b) the Mayor of London on the potential merits of increasing the congestion charge in London.

Rachel Maclean:

As part of the funding package agreed with the Mayor of London to allow Transport for London to continue operating essential services in London during the COVID 19 outbreak, the Mayor agreed to reinstate the congestion charge. The decision to temporarily increase the congestion charge was taken by the Mayor and will be considered as part of the upcoming Government lead review of TfL's financial position.

■ **Travel: Coronavirus**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[54158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether UK residents are required to self-isolate prior to travelling overseas during the covid-19 outbreak; and if so, for how long should UK residents so self-isolate.

Kelly Tolhurst:

There is no requirement for UK residents to self-isolate prior to travelling overseas. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises British nationals against all but essential international travel. It is advised to check the FCO's travel advice page regularly for further information.

TREASURY

■ **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme**

Seema Malhotra:

[\[55686\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that people (a) who are shielding, (b) who live with people who are shielding and (c) identified as clinically vulnerable during the covid-19 outbreak but are not shielding are furloughed by employers where that is an option.

Vicky Foxcroft:

[56079]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that people who (a) are shielding, (b) live with people who are shielding and (c) are clinically vulnerable but are not shielding are offered furlough during the covid-19 outbreak.

Jesse Norman:

Employees who are unable to work because they are shielding in line with public health guidance, or who need to stay home with someone who is shielding, can be furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). Those who are clinically vulnerable but not shielding are eligible for furlough on the same grounds as other employees. Any decision to access the CJRS is at the employer's discretion.

■ **Food: Wholesale Trade**

John McDonnell:

[53995]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will extend the hospitality, retail and leisure grants to the wholesale food and drink sector.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government recognises that this is a very challenging time for businesses in a wide variety of sectors. Small businesses occupying properties for retail, hospitality or leisure purposes are likely to be particularly affected by COVID-19 due to their reliance on customer footfall, and the fact that they are less likely than larger businesses to have sufficient cash reserves to meet their high fixed property-related costs. The Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF) is intended to help small businesses in this situation.

Local Authorities (LAs) can choose to make discretionary grants to businesses in other supply chains, like the wholesale food and drink sector, if they feel there is a particular local economic need. The Government has allocated up to an additional £617 million to LAs to enable them to give discretionary grants to businesses in this situation. LAs may choose to focus payments on those priority groups which are most relevant to their local areas or to businesses outside of these priority groups, so long as the business was trading on 11th March, and has not received any other cash grant funded by central Government.

Small businesses which are not eligible for business grants should still be able to benefit from other elements of the Government's unprecedented package of support for business. The Business Support website provides further information about how businesses can access the support that has been made available, who is eligible, when the schemes open and how to apply - <https://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder>.

Tracey Crouch:

[54082]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to make food and drink wholesalers who supply to care homes, hospitals and schools eligible for the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government recognises that this is a very challenging time for businesses in a wide variety of sectors. Small businesses occupying properties for retail, hospitality or leisure purposes are likely to be particularly affected by COVID-19 due to their reliance on customer footfall, and the fact that they are less likely than larger businesses to have sufficient cash reserves to meet their high fixed property-related costs. The Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF) is intended to help small businesses in this situation.

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Bob Blackman:

[54096]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will extend the application of the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund to the wholesale food and drink sector.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government recognises that this is a very challenging time for businesses in a wide variety of sectors. Small businesses occupying properties for retail, hospitality or leisure purposes are likely to be particularly affected by COVID-19 due to their reliance on customer footfall, and the fact that they are less likely than larger businesses to have sufficient cash reserves to meet their high fixed property-related costs. The Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF) is intended to help small businesses in this situation.

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situation. LAs may choose to focus payments on those priority groups which are most relevant to their local areas or to businesses outside of these priority groups, so long as the business was trading on 11th March, and has not received any other cash grant funded by central Government.

Small businesses which are not eligible for business grants should still be able to benefit from other elements of the Government's unprecedented package of support for business. The Business Support website provides further information about how businesses can access the support that has been made available, who is eligible, when the schemes open and how to apply - <https://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder>.

Kate Hollern: [55690]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will extend the application of business rates relief to food and drink wholesalers.

Tim Loughton: [55838]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will extend the application of business rates relief to food and drink wholesalers.

Neil Parish: [57189]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will extend the application of business rates relief to food and drink wholesalers.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has provided enhanced support through business rates relief to businesses occupying properties used for retail, hospitality and leisure 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. As set out in the guidance, support is targeted at premises that are wholly or mainly being used as shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas and live music venues; for assembly and leisure; or as hotels, guest and boarding premises, and self-catering accommodation. It is for local authorities to determine eligibility for reliefs, having regard to guidance issued by the Government.

A range of further measures to support all businesses, including those not eligible for the business rates holiday, such as wholesalers, has also been made available.

■ Gift Aid: Linlithgow and East Falkirk

Martyn Day: [54176]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many charities registered in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency have claimed back Gift Aid on small cash donations using the Gift Aid Small Donation Scheme since that scheme's inception.

Kemi Badenoch:

The information requested is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ **Health: Charities****Amy Callaghan:****[55043]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the £22 million in cash grants awarded by the Government to health charities as a result of the covid-19 outbreak, what assessment his Department made of the (a) funding needs of those charities and (b) effectiveness of the services those charities provide prior to that award; and what criteria the Government used to determine which charities should receive grants.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government has set out a £750 million package of support for charities providing key services and supporting vulnerable people during the COVID-19 crisis. This will enable such organisations to continue providing essential services to those most in need. Part of the funding for charities is being disbursed with £360 million directly allocated by government departments. The most up to date information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-charity-sector#government-financial-support-for-charities>. Our aim is to get funding to those in greatest need as soon as possible.

These services have never been more needed than they are now, especially health charities. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) is responsible for allocating funding to health charities and making decisions about the criteria and effectiveness of the services they are funding. Further details about the £22 million awarded to this sector and the types of organisations supported is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/22-million-awarded-to-life-saving-health-charities-during-virus-outbreak>.

■ **Hydrogen****Alexander Stafford:****[54285]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on opportunities for economic growth in the UK's hydrogen economy throughout the UK.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government continues to take its environmental responsibilities very seriously.

We are committed to meeting our climate change targets, including net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Hydrogen could be an important part of the transition to net zero.

We are investing in innovation, providing up to £121m to support a range of projects to explore and develop the potential of low carbon hydrogen. This includes production, storage and end use in heat, industry and transport.

In 2019 the Government published a consultation on business models for Carbon Capture and Storage, which sought views on support for low-carbon hydrogen. The response to the consultation will be published in due course.

Alexander Stafford:

[\[54286\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential for green hydrogen industries to help contribute to the UK's economic recovery in the aftermath of the covid-19 outbreak.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Coronavirus is the biggest threat this country has faced in decades. Alongside the focus on supporting the economy, the Government continues to take its environmental responsibilities very seriously.

Hydrogen could be an important part of the transition to net zero and has the potential to help the economy recovery in a stronger, cleaner, more sustainable way.

We are investing in innovation, providing up to £121m to support a range of projects to explore and develop the potential of low carbon hydrogen. This includes production, storage and end use in heat, industry and transport.

In 2019 the Government published a consultation on business models for Carbon Capture and Storage, which sought views on support for low-carbon hydrogen. The response to the consultation will be published in due course.

Alex Sobel:

[\[55017\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential economic effect on UK industry of EU plans for large-scale investment in green hydrogen.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government continues to take its environmental responsibilities very seriously and welcomes international efforts to invest in technologies that will be needed to decarbonise the energy used in our economies.

We remain committed to our net zero target, and hydrogen could be an important part of the transition.

We are investing in innovation, providing up to £121m to support a range of projects to explore and develop the potential of low carbon hydrogen. This includes production, storage and end use in heat, industry and transport.

■ Off-payroll Working

Sir Paul Beresford:

[\[55650\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent estimate he has made of the number of workers who only hold contracts covered by the off payroll working rules.

Jesse Norman:

The Tax Information and Impact Note (TIIN) published in July 2019 sets out that HMRC estimate that 170,000 individuals working through their own company, who

would be employed if engaged directly, would be subject to the off-payroll working rules. Individuals may have multiple engagements through their own company, with some engagements subject to the off-payroll working rules and some not. Those who are complying with the existing rules should experience little impact. The TIIN can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rules-for-off-payroll-working-from-april-2020/rules-for-off-payroll-working-from-april-2020>.

The impact of the delay to the changes of the off-payroll working rules will be published at the next fiscal event and will be subject to the scrutiny of the Office for Budget Responsibility.

■ Public Expenditure: Scotland

David Mundell: [54874]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the timeframe is for renegotiating the fiscal framework with the Scottish Government.

Steve Barclay:

The Scottish Government's fiscal framework sets out the timeline for its review. An independent panel jointly commissioned by the UK and Scottish governments will report by the end of 2021. This will inform negotiations between the UK and Scottish governments that will conclude by the end of 2022.

■ Small Business Grants Fund: Day Care

Nick Fletcher: [55061]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that children's care facilities can benefit from the Small Business Grant fund administered by local authorities.

Kemi Badenoch:

Children's care facilities in England which were in receipt of small business rate relief (SBRR) or rural rate relief (RRR) as of 11th March are eligible for the small business grant funding (SBGF) of £10,000. Nurseries occupied by providers on Ofsted's Early Years Register and wholly or mainly used for the provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage may also benefit from the 12-month business rates relief holiday.

Children's care facilities may also benefit from a range of other business support measures. The Business Support website provides further information about how businesses can access the support that has been made available, who is eligible and how to apply - <https://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder>.

■ Supermarkets: Coronavirus

Naz Shah: [55697]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether supermarkets that remain open during the covid-19 outbreak have been provided with business rates relief.

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 of the business rates holiday for the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, which included supermarkets.

■ **Taxation: Coronavirus****Mr Steve Baker:**[\[54903\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of reducing (a) VAT, (B) national insurance contributions, (c) income tax, (d) corporation tax, (e) Stamp Duty Land Tax and (f) other taxes to contribute to the UK's economic recovery after the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

The Treasury has taken unprecedented steps to keep as many people in their existing jobs, support viable businesses to stay afloat and protect the incomes of the most vulnerable. These measures have been on a scale unmatched by any government in recent history.

As the Chancellor has said, a new national collective effort has begun: to reopen the country and kickstart the economy. As part of this, the Treasury is keeping all taxes under review. The Chancellor will update Parliament at the appropriate time.

■ **Treasury: Buildings****Rachel Hopkins:**[\[54308\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer on 15 May 2020 to Question 43779 on Civil Servants, at how many multi-hub locations employees of his Department work 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.

Kemi Badenoch:

I refer the Hon. member to the answer given to PQ 54314 on 12 June 2020.

■ **VAT: Arrears****Martyn Day:**[\[54965\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the total value of VAT arrears owed for more than 12 months is in (a) Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency, (b) Scotland and (c) the UK.

Jesse Norman:

As of the end of May 2020, the UK VAT debt balance for debts aged more than 12 months is £1,351m. The information is not readily available for Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency or Scotland, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

WALES**■ Coronavirus: Wales****Daniel Kawczynski:**[\[57134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what assessment he has made of the effect of the different approaches of the UK and Welsh Governments to tackling covid-19 on the health of people in (a) Shrewsbury and (b) other border communities; and if he will work with his Welsh counterpart to improve co-ordination on covid-19 between the two Administrations.

Simon Hart:

The UK Government is doing whatever it takes to ensure the UK defeats Coronavirus and I have regular discussions with the First Minister and his Ministerial team on the UK-wide response, including the impact of Covid-19 on border communities. I consider it crucial that any differences in the response between Wales and England is supported by robust evidence.

Since the start of the outbreak, including through the COBR Ministerial Committee and the Ministerial Implementation Groups, there have been 116 engagements in total between the UK and Welsh Government. I am, of course, always looking for opportunities for closer working between the two governments and have asked the First Minister to consider inviting the Parliamentary Under-Secretary or me to attend meetings of the Welsh Government's Covid-19 Core Ministerial Group.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Department for Work and Pensions: Buildings****Rachel Hopkins:**[\[54307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer on 15 May 2020 to Question 43779 on Civil Servants, at how many multi-hub locations employees of her Department work 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.

Mims Davies:

DWP does not occupy any locations in London that are managed by the Government Property Agency.

I refer you to the answer given by my hon. Friend at the Cabinet Office, [PQ54314](#)

■ Health and Safety Executive: Finance

Seema Malhotra: [55990]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the annual budget of the Health and Safety Executive (a) is in 2020-21 and (b) was in each of the last 10 years.

Mims Davies:

[Holding answer 11 June 2020]: The table below shows the annual budget of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in the last 10 years up to 2020-21:

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/2020-06-08/55990>

■ Health and Safety Executive: Staff

Seema Malhotra: [55989]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Health and Safety Inspectors were employed by the Health and Safety Executive at the end of May in each of the last 10 years up to and including 2020.

Mims Davies:

The table below shows the number of inspectors employed by the Health and Safety Executive in each of the last 10 years up to and including 2020:

1. Figures provided are the total number of staff in all grades and roles, including trainees, managers and specialists with warrants, on 31st May for each financial year.
2. Figures provided do not include Inspectors from the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) which became an independent statutory public corporation on 1 April 2014.

■ Jobcentres: Staff

Seema Malhotra: [55988]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many full-time equivalent work coaches were employed by her Department in (a) January, (b) February, (c) March, (d) April and (e) May 2020; and how many additional work coaches she plans to recruit before August 2020.

Mims Davies:

[Holding answer 11 June 2020]: For the period January 2020 to May 2020, approximately 13,200 full-time equivalent (FTE) work coaches were employed by the Department. During this period, we have seen an unprecedented number of new

benefit claims, with work coaches and thousands of DWP staff moving roles to ensure these claims were processed and claimants paid on time.

■ **Universal Credit: Coronavirus**

Sarah Champion:

[54920]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she plans to amend the availability for work requirements for claimants of universal credit with child care responsibilities as a result of amended school timetables during the covid-19 outbreak.

Will Quince:

Where a claimant is the lead carer of a child under the age of 13, their work related requirements can be tailored to take into account amended school timetables during the covid-19 outbreak.

Peter Kyle:

[56083]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 2 June 2020 to Question HL4637 on Universal Credit: Coronavirus, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of enabling claimants of universal credit to be granted a nine month grace period on the basis of average earnings over the previous 12 months before a benefit cap is applied.

Mims Davies:

Claimants may benefit from a nine-month grace period where their benefit will not be capped if they have a sustained work history with monthly earnings of at least £604 (£569 up to March 2020) in each of the previous 12 months. These earnings can include statutory sick pay, employer sick pay, earnings from self-employment as well as payments from the furlough scheme. It is not considered appropriate to undertake the averaging of earnings for the benefit cap grace period exemption to be applied, as that goes against the fundamental design of UC, which responds to fluctuating earnings monthly based on a claimants circumstances