

**Daily Report****Wednesday, 17 June 2020**

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 17 June 2020 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:34 P.M., 17 June 2020). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

CONTENTS

ANSWERS	6	■ Ministerial University Research and Knowledge Exchange Sustainability Taskforce	14
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	6	■ Parental Leave and Pay: Childbirth	15
■ Bounce Back Loan Scheme	6	■ Public Houses: Coronavirus	15
■ Business Travel: Coronavirus	6	■ Research: Coronavirus	16
■ Businesses: Government Assistance	6	CABINET OFFICE	16
■ Businesses: Linlithgow and East Falkirk	8	■ Cabinet Office: Carers	16
■ Carers: Government Assistance	9	■ Census: Ethnic Groups	17
■ Companies: Registration	10	■ Coronavirus: Disease Control	17
■ Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme	10	■ Customs: Northern Ireland	17
■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Carers	11	■ Electronic Government: Proof of Identity	18
■ Employment: Industrial Health and Safety	11	■ Email: Fraud	18
■ Energy: Meters	12	DEFENCE	19
■ Fuel Poverty: Linlithgow and East Falkirk	13	■ Islamic State: Military Intervention	19
■ Hospitality Industry and Public Houses	13	■ Royal Military Academy	19
■ Local Enterprise Partnerships: South West	14	DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	20
		■ Boats and Caravans: Coronavirus	20
		■ Broadband: Access	20
		■ Coronavirus: Arts	21
		■ Culture: Coronavirus	21

■ Culture: Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme	21	■ Countryside Stewardship Scheme and Environmental Stewardship Scheme: Coronavirus	36
■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Carers	22	■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Carers	36
■ Electronic Publishing: VAT	23	■ Droughts	37
■ ICT: Equipment	23	■ Environment Protection: Reviews	38
■ Local Broadcasting: Radio	24	■ Environment Protection: Standards	38
■ National Lottery: Coronavirus	24	■ Floods: Coronavirus	39
■ Photography: Coronavirus	24	■ Food: Coronavirus	39
■ Radio	25	■ Food: Origin Marking	40
■ Television: Hearing Impairment	26	■ Highly Protected Marine Areas	40
■ Television: Licensing	26	■ Ivory Act 2018	41
■ Theatre Royal Newcastle upon Tyne: Coronavirus	27	■ Ivory: Public Consultation	41
EDUCATION	27	■ Public Houses: Coronavirus	41
■ Children: Day Care	27	■ Wildlife Parks and Zoos: Coronavirus	42
■ Children: Social Services	28	FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE	43
■ Department for Education: Carers	28	■ Gaza: Demonstrations	43
■ Nurseries: Coronavirus	29	■ Hong Kong: Human Rights	43
■ Private Education: Coronavirus	29	■ Iran: Arms Trade	43
■ Schools: Closures	30	■ Israel: Palestinians	44
■ Schools: Coronavirus	30	■ Israeli Settlements	44
■ Schools: Staff	32	■ Libya: Armed Conflict	45
■ Students: Coronavirus	33	■ Myanmar: Arms Trade	45
■ Students: Finance	34	■ Nigeria: Armed Conflict	46
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	34	■ Turkey: EDO MBM Technology	46
■ Agriculture: Subsidies	34	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	47
■ Agriculture: Wales	35	■ Asthma: Steroid Drugs	47
■ Clothing and Textiles: Sustainable Development	35	■ Health Services: Remote Working	48
■ Coastal Areas: Coronavirus	36		

■ Maternity Services: Coronavirus	48	HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	61
■ Mental Health Services: Coronavirus	49	■ Churches: Marriage	61
■ Mental Health: Coronavirus	49	■ Domestic Abuse: Coronavirus	61
■ Royal Shrewsbury Hospital: Finance	50	■ Domestic Abuse: Housing	63
HOME OFFICE	50	■ Evictions: Coronavirus	63
■ Aerospace Industry: Quarantine	50	■ Garages and Petrol Stations: Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund	64
■ Asylum: Housing	50	■ Housing: Disability and Older People	65
■ Asylum: Northern Ireland	51	■ Local Government Finance: Coronavirus	65
■ British Nationality: Assessments	52	■ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Carers	65
■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	52	■ Planning: Public Inquiries	66
■ Crime Prevention: Finance	52	■ Public Lavatories	67
■ Entry Clearances: Overseas Students	53	■ Public Lavatories: Coronavirus	67
■ Firearms and Knives: Crime	53	■ Temporary Accommodation	68
■ Hampshire Constabulary: Recruitment	55	INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	69
■ Home Office: Racial Discrimination	56	■ Bangladesh: Migrant Camps	69
■ Immigrants: Detainees	56	■ Food Supply and Nutrition: Overseas Aid	71
■ Immigration: EU Nationals	57	■ Overseas Aid: Family Planning	71
■ Metropolitan Police: Ethnic Groups	58	■ Palestinians: Textbooks	72
■ Motorcycles: Crime	58	INTERNATIONAL TRADE	72
■ Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation	59	■ Foreign Investment in UK	72
■ Police: Ethnic Groups	59	■ Music: Coronavirus	73
■ Police: Horses	60	■ Overseas Trade: Coronavirus	74
■ Recycling: Aluminium	60	■ Riot Control Weapons: USA	74
■ Youth Mobility Scheme: Au Pairs	61	■ Technology: Exports	79
		■ Trade: Aviation	79

JUSTICE	79	■ Network Rail: Finance	92
■ Administration of Justice: Disability	79	■ Public Transport: Coronavirus	92
■ Courts: Coronavirus	80	■ Railway Network: Wales	93
■ Disability	80	■ Railways: Fares	93
■ Legal Aid Scheme: Reviews	81	■ Road Traffic Control	93
■ Ministry of Justice: Carers	81	■ Roads: Noise	94
■ Prison Accommodation: Temperature and Ventilation	82	■ Roads: Wales	95
■ Prisoners: Coronavirus	82	■ Roll-on Roll-off Ships: Irish Sea	95
■ Prisoners: Mental Health	83	■ Shipping: Coronavirus	95
■ Prisons: Coronavirus	84	■ Taxis: Coronavirus	96
■ Prisons: Staff	84	TREASURY	96
LEADER OF THE HOUSE	85	■ Businesses: Coronavirus	96
■ Leader of the House of Commons: Carers	85	■ Charities: Finance	96
NORTHERN IRELAND	85	■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	97
■ Abortion: Northern Ireland	85	■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Supply Teachers	98
TRANSPORT	86	■ Economic Situation: Coronavirus	98
■ Cars: Linlithgow and East Falkirk	86	■ Electronic Publishing: VAT	99
■ Department for Transport: Carers	86	■ Enterprise Investment Scheme	99
■ Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Databases	87	■ Food: Wholesale Trade	100
■ Driving Instruction and Driving Tests: Coronavirus	87	■ Government Assistance: Coronavirus	100
■ Driving Instruction: Coronavirus	88	■ Government Assistance: Northern Ireland	101
■ Driving Tests: Coronavirus	89	■ Hospitality Industry: Coronavirus	102
■ Driving: Licensing	89	■ Merchant Shipping: Coronavirus	102
■ Electric Scooters	90	■ Musicians: Non-domestic Rates	103
■ Ferries: Freight	90	■ Office for Environmental Protection	103
■ Freight: Ferries	91		
■ Independent HS2 Construction Commissioner	91		

■ Private Rented Housing: Coronavirus	104	■ Poverty: Linlithgow and East Falkirk	110
■ Public Houses: Coronavirus	104	■ Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations	111
■ Travel Agents: Repayments	105	■ Unemployment: Coronavirus	111
■ Treasury: Correspondence	105	■ Universal Credit: Coronavirus	111
■ Treasury: Social Distancing	106	■ Universal Credit: Self-employed	112
■ World Economy: Coronavirus	106	MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS	113
WORK AND PENSIONS	107	BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	113
■ Carer's Allowance: Expenditure	107	■ Manufacturing Industries: Carbon Emissions	113
■ Carers' Benefits	107	WRITTEN STATEMENTS	114
■ Department for Work and Pensions: Carers	108	CABINET OFFICE	114
■ Food Banks	108	■ Advance from the Contingencies Fund	114
■ Health and Safety Executive: Finance	109	INTERNATIONAL TRADE	114
■ Health Professions: Coronavirus	109	■ Update on Trade Negotiations with Australia and New Zealand	114
■ Housing Benefit: Linlithgow and East Falkirk	110		
■ Poverty: Children	110		

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

■ Bounce Back Loan Scheme

Nick Fletcher:

[\[57406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support businesses that need to increase the amount of money they have borrowed through the Bounce Back Loan Scheme.

Paul Scully:

Under the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs), businesses can apply for between £2,000 up to 25% of their turnover. The maximum loan available under the Scheme is £50,000. Once a business has received a BBLs facility, it is not eligible to apply for a second loan under the Scheme.

Businesses using BBLs, who later decide that they need more financing, may be able to refinance under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) provided they are eligible for the CBILS.

Businesses are not permitted to access more than one of either the Bounce Back Loan Scheme, CBILS, Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) or the Covid Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF) scheme at the same time.

■ Business Travel: Coronavirus

Stephen Hammond:

[\[55921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions the Government has had with representatives of the business travel sector during the covid-19 outbreak.

Paul Scully:

The Government holds regular discussions with businesses and others to assess the impact of the covid-19 outbreak. The Government is working to find a balanced and a coordinated solution to the difficulties to the sector that have arisen as a result of covid-19.

■ Businesses: Government Assistance

Seema Malhotra:

[\[57218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Government support package for innovative firms hit by coronavirus announced on 20 April 2020, how many businesses (a) have accessed this support through; and how much and what proportion of funding from the £750 million to be allocated through Innovate UK has been to disbursed to (i) new applicants and (ii) existing award holders.

Amanda Solloway:

On 20th April, my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a £1.25bn coronavirus package to protect firms driving innovation in the UK.

This included £750 million of targeted support for the most R&D intensive small and medium size firms which will be available through Innovate UK's grants and loan scheme.

The Government has since confirmed that up to £500m of this is for existing customers including £200m of accelerated payments and up to £300m for continuity grants and loans. £20m of the remainder has been used to double the number of businesses receiving funding through the IUK call for business led innovation in response to the crisis which was open to new customers. Over 800 companies have been successful in this competition. IUK has also allocated up to £39m to increase the business advisory support services available new and existing high-growth potential SMEs. Announcements for the remaining money will be made in due course.

Beyond the Fast-Response competition, it is currently too early to state the number of businesses that have accessed this funding.

Jane Stevenson:[\[58782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support he has made available for businesses facing closure as a result of the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

Paul Scully:

[Holding answer 16 June 2020]: The Government has introduced an unprecedented package of support for businesses to get through this incredibly challenging period. This includes:

- A Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme;
- Deferring VAT and Income Tax payments;
- A Statutory Sick Pay relief package for SMEs;
- A 12-month business rates holiday for all retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England;
- Small business grant funding of £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief;
- Grant funding of £25,000 for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses with property with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000;
- A Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund, with up to £617 million available to Local Authorities to support certain small businesses;
- The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme offering loans of up to £5 million for SMEs through the British Business Bank;

- The Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme offering facilities of up to £200 million through the British Business Bank;
- The Bounce Back Loan Scheme to help the smallest businesses access loans of between £2000 and £50,000;
- The Future Fund to provide government loans to UK-based companies ranging from £125,000 to £5 million, subject to at least equal match funding from private investors;
- A new lending facility from the Bank of England to help support liquidity among larger firms, helping them bridge coronavirus disruption to their cash flows through loans;
- Extending the HMRC Time To Pay Scheme.

Many businesses have already benefitted from this support. As of 14 June, 1.1 million employers are utilising the Job Retention Scheme, over 900,000 businesses of all sizes have been able to access more than £38 billion of finance through our loan schemes, and more than £10 billion of Small Business and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants have been paid.

As well as this support, the Government is currently taking the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Bill through Parliament to make changes to insolvency and company law, to:

- introduce new corporate restructuring tools to give companies the breathing space and rescue tools required to maximise their chance of survival; and
- temporarily suspend parts of insolvency law to support directors in continuing to trade through the emergency without the threat of personal liability, and protects companies from aggressive creditor action.

Full details on the support available for businesses can be found on GOV.UK, or through contacting our business support line.

■ Businesses: Linlithgow and East Falkirk

Martyn Day:

[57293]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support micro businesses in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency.

Paul Scully:

Our aim is to make the UK the best place to start, scale up and grow a business and the Government is helping small businesses across the whole of the UK access the finance and support they need to succeed.

The British Business Bank's (BBB) programmes are currently supporting over £7.4 billion of finance to over 93,000 small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) across the UK. Since launching in 2012, the BBB Start-Up Loans programme has issued over 3,500 loans in Scotland, averaging £7,200 each and worth over £25m in total.

This includes 102 Start-Up Loans totalling £607,358 to companies in the Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency.

In addition to its lending and investment activity, BBB's online Finance Hub helps business owners to find the right finance options for their needs.

Government has taken further steps in recent years to support the growth of small businesses across the UK, including cutting corporation tax to 19 per cent and increasing the employment allowance from £2,000 to £3,000 to benefit around 1m businesses. Reforms and reliefs to business rates, are worth £13 billion over the next five years.

All businesses in Scotland, including your constituency may use the Scottish Government's dedicated website to find out about and access business support via <https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/> or by telephone: 0300 303 0660. (Monday to Friday, 09:30am to 5:30pm.)

■ Carers: Government Assistance

Mary Kelly Foy:

[58795]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that working unpaid carers in (a) City of Durham and (b) England are supported to remain in work.

Paul Scully:

[Holding answer 16 June 2020]: The Government recognises the crucial role unpaid carers play, especially during this difficult period.

On 8th April we published guidance for unpaid carers on GOV.UK, which includes general advice on infection control, advice on caring where someone has symptoms, how to create care plans, how to make alternative care arrangements at short notice and access links to various NHS resources.

We have provided additional funding to Carers UK's helpline, information and support services, to help more carers access trusted information and advice. We also continue to signpost carers to the charity's website for additional information and support during this pandemic.

We are committed to supporting carers in the City of Durham and across the country to remain in work, recognising the challenges of balancing work and care also in the longer term.

This is why the Government is now consulting on proposals to introduce Carer's Leave, to support working people who are also carers to balance employment with their caring responsibilities.

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

■ Companies: Registration

Kevin Hollinrake: [\[57274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to publish its response to its consultation on corporate transparency and register reform before the 2020 summer recess.

Paul Scully:

The Government is currently considering a broad package of reforms to Companies House to ensure it is fit for the future and continues to contribute to the UK's business environment. This would amount to the most significant reform of the UK's company registration framework since a companies register was first introduced in 1844, and it is important, therefore, to take the time to get it right.

The consultation received a significant number of responses and an official government response with proposals for the way forward will be published in due course.

Kevin Hollinrake: [\[57275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the consultation published by his Department on 5 May 2019 on corporate transparency and register reform, what assessment he has made of the level of resources required by Companies House to implement the reforms recommended in that consultation.

Paul Scully:

Companies House ensures it has the appropriate amount of resources to effectively manage the register. Staffing levels are made available in the Companies House Annual Report which is published after the end of the financial year.

The Department's consultation received a significant number of responses and an official government response with proposals for the way forward will be published in due course. An assessment of the staffing levels required to implement the recommended reforms will be finalised as the proposals are finalised.

As proposals under the consultation have not yet been finalised, the staffing levels required have not been finalised.

■ Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

Seema Malhotra: [\[57217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will review the Business in difficulty criteria of the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme to support smaller businesses.

Paul Scully:

Although the UK has left the EU, under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement, the EU State Aid rules continue to apply in the UK until the end of the Transition Period. The EU Commission have introduced a 'temporary framework' providing flexibility on

State Aid rules to support businesses impacted by the Covid-19 outbreak. The Government has notified the European Commission of the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) under the temporary framework, in line with State Aid rules.

Certain State Aid rules apply to businesses accessing the CBILS, including around the business in difficulty criteria. In recognition of the impact of Coronavirus, companies that do not pass the business in difficulty test are eligible for the CBILS, unless they were in difficulty on 31 December 2019, prior to the outbreak.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Carers**

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[57063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many staff in his Department had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The table below shows the number of staff who responded positively to the question: 'Do you look after or give help or support to any family members, friends, neighbours or others who have a long-term physical or mental illness or disability, or problems related to old age?' in the Department's annual People Survey from 2016 to 2019.

This is based on the number of people (rounded to the nearest 10) responding to the question and may not fully represent the number of carers in the Department.

Caring responsibilities may have changed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Department's staff are being encouraged to reflect this in an amended or new Carer's Passport.

YEAR	NUMBER
2016	420
2017	430
2018	600
2019	720

■ **Employment: Industrial Health and Safety**

Stella Creasy:

[\[58697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many people categorised as clinically extremely vulnerable during the covid-19 outbreak have continued working in their place of work during the outbreak; and what steps he is taking to support that group of people in the workplace.

Paul Scully:

[Holding answer 16 June 2020]: The Government made clear that vulnerable people who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) need to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures. Members of staff who are vulnerable or extremely vulnerable, as well as individuals whom they live with, should be supported by their employers as they follow the required social distancing and shielding measures.

It is critical that employers offer safe workplaces. The Government has published guidance to help ensure workplaces are as safe as possible during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. These guides cover a range of working environments and are available at www.gov.uk/workingsafely.

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

Employees have a legal duty to make sure the workplace is safe for their employees; this includes reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities and those who are clinically vulnerable.

The safer workplaces guidance provides some suggestions to help employers make their workplaces COVID-19 secure for their employees, visitors and customers.

■ Energy: Meters**Alex Norris:****[57325]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government has taken to ensure the safety of (a) residents and (b) technicians during smart meter installation as the covid-19 restrictions are eased.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Government is working closely with industry to support the adoption of guidance published on 11 May 2020 on working safely in people's homes during COVID-19.

Energy UK and the Association of Meter Operators have also been working with their member organisations to support compliance with the Government guidance and share good practice related to all aspects of remobilisation, including undertaking smart meter installations in consumer's homes. Energy suppliers, meter operators and energy networks will need to continue to have the health and wellbeing of their customers and staff as their central priority.

Alex Norris:**[57328]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of making it compulsory for all homes to have a smart meter at (a) the point of sale where the property is owner-occupied and (b) the change of tenancy where the property is privately rented.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Government has consulted on proposals for a new policy framework to continue to drive market-wide rollout of smart meters after the current duty on energy suppliers ends in December 2020. This consultation sought views from stakeholders about what policy measures the Government should consider in order to complement the proposed market-wide rollout obligation.

We are carefully considering the range of responses and evidence submitted, ahead of publishing a Government response. We will see seek to do this as soon as is practicable.

In the meantime, the Government has updated the 'How to Let' and 'How to Rent' guides for tenants and landlords in the private rented sector to make clear the rights and responsibilities for accepting and installing a smart meter.

Alex Norris:[\[57329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, in circumstances in which a SMETS2 smart meter cannot be installed for a customer, whether it is Government policy to install a SMETS1 meter until a SMETS2 solution is found.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

Energy suppliers are required by licence conditions to take all reasonable steps to provide second generation smart (SMETS2) meters to their customers.

SMETS1 meters will only normally be installed where energy suppliers are unable to provide a SMETS2 service, despite having taken all reasonable steps to provide one and the energy consumer prefers to have a SMETS1 service rather than wait for a SMETS2 service to become available .

■ Fuel Poverty: Linlithgow and East Falkirk**Martyn Day:**[\[57286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate she has made of the number of households in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency that were affected by fuel poverty in each year since 2015.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

Fuel poverty is a devolved matter and BEIS does not make estimates of households in fuel poverty for Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

■ Hospitality Industry and Public Houses**Daisy Cooper:**[\[57380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the financial ability of (a) pubs and (b) hospitality businesses to re-stock ahead of their re-opening.

Paul Scully:

The Government have engaged with hospitality businesses to discuss various issues around reopening, including financial issues. This Department's ministerial team are in regular contact with the industry. Work is ongoing to develop guidance with the assistance of representatives from the industry in order to get the sector reopened safely, in line with our approach with other businesses and sectors.

Local Enterprise Partnerships: South West**Sir Gary Streeter:**[\[57077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will recognise the four counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset as the Great South West economic region, as recommended by the relevant local enterprise partnerships; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Government is committed to pan-regional partnerships, as part of our commitment to further devolution and level up the country. These non-statutory partnerships will need to operate at scale, driving greater levels of foreign investment into the UK, and capitalising on major economic opportunities over a pan-regional geography.

I am grateful to the Counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, and Dorset for their proposals as presented in the Great South West prospectus and we will be setting out further detail through the Devolution White Paper.

Ministerial University Research and Knowledge Exchange Sustainability Taskforce**Chi Onwurah:**[\[57208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how often his Department plans to (a) meet and (b) receive updates from the Ministerial University Research and Knowledge Exchange Sustainability Taskforce; whether he plans to publish those updates.

Chi Onwurah:[\[57209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Ministerial University Research and Knowledge Exchange Sustainability Taskforce on their immediate priority issues.

Amanda Solloway:

The Taskforce has been meeting remotely via video conference on a fortnightly basis. The membership and full terms of reference of the group are available on gov.uk.

The taskforce has discussed a range of issues facing the sector due to the disruption surrounding COVID-19, and how to approach those challenges. Discussions at the taskforce are assisting ongoing policy development, alongside intelligence which has been submitted by members and their networks.

■ Parental Leave and Pay: Childbirth

Holly Mumby-Croft:

[\[57410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to bring forward legislative proposals to introduce statutory (a) pay and (b) leave for parents of babies in neonatal care in the Employment Bill; and what the timeframe is for the introduction of that Bill.

Paul Scully:

The Government is committed to introducing a new entitlement to Neonatal Leave and Pay for parents of babies who are admitted to neonatal care. In March this year we set out how we will take this forward in our response to a public consultation on the issue. We will legislate to implement this entitlement as part of the Employment Bill, which we will bring it forward in due course.

■ Public Houses: Coronavirus

Caroline Lucas:

[\[55935\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with representatives of publican tenants in tied pubs on the support those tenants require during the covid-19 outbreak; whether he is in touch with the #nopubnorent campaign; and if he will make it his policy to include a representative of The Forum of British Pubs on the Pubs and Restaurant taskforce to develop new covid-19 secure guidelines.

Paul Scully:

The Department has had discussions with a broad range of stakeholders from across the pubs sector on the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak, including support to pub tenants.

The Pubs and Restaurants Taskforce has already convened to develop guidance that will allow restaurants, bars and cafes to reopen at the earliest point it is considered safe to do so. The taskforce comprised stakeholders from a cross-section of the sector, with representation from trade bodies to small and medium sized operators, unions, as well as the supply chain. We consulted these stakeholders due to their expertise and real-life knowledge and experience of the challenges faced by the industry during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Jessica Morden:

[\[59199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with representatives from pub companies on support for pub tenants during the covid-19 outbreak.

Paul Scully:

The Department has had discussions with a broad range of stakeholders from across the pubs sector on the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak, including support to pub tenants.

■ Research: Coronavirus**Sir Mike Penning:**[\[57101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to prioritise and support research into covid-19 which (a) uses advanced non-animal scientific methods that are relevant to humans and (b) avoids the known issues of species differences which make the translation of animal research data to humans unreliable and can delay or prevent the availability of effective vaccines and treatments.

Amanda Solloway:

The Government considers that the carefully regulated use of animals in scientific research remains an important tool in the development of safe new medicines and treatments. At the same time, the Government believes that animals should only be used when there is no practicable alternative and it actively supports and funds the development and dissemination of techniques that replace, reduce and refine the use of animals in research (the 3Rs). This is achieved primarily through funding for the National Centre for the 3Rs (NC3Rs) which has invested £67million in research, and works nationally and internationally to drive the uptake of 3Rs technologies and ensure that advances in the 3Rs are reflected in policy, practice and regulations on animal research.

With regard to specific research into Covid-19, human trials are already underway. The Government is currently funding two UK vaccine candidates; one at the University of Oxford and one at Imperial College, London. The University of Oxford began Phase 1 human safety trials on 23 April and have recently recruited healthy volunteers aged between 18 and 55 to take part in these trials.

Animal testing has not been skipped, however. Clinical trials of any vaccine must follow a predefined development pathway. It was agreed at the meeting of the International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory Authorities, held on 18 March 2020 that it is scientifically justified to use toxicology data and clinical data collected from other trials using animals to support a first-in-human clinical trial for a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine candidate. It was also agreed that data from animal disease models would be required to support Phase II clinical trials.

CABINET OFFICE**■ Cabinet Office: Carers****Sir Edward Davey:**[\[57062\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many staff in his Department had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Sir Edward Davey:[\[57075\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many staff in his Department had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[57076\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many staff in his Office had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Chloe Smith:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ **Census: Ethnic Groups**

Thangam Debbonaire:

[\[57248\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the criteria is for adding an ethnicity to the options in the national census.

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 [PQ57248.pdf]

■ **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[45321\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish the evidence base on which the Prime Minister made his statement to (a) the media on 10 May 2020 and (b) the House of Commons on 11 May 2020.

Penny Mordaunt:

Scientific advice and analysis have underpinned the Government's policy making in the development of current social distancing measures and our recently published strategy. A wide range of advice and analysis was considered to inform the most recent review of measures announced by the Prime Minister in May.

In previous emergencies, such as the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic, papers were published only at the end of the emergency. By contrast, in recognition of the importance of transparency in these unprecedented times, SAGE has been publishing statements and accompanying evidence to demonstrate how the scientific understanding of COVID-19 has continued to evolve as new data emerges, and how SAGE's advice has adapted to findings that reflect a changing situation. The documents are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/scientific-advisory-group-for-emergencies-sage-coronavirus-covid-19-response>. This list will be updated as SAGE releases further papers.

■ **Customs: Northern Ireland**

Dr Philippa Whitford:

[\[57230\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what discussions has he had with business leaders in Northern Ireland who are calling for a six month delay to customs checks in the Irish Sea following the transition period.

Penny Mordaunt:

Ministerial meetings with external organisations and individuals are declared quarterly on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

■ **Electronic Government: Proof of Identity****Martyn Day:** [\[53518\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many (a) individuals and (b) businesses registered for the Verify programme in each of the last five years.

Martyn Day: [\[53524\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what proportion of the population of (a) the UK, (b) Scotland and (c) Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency can the Verify system assure the identity of.

Martyn Day: [\[54166\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what proportion of the population can the gov.uk Verify identity assurance system identify in (a) the UK, (b) Scotland, and (c) Linlithgow and East Falkirk.

Chloe Smith:

[GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) Verify enables individuals to prove who they are digitally and to access online government services safely and securely. Over 6.8 million accounts have been created on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) Verify since it went live in October 2014. The breakdown for the last five years is as follows:

- 2014 - 1706
- 2015: 526,164
- 2016: 447,487
- 2017: 753,782
- 2018: 1,628,092
- 2019: 2,194,816
- 2020 (until 31 May): 1,294,337

The privacy-centric design of [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) Verify means that it is not possible to provide a breakdown of users by constituency or region.

■ **Email: Fraud****Kirsten Oswald:** [\[58727\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many suspicious emails have been reported to the National Cyber Security Centre by (a) people and (b) organisations in (i) Northern Ireland, (ii) Scotland, (iii) Wales and (iv) each of the English Regions since the start of the (A) Cyber Aware campaign and (B) covid-19 lockdown.

Penny Mordaunt:

The public has been able to report suspicious emails to the NCSC through the Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS) since 21 April 2020 when it was launched alongside the Cyber Aware campaign. Since its launch, the SERS has received over 800,000 reports, and removed over 7,500 URLs and over 2,000 sites. Safeguards protecting the anonymity of reporters means that a regional breakdown cannot be conducted.

DEFENCE**■ Islamic State: Military Intervention****Sir Edward Davey:**[\[58612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will list the countries that RAF Reaper drones are being deployed in outside of those of Operation Shader; and if he will make a statement.

James Heappey:

REAPER is an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platform. We do not comment on intelligence matters and I am therefore withholding the information as its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ Royal Military Academy**Sir Edward Davey:**[\[58613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much revenue the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst has received from the training of foreign nationals since 2010, by country.

James Heappey:

The attached table provides the total income received by the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst for foreign nationals completing courses since 2010. Country specific breakdowns have been withheld from publication to protect international relations.

Governments are charged equally for all courses, but some are paid for by a combination of those governments and UK funding.

Attachments:

1. 58613 - RMAS Training of Foreign Nationals Costs [58613 -PQ-DaveyMP-RMAS-Income-Totals.xlsx]

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Boats and Caravans: Coronavirus****Daniel Zeichner:**[\[57990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will undertake a new risk assessment for (a) boat owners and (b) caravan owners staying overnight in their caravans.

Nigel Huddleston:

Our ambition is to reopen holiday accommodation, including private boats, boat hire, and caravans, for overnight stays in step three of the government's recovery strategy. All decisions on reopening will be based on the latest scientific evidence and regularly reviewed public health assessments.

The government has engaged closely with the waterways sector and the holiday & home parks sector to prepare guidance that will allow the sector to reopen safely, as quickly as possible.

■ Broadband: Access**Rachael Maskell:**[\[52176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what additional access to digital connectivity will he provide to ensure that those from lower socio-economic communities have equal access to broadband.

Matt Warman:

The UK broadband market is very competitive with a variety of packages at different price points to meet the needs of different consumers. In addition, both BT and KCOM offer lower cost landline and broadband packages for those in receipt of qualifying state benefits.

The Government is also committed to improving broadband across the country to ensure that all communities have the access that they need, including those from lower socio-economic groups. We have introduced the broadband Universal Service Obligation, which gives everyone the right to request decent broadband providing at least 10 Mbps download speeds up to a Reasonable Cost Threshold of £3,400 per premise. In addition, we are committed to delivering even faster, nationwide gigabit capable broadband as soon as possible. We will be investing £5 billion to subsidise deployment to the least commercial 20% of premises in the country.

In recognition of the particular challenges that communities are facing at the current time as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak, the Government has also agreed a package of measures with the UK's fixed and mobile providers to support consumers, particularly the most vulnerable. As part of these commitments, providers have agreed to provide new and generous offers to their vulnerable customers, ranging from free mobile data boosts to free landline calls, and to lift all broadband data caps.

■ Coronavirus: Arts

Neil Coyle:

[\[56010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions his Department has had with cultural organisations on their potential role in supporting vulnerable adults (a) during and (b) after the covid-19 outbreak.

Caroline Dinenage:

This department continues to emphasise the important role arts and culture plays in health and wellbeing. I am keen that the sector reopens as soon as it is safe to do so, and this is in part to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to engage with and participate in cultural activities, which we know has significant health and wellbeing benefits.

My officials, together with DCMS arms length bodies, have spoken to over fifty organisations in the last two weeks to better understand what specific programmes they offer, and are looking to offer, with the aim of supporting social outcomes such as supporting vulnerable adults. For example, a number of library services across the country have been systematically ringing all their vulnerable users to ensure they are OK and to maintain some form of friendly human contact.

■ Culture: Coronavirus

Neil Coyle:

[\[56007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to prevent the permanent closure of long-standing cultural institutions which are financially affected by the covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

Caroline Dinenage:

We recognise that these are incredibly challenging times for cultural institutions and the Government will continue to support these organisations through the unprecedented financial measures we have announced. DCMS has worked closely with its arm's-length bodies to deliver tailored support packages at speed, including the £160m Emergency Funding Package announced by Arts Council England, made possible by Government funding.

Alongside this, DCMS continues to engage with the sector extensively in order to best understand the challenges faced. We are working closely with the Arts Council to consider the additional support that may be needed to support the long-term recovery of the sector.

■ Culture: Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

Neil Coyle:

[\[56008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of organisations in the cultural sector on eligibility for access to the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme.

Neil Coyle:[\[56009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many organisations in the cultural sector have used the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme.

Caroline Dinenage:

The government has announced unprecedented support for business, workers and the self-employed during this national emergency. We will continue to support the cultural sector through the financial measures announced, including loans tailored to the needs of businesses large and small.

Alongside this, DCMS continues to engage with the sector extensively in order to best understand the challenges faced, to hear how and where they are benefitting from support measures and to consider additional support that may be needed.

■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Carers

Sir Edward Davey:[\[57064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many staff in his Department had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Caroline Dinenage:

Each year DCMS participates in the Civil Service-wide People Survey, which includes the question “Do you look after or give help or support to any family members, friends, neighbours or others who have a long-term physical or mental illness or disability, or problems related to old age?”

The number of people responding positively to this question in each of the last 5 years is in the table below alongside the total respondents and the response rate.

The total respondents is the number of people in DCMS who completed the People Survey each year. The response rate is the total number of respondents in DCMS as a percentage of the DCMS workforce.

This information is not a workforce statistic, so only representative of those who completed the survey each year but is the best information available.

YEAR	POSITIVE RESPONSES	TOTAL RESPONDENTS	RESPONSE RATE
2015	80	509	96%
2016	84	652	98%
2017	109	788	98%
2018	Not available	1,037	91%
2019	170	1,161	97%

The number of positive responses in 2018 is not available as the granular data was not analysed by the Central Analysis Team who produced the information for the other years.

■ Electronic Publishing: VAT

Marion Fellows:

[\[54135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent representations she has made to HM Treasury on VAT on audiobooks; and if he will make a statement.

Caroline Dinéage:

The government recognises the value of publishing as one of the UK's most successful industries. In addition to £330Bn of guarantees announced by the Chancellor which have included grants, loans, and the Job Retention Scheme, zero rate of VAT on e-publications was brought forward from December. The extension of the zero rate of VAT has been introduced to provide consistency in approach between certain physical and digital publications. Audiobooks, however, are already taxed consistently at the standard rate in both physical and digital format. The government keeps all taxes under review, including VAT.

■ ICT: Equipment

Christian Wakeford:

[\[57416\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps the Government is taking with telecommunications companies to provide IT equipment for people who are isolated, with no access to a phone or computer.

Caroline Dinéage:

My Department has been promoting the DevicesDotNow campaign, which is working with community organisations to distribute devices to vulnerable adults and help them get online. As part of this, I have also written to a number of industry Chief Executives of organisations to ask them to donate devices and funding to the DevicesDotNow campaign. to help vulnerable and digitally excluded adults. The aim is to enable elderly and vulnerable people, particularly those who are shielding, to communicate with the outside world and get access to vital services.

As part of Government's response to Covid-19, we have already agreed a package of measures with the UK's major fixed and mobile providers to support and protect consumers with their connectivity needs. This package was agreed on 29 March 2020, with further companies signing up on 18 May. As part of the commitments, providers have agreed to provide new and generous offers to their vulnerable customers, ranging from free mobile data boosts to free landline calls.

■ Local Broadcasting: Radio

Chi Onwurah:

[58706]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the effect on (a) jobs in the creative industries and (b) representation of northern voices on radio in the North East of Bauer medias takeover of local radio stations.

Mr John Whittingdale:

Whilst no such assessment has been made, we note Bauer Media's existing presence in the North East, through its ownership of Metro Radio and TFM, which were acquired by Bauer in 2008.

The government places a very high value on local commercial radio stations retaining their local character, and Ofcom retains its regulatory powers to secure that these stations continue to provide an appropriate amount of locally made programmes and programmes including local material. Ofcom's localness guidelines can be found here: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/information-for-industry/radio-broadcasters/localness>.

■ National Lottery: Coronavirus

John Spellar:

[57085]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 lockdown on sales of National Lottery tickets.

Nigel Huddleston:

Camelot releases sales information under a timetable and format agreed with its regulator, the Gambling Commission. Data on sales is published on the Camelot website three months in arrears. This can be found at:

<http://www.camelotgroup.co.uk/about-us/reporting>

The March 2020 sales data was published alongside Camelot's 2019/20 year-end sales announcement on 2nd June, in which they announced record yearly sales for the National Lottery.

National Lottery ticket sales during March totalled £687.1 million. Sales were down £36.4 million versus the equivalent period last year. Retail sales in particular were impacted towards the end of March and into April as a result of the lockdown measures. However, after a sharp initial fall in sales in the early stages of the lockdown they are now recovering to close to normal levels.

■ Photography: Coronavirus

Matthew Pennycook:

[56089]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether photography studios must remain closed to members of the public during the current phase of the easing of the covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

Caroline Dineneage:

Shops in England selling non-essential goods will be able to reopen from Monday 15 June, thanks to continuing progress in meeting our 5 tests, and provided they follow the COVID-19 secure guidelines set out by the Government in May.

This includes High street retailers and department stores, book shops, electronics retailers, tailors, auction houses, photography studios, indoor markets, and shops selling clothes, shoes and toys.

It will be for individual shops, however, to decide when the time is right for them to reopen, as it is subject to them following the COVID-19 secure guidelines.

Radio**Paul Bristow:**[\[52567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure a sustainable future for radio.

Mr John Whittingdale:

While radio stations across the UK are reporting increasing numbers of listeners tuning in to their broadcasts, many of these stations are operating against the backdrop of a rapid fall in advertising and other revenues due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Commercial radio stations have been able to take advantage of some of the unprecedented support measures that have been introduced across the wider economy, such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme. However, we acknowledge that commercial radio also faces some sector-specific pressures.

We are pleased that an agreement has now been reached with Arqiva that will result in a significant reduction in annual transmission costs for local commercial stations that use Arqiva's services, and have worked with industry during this crisis to support efforts to reduce other costs. We note in particular the help secured by Radiocentre in the form of reduced music licensing payments to reflect the fall in stations' revenues, and Ofcom's announcement relaxing its enforcement of licensees' programming and production requirements, which has been extended to December.

We have also worked with Ofcom to release emergency funding, through the Community Radio Fund, to help community radio stations continue to provide programming and outreach projects for the communities they serve. Ofcom announced details of 81 awards on 4 June.

We note that Ofcom plan to begin advertising small-scale multiplex licences later this year, which will provide a lower-cost digital transmission option for smaller stations, and we will shortly be publishing our response to our consultation on analogue commercial radio licences.

We will continue to liaise with stakeholders across the industry regarding ways in which the Government can reduce regulatory burdens further to support radio through Covid-19 and beyond.

■ Television: Hearing Impairment

Zarah Sultana:

[59259]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he plans to take steps with representatives from the BBC to improve subtitles across all BBC channels and services.

Mr John Whittingdale:

As the independent broadcast regulator, Ofcom is responsible for holding broadcasters to account for their delivery of television access services (subtitles, audio description and signing), not the government.

Ofcom's Code on Television Access Services sets out 10-year targets in relation to subtitling, which for BBC channels (excluding BBC Parliament and BBC Scotland) is 100% of all programming. Ofcom has found that the BBC has consistently met this target.

Ofcom's Code provides further guidance that broadcasters should regularly monitor the quality of their access services, and ensure that scheduled access services are being provided correctly. In line with the BBC's 2016 Royal Charter and Agreement, Ofcom is also currently reviewing how the BBC should make its UK Public Services accessible. Ofcom's public consultation on BBC Accessibility concluded on 31 January 2020.

■ Television: Licensing

Zarah Sultana:

[59258]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, for what reasons a television licence discount is not available for people with hearing impairments.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The government is committed to building a digitally inclusive society, and believes that television should be accessible for all UK audiences. The BBC provides subtitling on 100% of all of its programming (excluding BBC Parliament and BBC Scotland), as well as signing 5% of its content.

Currently, under the Communications (Television Licensing) Regulations 2004, TV Licence concessions are available to people who are registered blind or severely sight impaired, and people who live in qualifying residential care and are disabled or over 60 years old. We are not considering making changes to the current concessions regime at this time. The government has committed to review the TV Licence model ahead of the next Charter Review, which is set to be completed by 2027.

■ Theatre Royal Newcastle upon Tyne: Coronavirus

Chi Onwurah:

[\[58705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what additional financial support he plans to allocate to Newcastle's Theatre Royal in the event that the theatre is not able to hold public events for the remainder of 2020.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government recognises that this is an incredibly challenging time for those in the cultural sector and that there are many organisations who are currently facing challenging and uncertain circumstances. We are very alert to this issue, and are working to find solutions that support this vital sector.

The Government has provided the cultural sector with an unprecedented financial support package, in particular through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Self-Employment Income Support Scheme. In addition, Arts Council England has put together a £160 million emergency response package for the cultural sector which is available to publicly-funded organisations as well as those not usually in receipt of public funding .

The Secretary of State, Ministers and officials continue to consult the cultural sector extensively to ensure they fully understand the potential impacts of the Covid-19 outbreak on the sector. DCMS is regularly engaging with HMT to feed in their assessment of the potential impacts and to ensure the needs of the cultural sector are factored into the developing economic response, and that DCMS sectors are supported throughout this time.

EDUCATION

■ Children: Day Care

Alec Shelbrooke:

[\[57179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether parents unable to utilise their 30 hours free childcare entitlement during the covid-19 lockdown will be able to carry those unused hours over for use during the summer holidays 2020.

Vicky Ford:

We want parents to have access to a range of affordable childcare, giving them increased flexibility in their working hours and helping children thrive in the crucial early years. The government-funded early years entitlements deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare for eligible two, three and four-year-olds for 38 weeks a year.

The government wants to support nurseries, pre-schools and childminders during what must be a worrying and uncertain time. On 17 March, my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, confirmed the government would continue to pay funding to local authorities for the free entitlements for two, three and four-year-olds during the period of closures, providing reassurance for early years settings in light of

the COVID-19 outbreak. This entitlement funding has continued to be paid to providers to try and ensure that once the lockdown measures are eased and people return to work, there remains sufficient childcare for all those who need it.

These entitlements, therefore, cannot be accrued for time not spent in the setting and so parents will not be able to carry over unused hours for use in the summer holidays.

From 1 June, childcare settings have been able to reopen for children of all ages.

■ Children: Social Services

Alexander Stafford:

[57408]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the findings of the report published by Barnardo's, the Children's Society, Action for Children, the NSPCC and the National Children's Bureau entitled Children and young people's services: Funding and spending 2010-11 to 2017-18, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of funding for children's services.

Vicky Ford:

The government announced at the Local Government Finance Settlement that English councils' core spending power is rising by over £2.9 billion this financial year. This includes £1 billion of new grant funding that can be used flexibly by local authorities to deliver adult and children's social care services.

Further to this, the government has provided over £3.2 billion of additional funding to support local authorities in meeting COVID-19 related pressures, including within children's services. We will keep this under review over the coming weeks and months.

Longer term funding considerations are a matter for the next Spending Review.

■ Department for Education: Carers

Sir Edward Davey:

[57065]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many staff in his Department had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Nick Gibb:

The information requested is not held centrally. The Department does not collect information about how many of its staff have caring responsibilities. The Department for Education is committed to supporting its employees with caring responsibilities. It has an active carers network which has recently achieved 'Carer Confident' accreditation, one of 10 Civil Service organisations to have done so.

■ Nurseries: Coronavirus

Mary Kelly Foy:

[58791]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the need for nurseries to hire extra staff to comply with Government guidance on social distancing in order to reopen during the covid-19 outbreak.

Vicky Ford:

On 24 May, we published a planning guide to provide information and support for all early years providers in England as they prepared to open for all children. This planning guide was co-produced with experienced senior leaders and sector representatives and is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-early-years-and-childcare-settings-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-early-years-and-childcare-settings>.

Unlike older children and adults, children in early years cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years, we have taken this into account. Settings should keep children in consistent small groups and work through the hierarchy of controls set out in our guidance, which include minimising contact and mixing.

If demand for places is higher than the setting's capacity when measures to allow physical distancing between groups are in place, it may be necessary to have a temporary cap on numbers of children attending the setting. Solutions might involve working with the local authority to support children attending a nearby setting on a consistent basis.

■ Private Education: Coronavirus

Sir Mike Penning:

[57102]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 4 June 2020 to Question 51707 on Private Education: Coronavirus, whether independent schools are permitted to reopen for year 8 pupils when that is their final year before moving on to secondary education.

Nick Gibb:

The Department has asked primary schools to welcome back children in nursery, Reception, year 1 and year 6, alongside priority groups. Where primary and middle schools have already made provision for these children and where they have capacity, they may choose to welcome back additional pupils, in line with wider protective measures. It is up to schools to decide which pupils to prioritise, based on their knowledge of their children and communities.

Where middle schools choose to invite year 8 pupils back, they should be confident they can manage this within the strict measures the Department has asked primary schools to adopt. This includes having no more than 15 pupils in a class, and

maintaining consistency of these groups. This guidance covers independent schools where year 8 pupils are in their final year before moving on to another school.

■ Schools: Closures

Daniel Kawczynski:

[57140]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect of the devolved response on school closures on the effectiveness of communications issued to the public.

Nick Gibb:

The Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy makes clear that part of that UK wide approach will be acknowledging that the virus may be spreading at different speeds in different parts of the UK. Measures may need to change in different ways and at different times.

Education is a devolved matter and it is right that individual jurisdictions take decisions in line with their local circumstances.

There are various factors including different school term dates and concerns about rates of infection that mean governments in the devolved administrations need to take the decisions that are right for them.

The Department engages regularly and positively with our counterparts in the devolved administrations to collaborate on our shared education challenges, including on the wider opening of schools.

■ Schools: Coronavirus

Dr Lisa Cameron:

[52090]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will launch a national communications campaign to reassure children and parents about returning to school as the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

Nick Gibb:

The Department is communicating with parents, carers and children to reassure them about the measures that are in place to reduce the risk to children, staff and their families and inform them about the benefits of eligible children being in school. In addition to direct communications with parents, the Department has been working closely with schools, local authorities and education leaders to ensure our guidance on the phased wider opening of schools in England is clear and to encourage them to support parents and children returning to school.

The Department has produced a range of communications content to help inform parents about the carefully managed plan to widen the opening of schools as well as the social, wellbeing and educational benefits to children. We are working with key partners and other Government Departments to reach a wide audience and coordinate with other communications activity such as the Department for Transport's safer transport campaign. We are working closely with the Cabinet Office who

coordinate the national COVID-19 public information campaign to ensure key messages on education are communicated through the Stay Alert campaign. Additionally, we are working with the Cabinet Office on sharing our messaging to reassure parents and children through a media partnership with around 600 national, regional and community media titles.

It should be noted that that education is a devolved matter and it is right that individual jurisdictions take decisions in line with their circumstances. It is for the Scottish Government to take the decisions that are right for them to address concerns and reassure parents and children who are learning in the Scottish education system, be this through a national communications campaign or other means.

Mary Kelly Foy:

[58076]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of social distancing measures in schools on levels of mental well-being among children.

Vicky Ford:

The department is working closely with educational institutions, sector organisations, the Department for Health and Social Care, NHS England and Public Health England to understand the effects of the measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus on the mental health and wellbeing and identify the children and young people that need help and will continue to do so as more pupils return to school.

The return to school will, in itself, be part of supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, as attendance enables social interaction with peers, carers and teachers. Pupil wellbeing is an important consideration within our guidance on actions for educational and childcare settings as they begin to open in June 2020, which is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>.

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

We are working with the Department of Health and Social Care to put in place further specific support for school staff to understand the issues that pupils will face with their mental wellbeing. This includes training for teachers, such as a new module developed with clinical experts on how to teach about mental health in health education, and more information is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-mental-wellbeing>.

The government remains committed to promoting and supporting the mental health of children and young people. Access to mental health support is more important than ever during the COVID-19 outbreak. NHS services remain open, and leading mental

health charities are being supported to deliver additional services through the £5 million Coronavirus Mental Health Response Fund.

All NHS mental health trusts have been asked to ensure that there are 24/7 open access telephone lines to support people of all ages. Public Health England and Health Education England have also developed advice and guidance for parents and professionals on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, which is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>.

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

■ Schools: Staff

Tim Farron: [59200]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to allocate additional funding to schools for the employment of additional staff to support smaller class sizes from September 2020.

Tim Farron: [59201]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding he plans to allocate to schools to facilitate additional staff from September 2020; and what the timeframe is for the announcement of that funding.

Nick Gibb:

Schools will continue to receive their budgets for the coming year, as usual, regardless of any periods of partial or complete closure. That will ensure that they are able to continue to pay their staff and meet their other regular financial commitments.

We are also providing additional funding to schools, on top of existing budgets, to cover unavoidable costs incurred due to the COVID-19 outbreak that cannot be met from their existing resources. Our latest guidance on this is set out below:

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

We want to see all children and young people back in school as soon as the scientific advice indicates they can because that is where they learn best. We are working towards bringing all children and young people back to school in September. We will provide further information and guidance with as much notice as possible.

■ Students: Coronavirus

Stuart Anderson:

[57372]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has plans to reimburse students that have paid deposits on (a) private and (b) university housing for the 2020-21 academic year and whose education may be disrupted as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Michelle Donelan:

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

The government encourages universities and private hall providers to be fair in their decisions about accommodation charges for this period.

Information published by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) gives guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cma-to-investigate-concerns-about-cancellation-policies-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic/the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-consumer-contracts-cancellation-and-refunds>) on the COVID-19 outbreak's effects on consumer contracts and may be helpful to students, including those who have already paid deposits for accommodation.

The guidance sets out the CMA's view on how the law operates to help consumers understand their rights and to help businesses treat their customers fairly. Students may be entitled to refunds from certain accommodation providers depending on the terms of their contract and their particular circumstances. If students need help, organisations such as Citizens Advice offer a free service, providing information and support.

Students who have already signed an accommodation contract for next year and, because of COVID-19, think it may no longer fit their requirements, should talk directly to their housing provider.

If a student thinks that their accommodation provider is treating them unfairly, they can raise a complaint under the accommodation codes of practice as long as their provider is a code member. The codes can be found at: <https://www.thesac.org.uk/> ; <https://www.unipol.org.uk/the-code/how-to-complain> and: <https://www.rla.org.uk/about/nrla-code-of-practice.shtml>.

We have worked closely with the Office for Students to enable higher education (HE) providers to draw on existing funding to increase hardship funds and support disadvantaged students impacted by COVID-19. As a result, providers will be able to use the funding worth around £23 million per month for June and July, towards student hardship funds.

We have also asked that HE providers pay particular attention to the additional financial hardships that are being faced by student staff who have been reliant on income from campus-based jobs at this time.

■ Students: Finance**Hilary Benn:****[57094]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to make an assessment of the effect on BAME communities of the requirement that non-EU nationals must in general have indefinite leave to remain in order to apply for student finance.

Michelle Donelan:

Student finance is generally available to those who have no restrictions on their ability to live and work in the United Kingdom, so that they are likely to be able stay in the UK to complete their education and contribute to the UK economy afterwards.

In 2016, the regulations governing student support were amended to introduce a new eligibility category for those who do not have settled status but who have resided in the UK for an extended period. The amendment extended access to support to students who have spent half their life or at least 20 years in the UK preceding the first day of the first academic year of their course, or 7 years for those under 18 years old. Like most other students, they must be ordinarily resident in England and have been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands (Channel Islands and Isle of Man) for the 3 years preceding the first day of the first academic year of their course to qualify for support.

An equality impact assessment was carried out on this change before it was introduced. This can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/517514/bis-16-200-new-eligibility-category-for-higher-education-student-support-equality-impact-analysis.pdf. This assessment concluded that the policy could particularly benefit people from the Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia Central, Europe Other or Middle East regions.

Attachments:

1. 57094_PDF [57094-new-eligibility-category-for-higher-education-student-support-equality-impact-analysis.pdf]

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Agriculture: Subsidies****Deidre Brock:****[57241]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of pillar 2 payments he plans to have made by the end of June 2020.

Victoria Prentis:

This is a devolved matter and the information provided therefore relates to England only.

The Rural Payments Agency has continued to improve its payment performance and as of the 8 June 2020 has issued around £233 million 2019 Countryside Stewardship, Environmental Stewardship and legacy Woodland Grant payments to eligible

farmers, land managers, foresters and rural businesses in England. We expect to issue a further £19 million by the end of June 2020.

■ **Agriculture: Wales**

Daniel Kawczynski:

[\[57135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of further cooperation between Wales and border communities on farming and agriculture.

Victoria Prentis:

Agriculture is a devolved matter and now we have left the EU each UK administration has the flexibility to develop agricultural policy suited to their own unique circumstances. There is much merit in working cooperatively with the Welsh Government and we are working closely with all the devolved administrations on an administrative agricultural support framework. The framework will cover cross border issues. There are many farms along the border between England and Wales, so there is value in working cooperatively with the Welsh Government and learning from one another.

■ **Clothing and Textiles: Sustainable Development**

Anthony Mangnall:

[\[58081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support environmental sustainability in the fashion and textile industries.

Rebecca Pow:

In the landmark Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2018), the Government committed to develop policy measures to promote sustainable practices in the clothing and textiles industries. We are continuing to work with industry through WRAP on the Sustainable Clothing Action Plan (SCAP), and are currently engaged in developing an ambitious new phase of the voluntary agreement for 2021-2030. The most recent figures show that between 2012 and 2018 signatories to the SCAP reduced their water and carbon footprints by 18.1% and 13.4% respectively.

We are seeking enabling powers in the Environment Bill to introduce ecodesign and product information requirements, subject to consultation. Through secondary legislation these requirements could be applied to support durable, repairable, and recyclable textiles. We also identified textiles in the Resources and Waste Strategy as a priority area on which to consult for an Extended Producer Responsibility scheme.

We are supporting the textiles reuse and recycling sector, which has experienced particular challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic, through the WRAP-administered Resource Action Fund. The textiles fund makes a total of £1.5 million available, for small grants of £20 000 to £170 000. Our plans to promote sustainable practices in

the textiles sector will be built on and enhanced in a new Waste Prevention Programme, which is currently in development.

■ **Coastal Areas: Coronavirus**

Ruth Jones: [\[57371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to support coastal communities affected by coastal erosion during the covid-19 lockdown.

Rebecca Pow:

Local Authorities are best placed to manage their coastline and develop appropriate approaches to manage risks from coastal change.

Local Resilience Forums identify risks in their areas and develop plans with partners, including local authorities, to manage these risks. This forward planning will ensure appropriate and timely responses to an emergency event.

We also expect Local Authorities to have well established contingency arrangements to respond and support their local communities.

■ **Countryside Stewardship Scheme and Environmental Stewardship Scheme: Coronavirus**

Deidre Brock: [\[57240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, for what reasons it was necessary to offer Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship claimants bridging loans for the 2019 claim year.

Victoria Prentis:

On 28 April the Government announced that, in England, in recognition of the disruption to cash flow for rural businesses caused by coronavirus, eligible farmers and land managers would be offered bridging payments (interest-free loans) for 75% of the current estimated value for unpaid 2019 revenue claims on their stewardship agreements.

More than 3,800 bridging payments, worth around £43 million, were made to farmers and land managers by the end of May.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Carers**

Sir Edward Davey: [\[57066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many staff in his Department had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Victoria Prentis:

The information requested is not held centrally and to obtain it would incur disproportionate costs

In Defra we follow the Civil Service Carers Charter, which details the support available for employees who have caring responsibilities and helps managers

understand how they can support carers in the workplace. This includes support such as flexible working, job sharing, special leave (paid and unpaid), career breaks and parental leave.

We have a carer's passport which is used to help employees discuss caring responsibilities, at present or in the future, with their line manager.

Other support for employees who are carers is available from our Employee Assistance Programme offering independent advice, information and counselling from trained practitioners, and our membership of Employers for Carers, the Employers Membership forum which is part of Carers UK.

Defra has an active employee-led Carers Network providing information, advice and support to all employees.

■ Droughts

John Spellar:

[57081]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of level of risk of a hose-pipe ban in summer 2020; and what his policy is on new reservoir provision.

Rebecca Pow:

This is a devolved matter and the information provided therefore relates to England only.

The Government has a range of policies in place to mitigate the impacts of drought:

- The Environment Agency, which has responsibility for managing water resources and protecting the environment, chairs the National Drought Group (NDG). The NDG consists of representatives from regulators such as Public Health England (PHE), the agricultural sector and water companies. This group ensures that all sectors work together and take action to manage any impacts of dry weather and drought.
- Water companies have the legal duty to supply adequate quantities of wholesome water. To fulfil their duties, water companies maintain statutory drought plans, which set out the short-term actions they will take should a drought develop. Water companies' drought plans are published on their websites.

The Government is committed to a 'twin track approach' of managing water demand, including leakage reduction, and increasing supply, including the development of reservoirs.

Water companies have the statutory duty to develop and maintain efficient and economical systems of water service provision which will provide security of supply for customers. Statutory water resources management plans show how companies will meet this duty and manage water supply and demand for at least the next 25 years.

The National Framework for water resources brings together industry, regulators and Government to improve water company planning of water supplies. This includes investigating and developing new supplies such as reservoirs, supported by a £469 million fund for the development of strategic supplies.

■ Environment Protection: Reviews

Caroline Lucas:

[\[57163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has in place for the establishment of the new legal enforcement process of environmental review as proposed in the Environment Bill; and whether that process will be ready to receive cases by 1 January 2021.

Rebecca Pow:

Defra is working with colleagues across Government and the judiciary to ensure that the new legal mechanism of environmental review is established and able to receive cases from the point at which the relevant clauses of the Environment Bill are commenced, and the Office for Environmental Protection is operationally able to make applications for such a review.

■ Environment Protection: Standards

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[57963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to Clause 1 of the Environment Bill, what steps his Department is taking to develop (a) long term resource efficiency and (b) waste reduction targets.

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[57964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to Clause 1 of the Environment Bill, what plans he has to involve stakeholders in the development of (a) resource efficiency and (b) waste reduction targets.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government plans to bring forward at least one target in the area of resource efficiency and waste reduction by the Environment Bill's 31 October 2022 deadline.

We want a robust, evidence-led process for setting targets which includes seeking independent expert advice, a role for stakeholders and the public, as well as scrutiny from Parliament. The process for setting targets will broadly include: setting the scope of the targets; developing fully evidenced targets; public consultation on target proposals and drafting target legislation. We will be engaging stakeholders, including on resource efficiency and waste, during our stepped approach to target setting.

The target setting steps will broadly include: setting the scope of the targets; developing fully-evidenced targets; public consultation on target proposals and finally drafting target legislation. We expect to publish a Target Policy Paper over the coming months which will include further details and timing about these steps.

■ Floods: Coronavirus

Ruth Jones:

[57368]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the effect of the Covid-19 outbreak on communities recovering from the 2019 winter floods.

Rebecca Pow:

The Secretary of State recognises the impact of COVID-19 on flood-affected householders and businesses and sympathises with those affected.

Flood recovery is a devolved matter and in England the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is the lead Government department for recovery.

In response to the flood events of 2019 and 2020, the Government activated the Flood Recovery Framework in England. This framework aims to help people get back on their feet as quickly as possible. Defra leads on two recovery schemes: the Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Scheme and the Farming Recovery Fund (FRF). The PFR fund enables eligible flood-affected properties to receive up to £5,000 to improve their resilience to future flooding. Both the November 2019 and February 2020 schemes remain open despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Defra officials are working closely with local authorities to monitor the situation and provide support if necessary.

Officials are also in close contact with the Association of British Insurers (ABI) to understand the progress insurers are making within the recovery process in light of COVID-19. In general, insurers are stepping up their use of technology to work around the need to be in properties in person. They have access to the required protective equipment where needed, and suitable accommodation is being found where required. The ABI has been active in providing customers with regular updates and keeping officials informed of the progress on the ground.

The FRF was opened to support the recovery from the June and July 2019 floods in North Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. This was extended to cover the further flooding in parts of South Yorkshire, Gloucestershire and the Midlands in November 2019. Delivery is unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

■ Food: Coronavirus

Andrew Gwynne:

[59195]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of (a) the variety of food provided in food parcels to shielding individuals and (b) whether that variety can provide a well-balanced and nutritional diet.

Victoria Prentis:

The emergency food parcels are a standardised package designed to be suitable for the majority of people. They contain a basic selection of food and other essential items. The contents of the food parcels have been reviewed by nutritionists and are

based on, and broadly in line with, the national food model, the Eatwell Guide. We are currently working with nutritionists to make recommendations as to how to improve the nutritional content of these, and increase variety in any future food parcels.

■ **Food: Origin Marking**

Mr Richard Holden: [\[57403\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 2 June 2020 to Question 49873 on food labelling, how many times food labelling has been found to have breached the updated rules that state the country of origin or place of provenance of a primary ingredient, which is not the same as that given or indicated on a food as a whole, must also be included on the label.

Victoria Prentis:

The new labelling of the country of origin of primary ingredients rules apply across the EU and the UK. However, legislation enabling the rules to be enforced must be made through domestic regulations and, as food labelling is a devolved matter, will be introduced by separate statutory instruments in England and the devolved administrations.

The rules came into force less than 3 months ago (on 1 April). The enforcement legislation for England, following a statutory obligation to consult on food matters like these, was laid in Parliament in May and will come into force on 18 June.

We do not yet have any data on compliance with these new rules.

■ **Highly Protected Marine Areas**

Luke Pollard: [\[57357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department plans to enact the recommendations of the Benyon Report on Highly Protected Marine Areas.

Luke Pollard: [\[57358\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when his Department plans to undertake a public consultation on (a) the process to create Highly Protected Marine Areas and (b) determine the shortlist of new Highly Protected Marine Areas.

Luke Pollard: [\[57359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make it his policy to commission a part 2 of the Benyon Report into Highly Protected Marine Areas to consider a shortlist for those areas.

Luke Pollard: [\[57360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of extending the deadline for the publication

of the Benyon Report into Highly Protected Marine Areas as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Rebecca Pow:

We welcome the publication of the review into Highly Protected Marine Areas (HMPAs), which was published on 8 June 2020 and is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highly-protected-marine-areas-hpmas-review-2019>. I am grateful to Richard Benyon and the advisory panel for their work. In the coming weeks, we will consider Richard Benyon's report and issue a formal response to him, recognising our continued priority to support the cross-Government response to Covid-19. From there on, we have an opportunity to develop a programme of work to bring forward highly protected areas for the first time in English waters. The Review's publication marks an exciting moment for ocean conservation in English waters and complements our leadership at the global level. We would of course consult widely with the public and stakeholders before any decision to designate an HPMA.

■ **Ivory Act 2018**

Anthony Mangnall:

[\[58082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what his Department's timetable is for the implementation of the provisions of the Ivory Act 2018.

Rebecca Pow:

We welcome the Court of Appeal's ruling last month upholding the world-leading Ivory Act against a claim brought by a part of the antiques industry. The Government is committed to bringing the ivory ban into force as soon as practicable.

■ **Ivory: Public Consultation**

Anthony Mangnall:

[\[58083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to his Department's consultation entitled Non-elephant ivory trade: call for evidence which closed on 22 August 2019, what progress his Department has made on responding to that consultation.

Rebecca Pow:

We received 35 responses to the call for evidence on the non-elephant ivory trade. We are currently considering the evidence on the non-elephant ivory trade. A summary of the responses will be published in due course.

■ **Public Houses: Coronavirus**

Daisy Cooper:

[\[57381\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of implementing a national strategy for the disposal of spoiled beer being stored in pubs.

Rebecca Pow:

Defra and the Environment Agency are working with Water UK, the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA), BEIS, and HMRC to facilitate the safe and efficient management of spoiled beer from pub cellars in England (as water policy is a devolved matter). Beer is a polluting substance to the water environment, so a coordinated approach to the disposal of spoiled beer is important in ensuring there is no environmental damage and that sewerage infrastructure is not overloaded, while also supporting publicans in their preparations to reopen.

This coordinated approach must acknowledge that the capacity of individual wastewater treatment works to process spoiled beer varies across the sewer network. It is because of this variation in capacity that a common national strategy for beer disposal is not appropriate. The water industry has asked publicans to inform them of where, and how much, beer needs to be disposed of so that they can issue disposal guidance to reflect local circumstances. Water companies are working to streamline the application process and minimise response times so that requests from publicans are dealt with efficiently. Defra have confirmed with Water UK that water companies will be waiving the usual charge to publicans for disposing of spoilt beer to public sewers.

Wildlife Parks and Zoos: Coronavirus**Andrew Percy:**[\[57173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to facilitate the re-opening of zoos and wildlife parks.

Victoria Prentis:

As announced by the Prime Minister on 10 June, outdoor areas of zoos and safari parks will be allowed to reopen from 15 June, subject to appropriate social distancing measures being in place.

This includes keeping indoor exhibitions, such as reptile houses and those in aquariums, closed, and ensuring other amenities like cafes offer take-away services only.

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

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

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

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ Gaza: Demonstrations****Alex Cunningham:**[\[57198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of progress made by Israel in (a) investigating, and (b) holding those liable accountable for potentially unlawful killings by its forces in the context of the 2018-2019 Gaza protests.

James Cleverly:

The UK has repeatedly made clear to Israel our longstanding concerns about the manner in which the Israel Defense Forces police non-violent protests and the border areas, including use of live ammunition. We will continue to do so. We fully support an independent and transparent investigation into the deadly events in Gaza. We welcome that the Israeli Military Advocate General has ordered five criminal investigations which relate to eleven separate instances of Palestinian fatalities during the Gaza border protests. These investigations are ongoing. Given the importance of accountability, it is vital these investigations are independent and transparent; that their findings are made public; and, if wrongdoing is found, that those responsible be held to account.

■ Hong Kong: Human Rights**Anthony Mangnall:**[\[58079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing sanctions against those committing human rights abuses in Hong Kong through the Government's proposed global human rights sanctions regime.

Nigel Adams:

We have announced our intention to establish a UK autonomous Global Human Rights ('Magnitsky-style') sanctions regime. The regulations will come into force once secondary legislation is laid in Parliament in the coming months.

The purpose of a global human rights sanctions regime will be to promote compliance with international human rights law and respect for human rights and in particular, to provide accountability for and deter serious violations or abuses of human rights. It would not be appropriate to speculate on who may be designated under the sanctions regime; to do so could reduce the impact of designations under the regime.

■ Iran: Arms Trade**Andrew Bowie:**[\[57310\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what mechanisms are in place to prevent the UN conventional arms embargo on Iran from expiring 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. We are consulting partners on the implications of the expiry of the UN arms embargo for Iran and wider regional security. We note that other sanctions regimes will remain in force, such as UNSCRs 1540, 1701, and 2216 which prohibit the proliferation of weapons to Lebanese Hizballah and the Houthis. The UK encourages all states to implement national export control best practice in support of these regimes. The EU arms embargo and UN ballistic missile restrictions on Iran will also remain in place until 2023.

Israel: Palestinians**Alex Cunningham:**[\[57197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of changes in the level of (a) attacks by settlers and (b) demolitions of Palestinian structures in the occupied Palestinian territory since the beginning of the covid-19 pandemic.

James Cleverly:

As we made clear at the UN Security Council remote meeting on the Middle East Peace Process on 20 May, the UK is concerned by the continued demolition of Palestinian property by Israeli authorities, and repeated incidents of settler violence at this time. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. The practice causes unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians and weakens the capacity of Palestinians to withstand the impact of COVID-19. We condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. We welcome the efforts of Israeli authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance to bring those responsible to justice and end the culture of impunity. During this fragile period, we call on both parties to avoid any provocative action which might undermine the cooperation that is so critical. We have also stressed the importance of the Israel security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

Israeli Settlements**Layla Moran:**[\[57342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment her Department has made of the potential effect of Israel's intended annexation of parts of the West Bank on Palestinian (a) livelihoods, (b) housing, and (c) freedom of movement.

James Cleverly:

As we made clear at the UN Security Council remote meeting on the Middle East Peace Process on 20 May, we are deeply concerned by reports that the new Israeli Government coalition has reached an agreement which may pave the way for annexation of parts of the West Bank. The UK position is clear: any unilateral moves toward annexation of parts of the West Bank by Israel would be damaging to renewed efforts to restart peace negotiations, and contrary to international law.

Libya: Armed Conflict**Alicia Kearns:**[\[57402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government has taken to (a) monitor and (b) sanction (i) the Russian Wagner Group and (ii) other groups active in Libya in violation of international law.

James Cleverly:

The UK is concerned about reports of Russian Wagner Group personnel and other external actors operating in Libya. We take seriously violations of International Humanitarian Law and breaches of sanctions, including the UN arms embargo. We continue to stress to all states the necessity of complying with and enforcing international law. The UK carefully considers all reports of sanctions breaches, including the reports of the UN Panel of Experts, and regularly reviews sanctions measures.

Myanmar: Arms Trade**Stephen Kinnock:**[\[59229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has plans to adopt the EU arms embargo on Myanmar after the transition period.

Stephen Kinnock:[\[59230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he plans to ensure that the EU sanctions against 14 members of Myanmar's military which apply in the UK throughout the transition period will be replicated by the UK after the transition period ends.

Nigel Adams:

Independent sources, including the UN Fact Finding Mission, have been clear that the Myanmar military is responsible for human rights violations across the country.

The UK is a longstanding supporter of an arms embargo on Myanmar as well as targeted individual sanctions on those responsible for atrocities.

The EU Arms Embargo and 14 individual designations continue to apply in the UK for the duration of the transition period. We are looking to transfer existing EU Myanmar sanctions into UK law through the Sanctions Act in preparation for exiting the EU.

■ Nigeria: Armed Conflict**Dr Lisa Cameron:****[57236]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the report published by Amnesty International entitled *We dried our tears: addressing the toll on children of Northeast Nigeria's conflict*, what steps he is taking to ensure that Government support does not contribute to abuses taking place in that region as a result of conflict.

James Duddridge:

We are concerned by the reports of abuse and of children being held in military detention facilities, detailed within Amnesty International's Report, 'We Dried Our Tears'. The UK position is clear: children are victims of the conflict in North East Nigeria, not perpetrators and must not be treated as perpetrators.

The British High Commissioner has raised the report's findings with the Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs and has called for a full investigation into the allegations and prosecution of any individuals found to have committed abuses. The UK will continue to call on the Nigerian security forces to respect human rights, including the rights of children and abide by international humanitarian and human rights law. It is essential that victims can have trust in, and are protected by, their security forces.

All UK Government programme spend in difficult, conflict environments is subject to regular monitoring and review. The UK Government does not provide any support to the military detention facilities mentioned in Amnesty's report.

We are concerned by the criticism of the demobilisation, de-radicalisation and reintegration programme 'Operation Safe Corridor' in Amnesty's report, and are urgently following up with the implementer, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). They have assured us that no children are currently enrolled in the Operation Safe Corridor programme. Operation Safe Corridor is funded by international donors including the UK, US and EU.

Through our humanitarian and development assistance in Nigeria, we are supporting children affected by the conflict in the North East, including those previously detained by the Nigerian authorities. This includes support to programmes which ensure children's essential material needs are met. We will continue to urge all parties to prioritise mitigating the effect of conflict on civilians, particularly the most vulnerable including children.

■ Turkey: EDO MBM Technology**Kate Osamor:****[57303]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make assessment of whether equipment supplied by EDO MBM Technology Ltd to Turkey has been incorporated into drones sent by Turkey to Libya in violation of the UN arms embargo on that country.

James Cleverly:

HMG takes its arms export responsibilities seriously and operates one of the most robust arms export control regimes in the world. All licence applications are assessed against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, which include Criterion One, upholding the United Kingdom's international obligations to enforce arms embargoes; and Criterion Seven concerning the risk of equipment's diversion to an undesirable end-user or end-use. We are aware of reports of Turkish military involvement in Libya. Licences have been granted to EDO MBM Technology Ltd for military items for use by the Turkish armed forces. We are monitoring the situation in Libya and if extant licences are found to be no longer consistent with the Criteria, those licences will be revoked.

The UK publishes quarterly and annual statistics on all our export licensing decisions, including details of export licences granted, refused and revoked. These can be accessed here <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/strategic-export-controls-licensing-data>

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Asthma: Steroid Drugs****Liz Twist:****[57318]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he has taken to monitor oral corticosteroid use by asthma patients who have not been able to access specialist respiratory services during the covid-19 outbreak.

Helen Whately:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence COVID-19 rapid guideline on severe asthma provides guidance on the use of oral corticosteroids and starting or continuing on biological treatments, which aim to minimise oral corticosteroid exposure, for people with severe asthma during the COVID-19 outbreak. The guideline is available at the following link:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng166>

Liz Twist:**[57319]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to (a) monitor and (b) tackle over-reliance by asthma patients on reliever inhalers during the covid-19 outbreak.

Helen Whately:

The monitoring and prescribing of asthma medication are performed in accordance with guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to manage the condition. The guidance is available at the following link:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng80/chapter/Recommendations#self-management>

The NHS England and NHS Improvement clinical guide for the management of respiratory patients during the COVID-19 pandemic states that the majority of community respiratory services should be switched to telephone or virtual consultation. Routine annual reviews should continue virtually to reassure patients and ensure they are happy with their management plans to avoid hospital attendance. The clinical guide is available at the following link:

https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/C0063-Specialty-guide-Respiratory-and-Coronavirus-v1_26-March.pdf

■ Health Services: Remote Working

Rosie Cooper:

[57128]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will ensure that remote (a) consultations and (b) working in certain clinical practice scenarios continues after the covid-19 lockdown.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

There has been an impressive response to the pandemic by the National Health Service, with staff and organisations rapidly adapting to changing circumstances and implementing new ways of working; including the greater use of digital tools and the growth in the availability and use of remote consultations. This is helping to minimise the spread of COVID-19 by supporting patients to stay at home, while still enabling them to receive the care they need, and to allow general practitioners and clinicians to work remotely. The NHS has already made a commitment in the NHS Long Term Plan that every patient will have the right to be offered digital-first primary care by 2023-24. We will learn from these new ways of accessing services so that subject to patient and clinician preference, and clinical safety, they are part of delivery going forward.

■ Maternity Services: Coronavirus

Olivia Blake:

[59268]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what post-natal care procedures he has put in place for people who gave birth during the covid-19 lockdown; and what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the provision of post-natal care.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, maternity services have been facing significant staff shortages with many staff either ill, shielded or self-isolating.

The National Health Service is making arrangements to ensure that women are supported and cared for safely through pregnancy, birth and the period afterwards during this pandemic when there will be extra pressures on healthcare services.

Community health services should continue to provide support during the current pandemic, supported by greater use of digital and remote technologies, and priority

given to families in greatest need or who are vulnerable. Antenatal contact and new baby visits should continue.

NHS mental health services have remained open for business throughout this time, including delivering support digitally and over the phone where possible.

■ **Mental Health Services: Coronavirus**

Munira Wilson:

[55125]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether plans to implement the NHS Long Term Plan in respect of mental health will be affected by the covid-19 outbreak.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 10 June 2020]: There is broad consensus that there will be an increase in demand for mental health services as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Modelling is underway to understand the implications of this in more detail, involving the Department, NHS England and NHS Improvement, Public Health England and sector experts. This will inform our approach to delivery and transformation of mental health services and ensure an agile, responsive approach focusing on key priorities for the population.

In this context, we remain committed to achieving our NHS Long Term Plan ambitions for service transformation and expansion, backed by investment of at least £2.3 billion of extra funding for mental health by 2023-24.

■ **Mental Health: Coronavirus**

Alex Cunningham:

[57199]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effects on the (a) mental health and (b) social isolation of those who have been designated as clinically vulnerable during the covid-19 outbreak.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 15 June 2020]: We recognise the effect that social distancing and self-isolation may have on a person's mental wellbeing, including those who are clinically vulnerable and self-isolating. We have published official guidance on mental health and wellbeing on GOV.UK and are promoting this through Every Mind Matters.

We are working with the National Health Service and Public Health England, service users, academics and the voluntary sector to gather evidence and assess the potential longer-term mental health impacts of COVID-19 and plan for how to support the public's mental health and wellbeing throughout the 'recovery' phase.

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital: Finance

Daniel Kawczynski: [\[57139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will allocate additional funding to the Royal Shrewsbury hospital to mitigate the level of funding of patients from Wales who use that hospital.

Edward Argar:

For the current financial year, we are not planning on the assumption that such additional funding is necessary. Funding for patients from Wales comes from the Welsh National Health Service commissioners. This is normally via the English national tariff with recent work to agree that from this year the tariff uplift will be paid in full, with NHS Wales fully engaged in tariff setting arrangements for England. However, as part of the COVID-19 response, tariff payments are currently replaced by block payment arrangements, with NHS Wales following suit.

HOME OFFICE**Aerospace Industry: Quarantine**

Christian Matheson: [\[57231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish her assessment of the economic effect on the UK aerospace manufacturing sector of the Government's policy of introducing a 14 day quarantine period for travellers arriving from overseas.

Kevin Foster:

A range of criteria informed the development of the introduction of new health measures at the border, including the urgent requirement to protect our progress in countering the spread of the virus and reducing the risk of a second wave whilst doing all we can to protect vital supply chains and infrastructure work.

It is unfortunately unavoidable there will be an economic impact in the UK if we are to take necessary steps like this to protect public health and save lives.

The Government has committed to keeping the border health measures under regular review to ensure they remain effective and proportionate.

Asylum: Housing

Tim Farron: [\[59202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will extend the suspension of evictions from asylum accommodation beyond the 30 June 2020 deadline.

Tim Farron: [\[59203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions her Department has had with representatives from (a) civil society and (b) faith organisations

on the next phase of support for people in the asylum system during the covid-19 outbreak.

Tim Farron:

[59204]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support her Department provides to help people granted refugee status access mainstream (a) welfare benefits and (b) accommodation during the covid-19 outbreak.

Chris Philp:

The decision to suspend the cessation of support will be reviewed before the end of June.

A comprehensive cessation plan, on how to recommence support cessations and evictions is being worked through with discussions with Local Authorities, Other Government Departments and Stakeholders, which included members of the voluntary and community sector.

Generally, upon receipt of a “positive” cessation a person is given 28 days’ notice and is referred to the Department of Work and Pensions to apply for benefits if they require them and to Local Authorities for housing assistance. During the Covid 19 crisis newly granted refugees have been continuing to receive support and accommodation while their applications to mainstream benefits have been considered.

All people currently accommodated within our accommodation can receive advice on asylum support and have access to our Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) provider, Migrant Help. They can contact Migrant Help 24 hours a day on a freephone number if they need assistance or guidance.

We remain committed to working closely with the accommodation providers and communicating with local authorities to relieve pressure and capacity as much as possible and ensure that health guidance is being followed.

■ Asylum: Northern Ireland

Claire Hanna:

[57405]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the Northern Ireland Executive on the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the number of people claiming asylum in Northern Ireland.

Chris Philp:

The latest statistics on asylum intake since the UK left the EU can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2020/list-of-tables#asylum-and-resettlement>. The Home Office will continue to support all devolved administrations and local authorities after the transition period in the same way as we do now.

The UK takes its relationship with Ireland and the Island of Ireland seriously and maintaining the integrity of the Common Travel Area is key to upholding an effective immigration system for all in the future. The UK is engaging with the EU on a future

partnership and will collaborate with the NI Executive where concrete progress has been made.

■ British Nationality: Assessments

Patrick Grady: [57247]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the covid-19 outbreak and pursuant to the Answer of 20 May 2020 to Question 47382, how long will applications for indefinite leave to remain in the UK be held to allow applicants to complete a life in the UK test, once testing resumes.

Kevin Foster:

Individuals can continue to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain and their application will be held until testing resumes, with their existing leave continuing until their application is decided.

■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Chris Elmore: [38003]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether an individual who is on a spousal visa will be penalised if their employer places them on the furloughed workers scheme.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office has put in place a range of measures to support those affected by the Covid-19 outbreak.

These concessions are set out for customers on GOV.UK and are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents>.

We continue to monitor the situation closely and take the current exceptional circumstances into account.

To ensure a spouse or partner applying for entry clearance, leave to remain or indefinite leave are not unduly affected by circumstances beyond their control, for the purpose of the minimum income requirement an applicant or sponsor furloughed under the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will be deemed as earning 100% of their salary.

■ Crime Prevention: Finance

Bambos Charalambous: [57311]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which areas in England and Wales are disproportionately affected by acquisitive crimes and are therefore eligible to bid for the Safer Streets Fund.

Bambos Charalambous:

[\[57312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what bids have been received by her Department for the Safer Street Fund.

Bambos Charalambous:

[\[57313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much and what proportion of the Safer Streets Fund has been awarded, and where has that fund been rolled out.

Kit Malthouse:

The £25m Safer Streets Fund will support areas in England and Wales that are disproportionately affected by acquisitive crimes, like burglary and theft, to invest in well evidenced crime prevention measures such as improved street lighting and home security. Police and Crime Commissioners were eligible to apply to the fund, using their local crime data to identify areas with disproportionately high acquisitive crime. Eligibility criteria for funding are set out in the Safer Streets Prospectus available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/860797/safer-streets-fund-prospectus.pdf.

The bidding window for PCCs to apply to the Fund closed on the 03 April and we expect to announce successful areas in July.

■ Entry Clearances: Overseas Students

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[57224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to extend the application window for Tier 4 visas from three to six months, in order for international students beginning their courses online to know that they will be eligible for a visa to enter the UK before they begin studying.

Kevin Foster:

Students are currently permitted to apply up to three months in advance of the course start date listed on the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). Students commencing a course of study outside the UK, are not required to hold a visa to commence the course. All provisions are being kept under regular review in light of the situation with Covid-19 (Coronavirus).

Visa Application Centres (VAC) are starting to re-open which will enable students to submit their applications and enrol biometrics.

■ Firearms and Knives: Crime

Zarah Sultana:

[\[59260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what resources she has allocated to (a) researching and (b) tackling the causes of gun and knife-related crimes in (i) Coventry, (ii) the West Midlands and (iii) England.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government's Serious Violence Strategy, published in April 2018, sets out our analysis of the trends and drivers behind rises in serious violence including gun and knife crime.

We are clear that the police must have the powers and resources they need to tackle gun and knife crime, wherever it occurs. This is why we are recruiting 20,000 more police officers over the next three years and why the West Midlands police are receiving £620.4m in funding in 2020/21 – an increase of £49.1m on 2019/20.

In addition, the Home Office has committed over £176.5 million over two years to address

serious violence in the most affected 18 police force areas in England and Wales, which

includes £104.9 million to pay for a surge in police operational activity, of which £12,601,485 has been allocated to West Midlands police. The remaining £70 million is being invested in multi-agency Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) over two financial years, with £6,740,000 of this going directly to the West Midlands VRU. The VRU brings together police, local government, health and education professionals, community leaders and other key partners to identify the drivers of serious violence and agree a multi-agency response.

In relation to gun crime specifically, the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 has introduced a ban on certain rapid-firing rifles and we are introducing greater regulation of antique firearms to prevent their misuse by criminals. We have also consulted on statutory guidance on firearms licensing to improve standards and the consistency of police licensing decisions, and we have established a multi-agency national firearms threat assessment centre to improve our capability to disrupt the supply and use of illegal firearms by criminals and Organised Crime Groups.

The Offensive Weapons Act 2019 also gives the police more powers to tackle knife crime and will make it more difficult for young people to get hold of knives in the first place. The Act

introduces Knife Crime Prevention Orders which will help the police to steer those most at risk away from serious violence and knife crime, and we will be legislating to introduce new Serious Violence Reduction Orders to make it easier for the police to stop and search known knife

carriers.

The Serious Violence Strategy also puts an emphasis on prevention and early intervention. We are investing £200 million through the Youth Endowment Fund to invest in and evaluate early intervention projects and an additional £500 million over five years through the new Youth Investment Fund to build new youth centres, refurbish existing youth facilities, provide mobile facilities for harder to reach areas, and to invest in the youth work profession and frontline services.

■ Hampshire Constabulary: Recruitment

Mr Stephen Morgan: [\[56152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effect of trends in police numbers since 2010 on the ability of Hampshire Police to tackle crime in public spaces during the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr Stephen Morgan: [\[56155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of bringing forward the start date for new police officers in Hampshire to enhance the ability of police to effectively tackle crime committed in public spaces in Portsmouth during the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr Stephen Morgan: [\[56157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support Hampshire Police in dealing with crime in public spaces during the covid-19 outbreak.

Kit Malthouse:

Many factors impact on crime levels and the Home Office continues to monitor crime levels and officer numbers.

Our police forces face unprecedented challenges as they play the critical role of maintaining public order during this public health emergency. Our frontline officers police by consent – and that is not changing. We are relying on their professional judgement to protect our communities, protect our NHS and save lives.

The Government is committed to ensuring the police have the resources they need to keep themselves and the public safe at this crucial time, including 156 additional officers and a cash increase of £26.1m for Hampshire this year. We are working closely with the National Police Chiefs' Council, the College of Policing and all forces, including Hampshire Police, to consider the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on recruitment.

We have already begun to look at how to adapt processes while maintaining the quality of recruitment. In response to COVID-19 measures, the College of Policing is rolling out a new Online Assessment Centre to allow safe assessment of candidates without the need for face to face contact. Hampshire Police has been one of the first forces to begin using the online assessment centre, beginning in May.

In addition, the College of Policing has issued emergency guidance to support forces in safely deploying newly recruited officers on accompanied patrol as quickly as possible to support operational resilience.

Mr Stephen Morgan: [\[56153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of bringing forward police recruitment processes within Hampshire Police to enhance the ability of police to effectively tackle crime committed in public spaces in Portsmouth during the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr Stephen Morgan:

[56154]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the barriers to bringing forward recruitment processes for police officers within Hampshire Police.

Mr Stephen Morgan:

[56156]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on what date the 156 police officers joining Hampshire Police are planned to be fully operational.

Kit Malthouse:

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

As of March 2020, Hampshire had not recruited any additional uplift officers against an allocation target of 156 by the end of March 2021. This recruitment profile was expected as Hampshire Police plans to recruit its uplift allocation later in 2020.

To support the force, Hampshire Police has been one of the first forces to use the new Online Assessment Centre which will support recruitment during the COVID-19 pandemic period and ensure recruitment plans remain on track. There are currently no further plans to bring forward police recruitment processes however we continue to support the force in recruitment against its year one allocation.

We do not centrally collect information on the operational deployment of officers. This remains an operational matter for Chief Constables.

■ Home Office: Racial Discrimination

Catherine West:

[53544]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to tackle racism.

Kit Malthouse:

Tackling racially motivated hate crime remains a priority for this Government. The Home Office are supporting a range of projects to tackle racism, including Show Racism the Red Card and the Anne Frank Trust, organisations who work with young people across the country to challenge prejudice and discrimination.

■ Immigrants: Detainees

Caroline Lucas:

[57167]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people are (a) being held in immigration detention centres and (b) required to report to her Department for immigration enforcement purposes; what steps her Department are taking to help protect those people from covid-19; and if she will make a statement.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office publishes data on people in detention in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics->

quarterly-release). Data on the number of people detained under immigration powers at the end of each quarter, by location are published in table Det_D02 of the immigration detention detailed datasets (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/returns-and-detention-datasets#immigration-detention>).

Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the 'summary tables' (attached). The 'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on detention.

A statistical report Statistics relating to Covid-19 and the immigration system, May 2020 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statistics-relating-to-covid-19-and-the-immigration-system-may-2020>), released on 28 May 2020 provides further high-level information relating to immigration detention and Covid-19 up to the end of April.

Figures covering the second quarter of 2020, including those detained as at 30 June 2020 will be released on 27 August 2020. Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar' (https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics?content_store_document_type=upcoming_statistics&organisations%5B%5D=home-office&order=release-date-oldest).

The decision to pause face to face reporting came into effect 23 March 2020. Since closing to the public, we have embarked on a programme of contact with those required to report using telephone, SMS and email. As lockdown measures start to ease, reporting centres will begin to open with social distancing and other appropriate measures in line with Public Health England (PHE) guidance to keep those that we require to report safe.

The safety and health of people in the detention estate are of the utmost importance. We are following all PHE guidance and have robust contingency plans in place. Further guidance on managing COVID-19 in immigration removal centres was published on gov.uk on 5 June <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-immigration-removal-centres>.

As of 17 June 2020, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in immigration removal centres.

Attachments:

1. Detention Summary Tables [Copy of detention-summary-dec-2019-tables.xlsx]

■ **Immigration: EU Nationals**

Claire Hanna:

[59264]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what safeguards her Department has put in place for the family members of Northern Ireland-born citizens who following changes to the Immigration Rules announced on 14 May 2020 now qualify for the EU settlement scheme but have a current visa that will expire before 24 August 2020.

Kevin Foster:

The statement of changes to the Immigration Rules laid before Parliament on 14 May will amend the EU Settlement Scheme so that family members of the people of Northern Ireland can apply for immigration status on broadly the same terms as family members of Irish citizens. This delivers the commitment made in the New Decade, New Approach agreement which restored the Northern Ireland Executive in January 2020.

Family members of the people of Northern Ireland will be able to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme from 24 August.

Family members of the people of Northern Ireland who cannot already apply to the EU Settlement Scheme and want to come to the UK or extend their current stay before 24 August can make an application under an existing immigration route.

Metropolitan Police: Ethnic Groups

Ms Harriet Harman: [58598]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of police officers in the Metropolitan Police Service are of a black or ethnic minority background.

Ms Harriet Harman: [58599]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of police officers at Chief Superintendent level or above in the Metropolitan Police Service are of a black or ethnic minority background.

Kit Malthouse:

The Home Office collects and publishes data on the ethnicity and rank of police officers in England and Wales, broken down by Police Force Area, on an annual basis. The latest available data, covering the situation as at 31 March 2019, can be found in of the Open Data Tables, published alongside the 'Police Workforce, England and Wales' statistics, available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817735/open-data-table-police-workforce-ethnicity.ods

Data as at 31 March 2020 are due to be published in July 2020.

Motorcycles: Crime

Darren Henry: [57395]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of (a) police resources and (b) powers to deal with people who ride motorcycles illegally.

Kit Malthouse:

This government is fully committed to giving the police the powers and resources they need to fight crime.

We will provide a total police funding settlement of up to £15.2 billion in 2020/21, which is an increase of up to £1.120 billion compared to 2019/20, including main grant, council precept and national priorities. The police have powers under the Road Traffic Act 1988 and Police Reform Act 2002 to seize vehicles being driven illegally without a valid driving licence or insurance or in an anti-social manner.

■ Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation

Bob Blackman:

[\[57185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to coordinate with the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation.

James Brokenshire:

The Home Office and OFSI are part of cross-Whitehall initiatives working to develop the UK's autonomous sanctions regimes. The Joint Anti-Corruption Unit, based in the Home Office, also liaises with OFSI in its monitoring and reporting of the Anti-Corruption Strategy 2017-22.

■ Police: Ethnic Groups

Ms Harriet Harman:

[\[58600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to increase the number and proportion of police officers from a black and ethnic minority background in (a) the Metropolitan Police Service and (b) police forces in England and Wales.

Kit Malthouse:

Police forces have worked hard to improve equality and diversity in policing and the workforce is more diverse than ever before, however we know that we cannot be complacent. Our drive to recruit 20,000 officers gives us a significant opportunity to attract a wide range of people into a career in policing and support the police to become more representative of the communities they serve.

At 31 March 2019, there were 8,329 black, Asian and minority ethnic officers representing 6.9% of all police officers in England and Wales, compared with 4.7% in 2010.

The Metropolitan Police Service has the highest proportion of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) officers in England and Wales (15.0%) and had almost 4,500 BAME officers in total. One in four new recruits joining the Metropolitan police were from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background in 2018/19.

We continue to work across policing to support forces in addressing under-representation in the recruitment, retention and progression of officers, including those from BAME backgrounds.

■ Police: Horses**Afzal Khan:** [\[57356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions officials in her Department have had with police forces on the deployment of mounted police for the purposes of crowd control; and if she will make a statement.

Kit Malthouse:

Home Office officials regularly discuss with the National Police Chief's Council the effectiveness of public order tactics including the use of Mounted Horse Units for crowd control purposes.

The use of police horses is an operational matter for chief officers.

Catherine West: [\[58752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his Department has plans to review the use of police horses during protests and crowd control operations.

Kit Malthouse:

Home Office officials regularly discuss with the National Police Chief's Council the effectiveness of public order tactics including the use of Mounted Horse Units for crowd control purposes.

The use of police horses is an operational matter for chief officers.

■ Recycling: Aluminium**Rachael Maskell:** [\[56049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to extend the provisions of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to support charitable groups collecting household aluminium for recycling.

Kit Malthouse:

We supported the introduction of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to reverse an upward trend in levels of metal theft through better regulation of the metal recycling sector. The changes introduced by the 2013 Act require all scrap metal dealers to obtain a scrap metal licence from their local authority, including charities collecting household aluminium for recycling.

Due to the nature of the licensing process, each application for a scrap metal dealer's licence – site licence or mobile collector licence – must be accompanied by a fee, which is calculated on the basis of recovering certain administration costs and ensuring compliance with the licensing scheme. However, we continuously work with local authorities and other agencies to understand the impacts of the 2013 Act and how it functions, including on charitable groups.

■ Youth Mobility Scheme: Au Pairs

James Wild:

[\[57394\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to introduce a new official au pair status within the Youth Mobility Visa (Tier 5) for EU members states after the end of the transition period.

Kevin Foster:

We have indicated our desire to negotiate a youth mobility arrangement with the EU, or with individual countries within it, ensuring young people can continue to enjoy the social, cultural and educational benefits of living in the EU and the UK.

The Government has no plans to introduce an immigration route specifically for au-pairs.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Churches: Marriage

Sir Charles Walker:

[\[59190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when he plans to issue additional guidance to religious organisations on the opening of churches to conduct wedding ceremonies, and if he will make a statement.

Luke Hall:

To protect public safety, weddings are among the social and religious events that can't take place at this time. We understand the inconvenience and disappointment this will cause.

In Step 2 of our [Roadmap to Recovery strategy](#) we said that we would examine how to enable people to gather to facilitate small marriage ceremonies. Government continues to look at this issue in great detail to see what will be possible while minimising risk.

We understand the frustration couples waiting to marry must be feeling, and as with all COVID-19 restrictions, we will look to ease them as soon as it is safe to do so.

■ Domestic Abuse: Coronavirus

Christian Wakeford:

[\[57411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government plans to take to provide additional funding for housing assistance to help ensure that victims of domestic abuse and their children continue to be protected while covid-19 restrictions remain in place.

Luke Hall:

My Department's priority remains for refuges to stay open, up and running, so victims of domestic abuse and their children can access support and safe accommodation when they need it.

On 7 May, my Department launched a £10 million fund to support safe accommodation charities providing vital accommodation and support for victims of domestic abuse and their children. On 5 June, we announced the outcome of the first wave of this Emergency Domestic Abuse Fund, with 103 successful applications receiving £8.15 million and covering 147 organisations. This funding will help to reopen 291 bedspaces and create an additional 1210 bed spaces during the pandemic.

The Fund has now reopened for further bids to allocate the remaining £1.85 million, giving charities the flexibility to apply to support more victims.

Christian Wakeford:

[57412]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that clear statutory guidance is issued to help local authorities and charities carry out their duty to (a) support and (b) meet the needs of victims of domestic abuse (i) during and (ii) after the covid-19 lockdown.

Luke Hall:

My Department's priority remains for refuges to stay open, up and running, so victims can access support and safe accommodation.

The Government has made available clear quality standards for domestic abuse services through the Violence Against Women and Girls National Statement of Expectations, as well as my Department's Priorities for Domestic Abuse Services which were updated in 2018. The Priorities are clear that local areas should respond to the needs of all domestic abuse victims, including those from isolated and/or marginalised communities, those with complex needs, BAME, LGBT+, disabled and male victims and older people.

My Department has also issued PHE-approved guidance for domestic abuse safe accommodation providers in support of their service delivery in these unprecedented times. The guidance will help protect victims and their children residing in safe accommodation and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-provision>.

There is currently no statutory duty on local authorities or charities in regard to the delivery of support for victims of domestic abuse, or any requirement in legislation to provide guidance in regard to support for victims.

However, we are continuing the progression of the landmark Domestic Abuse Bill through Parliament including the introduction of a statutory duty on local authorities aimed at ensuring that all victims, including children, have access to safety and support within safe accommodation, when they need it. The duty will be underpinned by robust statutory guidance, clearly setting out expectations on local authorities in meeting their duty which is planned to come into force from April 2021.

■ Domestic Abuse: Housing

Christian Wakeford:

[\[57417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government is taking to help local authorities make accommodation and social housing available for victims of domestic abuse.

Luke Hall:

On 17 February we announced £16.6 million for support to victims of domestic abuse, and their children, within safe accommodation (2020/21). The fund will go to 75 local authority led projects to maintain essential existing services, as well as deliver new services.

We have also put in place a system for local authorities to meet additional demand due to COVID-19 enabling them to book rooms for domestic abuse victims through Crown Commercial Services. In relation to social housing, we have already ensured that victims of domestic abuse get the priority they deserve. Statutory guidance issued in 2012 encourages authorities to give additional preference (high priority) to people who require urgent rehousing as a result of domestic abuse.

In 2018 we issued further statutory guidance to improve access to social housing for those who have escaped abuse and are being accommodated in a refuge or other form of safe temporary accommodation. It sets out how local authorities can ensure that victims and their families are given appropriate priority as well as setting a strong expectation that local authorities should not apply residency tests for those who have been forced to flee to another district.

On 2 May the Government announced its intent, through the Domestic Abuse Bill, to give those who are homeless as a result of being a victim of domestic abuse priority need for accommodation secured by the local authority. This will help to ensure victims do not remain with their abuser for fear of not having a roof over their head.

■ Evictions: Coronavirus

Caroline Lucas:

[\[57155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the extension for two months of the ban on evictions announced on 5 June 2020, if he will grant judges a general discretion to consider the impact of covid-19 in possession cases before any future decision to end eviction suspension measures; and if he will make a statement.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government remains committed to bringing forward legislation to deliver its planned reforms to enhance renters' security, including by abolishing so-called 'no-fault' evictions. However, the proposals for tenancy reform would represent the largest change to renting in 30 years and it is only right that these reforms are taken forward in a considered manner.

In the interim, the Government will 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 will have all the information necessary to make just decisions in the current framework and that the most vulnerable tenants will get the help they need.

The Master of the Rolls, as head of civil justice, has convened a judiciary-led, cross-sector working group to consider and to address so far as is practicable, matters affecting litigants and the courts when the present stay on possession proceedings is lifted.

■ **Garages and Petrol Stations: Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund**

Damian Collins:

[59212]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether car repair garages are eligible for funding from Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Simon Clarke:

The Government has announced an unprecedented package of support for businesses to help with their ongoing business costs in recognition of the disruption caused by COVID-19. This package of support includes the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF).

Businesses in England that would have been in receipt of the Expanded Retail Discount (which covers retail, hospitality and leisure) on 11 March with a rateable value of less than £51,000 will be eligible for a RHLGF cash grant per property of either £10,000 or £25,000 depending on the rateable value of the property.

Guidance on the types of businesses covered by the Expanded Retail Discount can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-rates-retail-discount-guidance>. It is for individual local billing authorities to adopt a local scheme and determine in each individual case when, having regard to this guidance, to grant relief. Any enquiries on eligibility for the Expanded Retail Discount and thus the RHLGF should be directed to the relevant local authority.

For more information on the RHLGF please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-youre-eligible-for-the-coronavirus-retail-hospitality-and-leisure-grant-fund>

In addition, on 1 May, the Government 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 are not liable for business rates or rates reliefs.

Businesses already in receipt of a Small Business grant or a Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grant are not eligible for this fund. Businesses who are eligible for or in

receipt of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) are now eligible to apply for this scheme.

Guidance, intended to support local authorities in administering the Discretionary Grants Fund, was published 13 May and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-business-support-grant-funding>. Local authorities are responsible for developing their local scheme, having regard to this guidance, and decisions about which businesses to support, and the level of grant to award, are for local authorities to take.

■ **Housing: Disability and Older People**

Dr Lisa Cameron:

[57238]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that accessible housing for older and disabled people remains a Government priority in light of the covid-19 outbreak.

Luke Hall:

I refer the Honourable Member to the answer given to Question UIN 54976 asked on 4 June 2020.

■ **Local Government Finance: Coronavirus**

Alexander Stafford:

[57409]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what proportion of the £3.2 billion allocated to local authorities to tackle the immediate effects of the covid-19 outbreak have been spent on children's services.

Mr Simon Clarke:

We have now made an unprecedented £3.2 billion available to local authorities through an un-ringfenced grant so they can address pressures they are facing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including for Children's Services.

Councils are on the front line as we tackle this pandemic and are best placed to understand local needs. It is for local authorities to determine how to spend their un-ringfenced income on the services they provide, including services for children.

■ **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Carers**

Sir Edward Davey:

[57073]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many staff in his Department had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Luke Hall:

The Department's annual People Survey includes two questions on caring responsibilities and responses to these questions can be used to help determine the number of officials with caring responsibilities. This information is offered on an entirely voluntary basis and as such only accounts for those officials that elected to complete the survey questions concerned. The number of staff who identified

themselves as having caring and/or childcare responsibilities in each of the last five years is included in the table below:

SURVEY YEAR	PEOPLE	NUMBER WITH CARING RESPONSIBILITIES	TOTAL	PROPORTION WITH CARING RESPONSIBILITIES	NUMBER WITH CHILDCARE RESPONSIBILITIES	TOTAL	PROPORTION WITH CHILDCARE RESPONSIBILITIES
	SURVEY RESPONSE RATE		NUMBER WHO ANSWERED THE CARING QUESTION			NUMBER WHO ANSWERED THE CHILDCARE QUESTION	
2015	82%	280	1273	22%	483	1277	38%
2016	82%	215	1071	20%	387	1077	36%
2017	90%	241	1270	19%	427	1269	34%
2018	94%	278	1683	17%	492	1698	29%
2019	97%	435	1973	22%	610	2017	30%

It is worth pointing out that this information is not considered to be an official workforce statistic, and this is also only representative of those who completed the people survey in each year.

■ Planning: Public Inquiries

Mike Amesbury:

[\[59247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government how many and what proportion of decisions of public planning inquiries, as a result of call-ins only, did not follow the advice of the planning inspector in each year since 2017 up to the most recent year for which data is available; and if he will make a statement.

Christopher Pincher:

Figures are as follows:

YEAR	TOTAL DECISIONS (CALLED IN APPLICATIONS ONLY)	MINISTER DISAGREED WITH INSPECTOR	PROPORTION DISAGREED
17-18	10	2	20%
18-19	5	1	20%
19-20	7	1	14%
Total	22	4	18%

Called-in applications make up around 17 per cent of all substantive decisions made by Ministers (i.e. recovered appeals plus called-in applications).

■ Public Lavatories

John Spellar:

[57084]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to secure the reopening of public lavatories.

Luke Hall:

We strongly encourage public toilets to be open wherever possible. We've published guidance to help operators ensure facilities are safe where they are open including increasing cleaning of touch points

The Government has published guidance on safer public spaces. It includes advice, information and examples of the potential interventions that can be used in public places to facilitate social distancing in areas of higher footfall such as in parks (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safer-public-places-urban-centres-and-green-spacescovid-19>). Owners and operators are advised to implement cleaning protocols to limit coronavirus transmission in public places. It is advised that touch points (e.g. handrails and gates) should be particular areas of focus for increased cleaning.

We have now made £3.2 billion available to local authorities through an unringfenced grant so they can address pressures they are facing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The package recognises the additional costs and pressures on finances councils are facing as a result of the current crisis. It demonstrates the Government's commitment to making sure councils, including upper and lower tier authorities, have the resources they need to support their communities through this challenging time. Local authorities are best placed to understand how to meet the major COVID-19 service pressures and spending needs in their local area, this funding will not be ringfenced. The funding can be used across all local services facing pressures.

■ Public Lavatories: Coronavirus

Sir Edward Davey:

[55715]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many and what proportion of public toilets were closed during the covid-19 lockdown.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Central Government does not hold monitoring data on the number of public toilets which were in operation during the COVID-19 lockdown as it is a local decision whether to keep these facilities open or closed. While decisions to reopen public toilets are for councils - and others responsible for them - we strongly encourage them to open wherever possible. We have published guidance to help them ensure facilities are safe where they are open including increasing cleaning of touch points: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safer-public-places-urban-centres-and-green-spaces-covid-19>.

Sir Edward Davey:

[59182]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department has provided to local authorities on the opening of public toilets during the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Simon Clarke:

We strongly encourage public toilets to be open wherever possible. We have published guidance to help operators ensure facilities are safe where they are open including increasing cleaning of touch points.

The Government has published guidance on safer public spaces. It includes advice, information and examples of the potential interventions that can be used in public places to facilitate social distancing in areas of higher footfall such as in parks (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safer-public-places-urban-centres-and-green-spacescovid-19>). Owners and operators are advised to implement cleaning protocols to limit coronavirus transmission in public places. It is advised that touch points (e.g. handrails and gates) should be particular areas of focus for increased cleaning.

We have now made £3.2 billion available to local authorities through an unringfenced grant so they can address pressures they are facing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The package recognises the additional costs and pressures on finances councils are facing as a result of the current crisis. It demonstrates the Government's commitment to making sure councils, including upper and lower tier authorities, have the resources they need to support their communities through this challenging time. Local authorities are best placed to understand how to meet the major COVID-19 service pressures and spending needs in their local area, this funding will not be ringfenced. The funding can be used across all local services facing pressures.

■ Temporary Accommodation

Caroline Lucas:

[57153]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will take steps so that people with nowhere safe to stay are given priority need for emergency accommodation under homelessness legislation on public health grounds; and if he will make a statement.

Luke Hall:

Almost 15,000 vulnerable people have been housed in emergency accommodation, including hotels, since the start of the COVID-19 lockdown period.

Building on the considerable success so far, we announced that Dame Louise Casey will spearhead a Taskforce to lead the next phase of the Government's support for rough sleepers during this pandemic

We announced on 24 May radical plans to provide thousands of long-term, safe homes for vulnerable rough sleepers taken off the streets during this pandemic. This ambitious commitment will be backed by £160 million this year through accelerating

plans for the £381 million announced for rough sleeping services at Budget, bringing the total to £433 million over the lifetime of this parliament.

This funding will ensure that 6,000 new housing units will be put into the system, with 3,300 units of this accommodation becoming available in the next 12 months

Local authorities must of course continue to carry out their statutory duties.

Priority need is decided by local authorities on a case by case basis in line with the legislation and the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

Caroline Lucas:

[\[57154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will take steps to ensure that people who are not currently eligible under homelessness legislation because of immigration status are accommodated; and if he will make a statement.

Luke Hall:

The rules as to eligibility relating to immigration status have not changed. Local authorities must use their judgement in assessing what support they may lawfully give to each person on an individual basis, considering that person's specific circumstances and support needs.

We are ensuring local authorities are supported, with £3.2 million in targeted funding to help individuals who are sleeping rough off the streets. This is in addition to the £3.2 billion provided to local authorities as part of the wider government response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government recognises that these are unprecedented times, and expects local authorities to support people who are sleeping rough, and also to minimise unnecessary risks to public health, acting within the law.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Bangladesh: Migrant Camps

Sarah Champion:

[\[59224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what additional budget allocations her Department has made to programmes in Cox's Bazar to (a) support the covid-19 response and (b) maintain and expand gender-based violence services in light of the prevalence of gender-based violence in the camps.

Sarah Champion:

[\[59225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what representations she has made to (a) UN agencies and (b) the Government of Bangladesh to ensure that gender-based violence (GBV) services are designated as essential in order to allow for continuity of GBV service provision in Cox's Bazar throughout the covid-19 response.

Nigel Adams:

The UK has provided an initial £11 million to support COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts in the Rohingya camps and surrounding host communities. This has been allocated to existing UN and Non-Governmental Organisation UK partners. It is also maintaining essential humanitarian services in the camps, such as shelter, food, registration and civil documentation, healthcare, water and sanitation, and hygiene.

Part of this funding is focused on ensuring critical gender-based violence (GBV) and child protection services keep operating for all those who need them. For example, the UK has provided an additional £400,000 to UNFPA for GBV services, including activities disseminating anti-GBV messaging and anti-GBV role modelling activities with adolescent boys and girls.

The Rohingya Refugee response in Cox's Bazar district has been reduced to only critical services since 8 April. While women and girls' safe spaces are not functioning as normal (to prevent the spread of the virus), all protection services including GBV services have continued throughout. DFID officials are collaborating with UN agencies on the provision and continuity of GBV services. UN agencies have worked closely with the Bangladesh government to prepare and respond to COVID-19 in the refugee camps and ensure vital and lifesaving operations are not jeopardised.

Sarah Champion:[\[59226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the scale of gender-based violence (GBV) in Cox's Bazar (a) before and (b) during the covid-19 pandemic; and with reference to International Rescue Committee research indicating at least one in four women and girls that organisation screens have experienced GBV, what plans her Department has to help maintain and expand provision of GBV services.

Sarah Champion:[\[59227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the findings of the International Rescue Committee's report entitled *The Shadow Pandemic: Gender-Based Violence amongst Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar*, and what steps she plans to take to ensure that funding for gender-based violence services is (a) maintained and (b) increased in Cox's Bazar.

Nigel Adams:

Gender-based violence (GBV) continues to be a constant threat in refugee camps, especially to women and girls. The scale of GBV in the Rohingya camps is too high, though still not fully known. As GBV is generally underreported due to stigma and fear, the recorded cases are likely to represent only a small fraction of the overall number. However, an information management system is ensuring vital data is collected and analysed from recorded cases.

We agree with the International Rescue Committee that we need to expand GBV programming to address unmet needs, including prevention activities; and that these needs are likely to be exacerbated by COVID-19. The UK is the second largest donor

to the Rohingya response, contributing £256 million to-date, and we play a leadership role in ensuring anti-GBV efforts are prioritised.

DFID has continuously supported efforts to reduce GBV in Rohingya camps and also in host communities. UK aid-supported GBV activities are being implemented across 34 camps, in 35 women friendly spaces/integrated women centres, and have helped more than 12,000 individuals receive GBV case management support since 2017.

The UK has provided £11 million to support COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts in the Rohingya camps and surrounding host communities. Part of this funding is focused on ensuring critical gender-based violence and child protection services keep operating for all those who need them. For example, the UK has provided an additional £400,000 to UNFPA for GBV services, including disseminating anti-GBV messaging and anti-GBV activities with adolescent boys and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic.

■ **Food Supply and Nutrition: Overseas Aid**

David Mundell:

[\[57926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the Global Nutrition Report 2020, what steps the Government is taking to help prevent hunger and malnutrition throughout the world.

Wendy Morton:

The UK has been a global leader on nutrition since it hosted the first Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit in 2013. The Summit generated £15 billion in new financing for nutrition up to 2020. Between 2015 and March 2019, DFID reached 50.6 million women, adolescent girls and young children with nutrition services in 25 countries, including Bangladesh, Somalia, Myanmar, Ethiopia and Yemen.

The UK remains committed to preventing and treating malnutrition as part of our commitment to end the preventable deaths of mothers, new-borns and children. Continued investment to prevent and treat malnutrition is important, particularly as countries face worsening levels of malnutrition in the face of COVID-19. The Secretary of State reiterated the importance of nutrition in her endorsement for the DFID-funded Global Nutrition Report 2020, which was published in May.

■ **Overseas Aid: Family Planning**

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[\[59207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the covid-19 outbreak on levels of Official Development Assistance; and if she will maintain a existing levels of support for sexual and reproductive health and rights and family planning services in (a) 2020 and (b) future budgets.

Wendy Morton:

Our aid spending is linked to the growth of our economy.

We are working closely with the Treasury to understand the likely forecasts and to ensure that we can meet our 0.7% commitment.

The UK is committed to advancing and defending comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights and, as a leading global donor, we will continue to be a progressive voice on this issue to give women in developing countries the reproductive health choices they want and need.

We are working across Departments to ensure that we continue to drive UK aid spending and commit our Official Development Assistance to the world's most vulnerable and poorest people.

■ **Palestinians: Textbooks**

Peter Gibson:

[R] [\[58077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the implications for her Department's transparency commitments of reports that the EU plans to classify the interim report into Palestinian textbooks jointly commissioned by the UK.

James Cleverly:

Following the UK's calls for international action, an independent review of Palestinian textbooks is currently underway, conducted by the Georg Eckert Institute, a specialist textbook analysis centre.

DFID continues to favour transparency and the UK has repeatedly lobbied the EU to push for publication of the interim report.

To ensure the review could begin immediately on the signing of the contract, the UK commissioned the Georg Eckert Institute to produce a separate inception report to establish its methodology in advance. We plan to publish this report in the coming weeks.

We will continue to raise our concerns about allegations of incitement with the Palestinian Authority (PA) as I did most recently with the PA Minister for Education on 4 June.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ **Foreign Investment in UK**

Martyn Day:

[\[57287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment he has made of the effect of funding allocated to UK Trade and Investment on the level of foreign direct investment in (a) the UK, (b) Scotland and (c) Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency since 2015.

Graham Stuart:

According to UNCTAD's World Investment Report 2020, the UK's level of FDI stock was over \$2 trillion in 2019. This is more than France and Germany combined.

With respect to Scotland, support for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is a joint responsibility of both DIT and the Scottish Government. The FDI results for Scotland reflect their joint efforts.

In the most recent figures, for the financial year 2018/19, the total recorded number of FDI projects in the UK was 1,782, with 57,625 associated new jobs. DIT supported 81% of those projects accounting for 51,863 jobs. In the same period, 126 projects were recorded in Scotland, with 3,346 new jobs created as a result. DIT recognises the value that more granular data breakdown could provide but does not currently have the ability to report beyond UK regional level.

Further historical data for recorded FDI projects can be seen below:

MEASURE	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
UK FDI Projects	2,213	2,265	2,072	1,782
Scotland FDI Projects	108	183	141	126
UK total jobs	115,974	107, 898	91,031	64,623
Scotland total jobs	5,905	8,597	9,287	4,469

■ Music: Coronavirus

Ian Paisley:[\[57210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps his Department plans to take to ensure UK music remains internationally competitive (a) during and (b) after the covid-19 pandemic.

Graham Stuart:

The Department for International Trade consistently champions the British music industry and the incredible talent which makes the sector such a great success story for the UK.

The Government has put in place unprecedented support for businesses and workers to protect them against the economic impact of COVID-19. In 2020/21, the Government is providing export support of around £1 million to UK music companies. Most of this is grant support offered to the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the UK's music sector through the International Showcase Fund and the Music Export Growth Scheme. Companies in Northern Ireland have benefited from both schemes, with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Invest Northern Ireland supporting the International Showcase Fund as funding partners.

During the pandemic, the Government has provided support for digital events so music companies can continue to do business with international customers. The Government is working closely with the Creative Industries Trade and Investment Board, which includes music representatives, to develop a creative industries trade and investment recovery strategy which will enable the UK music sector to maintain its strong international position.

■ **Overseas Trade: Coronavirus**

Henry Smith: [\[58682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the effect of the 14-day quarantine period on international trade and exports.

Graham Stuart:

The Department for International Trade has ensured that the economic impact assessment, led by the Treasury, reflects the impacts the regulations are having on UK imports and exports, as well as the wider economy, and that there are specific and targeted exemptions to mitigate the impact.

Exemptions exist for those who provide vital services to the UK, such as road haulage and freight workers, to ensure the supply of goods is not impacted, and medical professionals who are travelling to help with the fight against coronavirus.

■ **Riot Control Weapons: USA**

Alex Sobel: [\[53584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the current status is of export licenses to the US for anti-riot gear.

Alex Sobel: [\[53585\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will revoke existing licences to export riot gear to the US.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

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

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

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

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

Emily Thornberry:

[\[57122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will publish an itemised list of the type of goods exported under all extant (a) Open Individual Export Licences, (b) Open General Export Licences and (c) Specific Individual Export Licences which cover the export of riot control equipment and agents to end users in the United States.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[57930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will publish an itemised list of all extant (a) Open Individual Export Licences, (b) Open General Export Licences and (c) Specific Individual Export Licences which cover the export of riot control equipment and agents to end users in the US.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[57931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will publish an itemised list of the value of goods exported under all extant (a) Open Individual Export Licences, (b) Open General Export Licences and (c) Specific Individual Export Licences which cover the export of riot control equipment and agents to end users in the US.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

The extant Standard Individual Export Licences (SIELs) that permit the export to the United States of America of the following items are:

SIEL 1: Anti-riot/ballistic shields – value: £200,000

SIEL 2: Anti-riot/ballistic shields – value: £650,000

The extant Open Individual Export Licences (OIELs) permit the export to the United States of America of the following items are:

OIEL 1: anti-riot/ballistic shields, munitions/ordnance detection/disposal equipment;

OIEL 2: anti-riot/ballistic shields, portable incapacitating substance riot control devices, portable riot control electric-shock devices;

OIEL 3: CS hand grenades, depth charges, hand grenades, illuminators, munitions/ordnance de-tection/disposal equipment, signalling devices, smoke canisters, smoke/pyrotechnic am-munition, tear gas/irritant ammunition, tear gas/riot control agents, training CS hand gre-nades, training hand grenades, training tear gas/irritant ammunition

OIEL 4: NBC detection equipment, NBC protective/defensive equipment, civil NBC protection clothing, civil NBC protection equipment, civil riot control agent protection equipment, components for NBC protective/defensive equipment, components for civil NBC protec-tion equipment, components for civil riot control agent protection equipment, components for military diving apparatus, imaging cameras, military diving apparatus, military laser protection equipment, software for NBC detection equipment, software for NBC protec-tive/defensive equipment, software for military diving apparatus, software for military laser protection equipment, technology for NBC detection equipment, technology for NBC pro-TECTIVE/defensive equipment, technology for imaging cameras, technology for military div-ing apparatus, technology for military laser protection equipment

OIEL 5: NBC protective/defensive equipment, components for NBC protective/defensive equip-ment, equipment for the use of NBC protective/defensive equipment, software for equip-ment for the use of NBC protective/defensive equipment, technology for NBC protec-tive/defensive equipment

There is one further OIEL, issued in 2020. This has yet to be published as Official Statis-tics and therefore further details cannot be released.

As OIELs cover multiple shipments of specified goods to specified destinations, exporters holding OIELs are not asked to provide details of the value of items they propose to ex-port under a particular OIEL. Accordingly, it is not possible to provide this information.

The extant Open General Export Licences (OGELs) that have scope for riot control equipment and/or agents to be exported to the United States of America are:

- Exports of non-lethal Military and Dual-Use Goods: To UK Diplomatic Missions or Consular Posts. • Military Goods, Software and Technology: Government or NATO End-Use. • EU General Export Authorisation (EU001)
- Military and Dual-Use Goods: UK Forces deployed in non-embargoed destinations / Military and Dual-Use Goods: UK Forces deployed in non-embargoed destinations – from December 2019. • Export For Exhibition: Military Goods / Export For Exhibition: Military Goods – from December 2019. • Military Goods: For Demonstration / Military Goods: For Demonstration – from December 2019. • Export After Exhibition or Demonstration: Military Goods. • Export After Repair/replacement Under Warranty: Military Goods / Export After Repair/Replacement Under Warranty: Military Goods – from June 2019. • Export For Repair/Replacement Under Warranty: Military Goods / Export For Repair/Replacement Under Warranty: Military Goods – from December 2019. • Exports or transfers in support of UK Government Defence Contracts /

Exports or transfers in support of UK Government Defence Contracts – from June 2019

- Export After Repair/Replacement Under Warranty: Dual-Use Items
- Historic Military Goods / Historic Military Goods – from December 2019.
- Military Components.
- OGEL (Certified Companies).
- OGEL (Exports under the US-UK Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty).

OGELs are available to view in full on GOV.UK and, as OGELs are pre-published licences allowing the export of specified goods to specified destinations, without a specified validity period, exporters who register for OGELs are not required to provide the value of items they propose to export. Accordingly, it is not possible to provide this information.

An itemised list of all items exported under the three types of licence is not centrally held.

Emily Thornberry:

[57123]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many companies based in the UK are authorised to export riot control (a) agents and (b) equipment to the US under open general export licences; and if she will list the names and addresses of those companies.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

Open General Export Licences (OGELs) that permit registered users to export items to countries including the United States of America, whose scope may include riot control equipment and/or agents, are:

- Exports of non-lethal Military and Dual-Use Goods: To UK Diplomatic Missions or Consular Posts.
- Military Goods, Software and Technology: Government or NATO End-Use.
- EU General Export Authorisation (EU001).
- Military and Dual-Use Goods: UK Forces deployed in non-embargoed destinations / Military and Dual-Use Goods: UK Forces deployed in non-embargoed destinations – from December 2019.
- Export For Exhibition: Military Goods / Export For Exhibition: Military Goods – from December 2019.
- Military Goods: For Demonstration / Military Goods: For Demonstration – from December 2019.
- Export After Exhibition or Demonstration: Military Goods.
- Export After Repair/replacement Under Warranty: Military Goods / Export After Repair/Replacement Under Warranty: Military Goods – from June 2019.
- Export For Repair/Replacement Under Warranty: Military Goods / Export For Repair/Replacement Under Warranty: Military Goods – from December 2019.

- Exports or transfers in support of UK Government Defence Contracts / Exports or transfers in support of UK Government Defence Contracts – from June 2019.
- Export After Repair/Replacement Under Warranty: Dual-Use Items.
- Historic Military Goods / Historic Military Goods – from December 2019.
- Military Components.
- OGEL (Certified Companies).
- OGEL (Exports under the US-UK Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty).

These OGELs are published on GOV.UK. The numbers of registrations for OGELs in a period are published as Official Statistics on GOV.UK.

However, a list of all names and addresses of companies that are authorised to export riot control agents and/or equipment can only be provided at disproportionate costs. Furthermore, such information may be commercially sensitive.

Emily Thornberry:

[57124]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many companies based in the UK are authorised to export riot control (a) agents and (b) equipment to the US under open individual export licences; and if she will list the names and addresses of those companies.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

Currently there is (a) one company authorised to export riot control agents; and (b) six companies authorised to export riot control equipment under Open Individual Export Licences (OIELs).

However, a list of all names and addresses of companies that are authorised to export riot control agents and/or equipment can only be provided at disproportionate costs. Furthermore, such information may be commercially sensitive.

Emily Thornberry:

[57125]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many companies based in the UK are authorised to export riot control (a) agents and (b) equipment to the US under specific individual export licences; and if she will list the names and addresses of those companies.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

Currently there are (a) no companies authorised to export riot control agents; and (b) one company authorised to export riot control equipment under a Standard Individual Export Licences (SIELs).

However, a list of all names and addresses of companies that are authorised to export riot control agents and/or equipment can only be provided at disproportionate costs. Furthermore, such information may be commercially sensitive.

■ Technology: Exports

Jonathan Gullis:

[\[58829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what support her Department is providing to the UK tech sector to help it (a) export to and (b) access overseas markets.

Graham Stuart:

On 10 June, the Department for International Trade launched a future trade strategy for the UK tech sector, supporting companies to seize trade and investment opportunities overseas.

The new measures announced will seek to increase tech exports to fast-growing international markets and strengthen UK scaleup companies' market readiness to export. For example, a new Digital Trade Network for Asia-Pacific will support UK small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to break into the Asian market, and the launch of a new Tech Exporting Academy will provide expert advice to UK scaleups on subject areas essential to expansion. These measures will help companies access overseas markets and unleash the UK's potential on the world stage.

■ Trade: Aviation

Henry Smith:

[\[58683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the importance of UK aviation to the Government's international trade priorities.

Graham Stuart:

The Government recognises the importance of UK aviation, both as a source of exports and as a facilitator of international trade and investment. UK airports support the movements of high-value goods which, in 2019, accounted for half of all UK exports of goods by value to non-EU countries.

Air freight plays an important role in supply chains and in ensuring that essential goods can continue to be brought in and out of the UK without disruption. The Government is continuing to monitor air freight capacity.

The Department for International Trade engages with other government departments, UK suppliers from across the aviation industry, and trade associations to support exports and investment and understand industry requirements and capabilities.

JUSTICE

■ Administration of Justice: Disability

Alex Cunningham:

[\[59215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the finding of the recent report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, entitled Inclusive justice: a system designed for all, that there are gaps in the collection, monitoring and analysis of disability data for defendants, what steps his Department is taking to tackle those gaps.

Chris Philp:

HMCTS welcomes the Equality and Human Rights Commission report on Inclusive Justice which brings the opportunity to review the report recommendations alongside the work already being progressed for supporting vulnerable defendants.

Under the HMCTS Reform Programme new systems are being developed to improve accuracy and consistency of data across the Magistrates' and Crown Court jurisdictions, including data on disability.

Courts: Coronavirus**Alex Cunningham:**[\[59214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to publish the proposed evaluation of the use of remote hearings during the covid-19 outbreak; whether the findings of that evaluation will be disaggregated by protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010; and how the findings will be used to inform future practice.

Chris Philp:

We have worked closely with the judiciary to safely continue thousands of hearings during the pandemic.

HM Courts and Tribunals Service is planning to evaluate the use of remote hearings during the covid-19 outbreak. They will publish the findings of the evaluation once it is complete and has been quality assured.

The findings will be disaggregated by protected characteristic where data are available and robust conclusions can be drawn. The findings will be used to inform how remote hearings are used in different jurisdictions.

Disability**Alex Cunningham:**[\[59216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to record data on different disability impairment types.

Chris Philp:

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is committed to supporting all vulnerable people who come into contact with the criminal justice system. We recognise the importance of meeting the needs of this cohort, are therefore taking steps to improve data collection on disability.

This includes ongoing work by HM Prisons and Probation Service (HMPPS) to implement a new data categorisation list which aligns with that used by the World Health Organisation and the Government Statistical Service on the new Prison National Offender Management Information System (new-NOMIS). This will include a more complete list of conditions which will allow HMPPS to more accurately record impairments and support the individual needs of offenders.

Improvements have also been made in the breadth of data captured on NDelius, the probation case management system. Probation data collection covers the protected

characteristics, and records specific conditions as narrative detail under broad headings such as Autism Spectrum Condition, Visual Impairment, Reduced Physical Capacity and others.

The MoJ is also committed to supporting staff with disabilities. The department is working to improve the robustness of employee disability data, and to record data with more accurate recognition of disability impairment types.

■ Legal Aid Scheme: Reviews

Christian Wakeford:

[\[57415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress his Department has made in its review of the means test; and when he plans to bring forward proposals.

Alex Chalk:

The comprehensive review of the legal aid eligibility regime commenced in February 2019. The review is exploring how the current arrangements, including the existing financial thresholds, adequately protect access to justice, particularly for the vulnerable. Whilst the Government had previously committed to complete the review by Summer 2020 and to mark this with publication of a consultation paper, the impact of the Covid-19 crisis has meant this work has been temporarily paused and a revised timetable for delivery of the review will be announced shortly.

■ Ministry of Justice: Carers

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[57072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many staff in his Department had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Chris Philp:

The MoJ HR systems do not capture this information regarding caring responsibilities.

We can provide data from the Civil Service People Survey for the last 4 years. This is not a workforce statistic, so only representative of those who completed the survey each year, but it is the best available information the department has.

The question answered is below:

“Do you look after or give help or support to any family members, friends, neighbours or others who have a long-term physical or mental illness or disability, or problems related to old age?”

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Yes	6740	8970	7620	10021
No	21960	21910	25380	23006
People Survey	46%	48%	49%	49%

	2016	2017	2018	2019
--	------	------	------	------

Response Rate

The department aims to support those with caring responsibilities. We've been recognised for the support we provide to carers and run the Carers Network, which is open to all staff, offering support and guidance.

■ Prison Accommodation: Temperature and Ventilation

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[57150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the (a) internal temperature and (b) ventilation of temporary accommodation cells during hot weather.

Lucy Frazer:

The temporary accommodation cells are constructed and insulated to be comfortably occupied in all weathers. Each cell is thermally insulated which, along with insulating against cold weather, also stops heat gain. Each cell has a heater that can be controlled from inside the cell and a window that can be opened to provide ventilation and fresh air.

■ Prisoners: Coronavirus

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[57151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of prisoners were tested for covid-19 (a) following reception to the custodial estate, (b) following a transfer between custodial facilities and (c) before being released from prison during May 2020.

Lucy Frazer:

Data on prisoner receptions, transfers and releases for the requested period are not yet available. As such, we do not hold the specific information requested. The requested data are a subset of Offender Management Quarterly Statistics due for future publication in October 2020.

We can confirm the total number prisoners who have tested positive for Covid-19, which was 482 as of Friday, 5 June. Prisoner tests are conducted on symptomatic individuals on site. The testing capacity and availability can vary between establishments, depending on local circumstances at the time.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[57418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will amend the COVID-19: National Framework for Prison Regimes and Services, published on 2 June 2020, to specify that it will be an objective to test prisoners for covid-19 infection in all cases during reception, transfer, and release processes as soon as is practicable.

Lucy Frazer:

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service has no plans to amend the Covid-19: National Framework for Prison Regimes and Services published on 2 June.

We are, however, examining what additional testing capacity we might bring in to further support our understanding of the importation of infection into prisons, including the asymptomatic testing of new receptions.

■ Prisoners: Mental Health**Ms Lyn Brown:****[57149]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on prisoners' mental health of extended periods of occupation of temporary accommodation cells.

Lucy Frazer:

We take mental health provision very seriously and are committed to working closely with health partners to ensure that offenders are able to access the treatment and support required for their mental health needs. The health and justice partners include: Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), NHSE/I, and Public Health England (PHE).

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic mean that visits have been suspended and people in prison are spending more time in their cells. They are, however, being given access to services including telephone contact with loved ones, access to health services and where possible time in the open air. Additionally, following a successful trial at HMP Berwyn, we are rolling out secure video calling to other prisons to help prisoners maintain contact with their families. We continue to make the Samaritans phone service available, and are working with the Samaritans to ensure that the Listener peer support scheme continues to function effectively. We are also providing distraction packs and in cell activities to support mental and physical wellbeing and to address anxiety and boredom.

Temporary accommodation is being installed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is designed to support HMPPS in protecting prisoners by providing further space in the estate for prisoners in line with Public Health England guidelines.

All accommodation is for single occupation and provides in-room sanitation. This will create a safe environment for social distancing and self-isolation.

We are continuing to provide care and support to people at risk of self-harm or suicide through ACCT (Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork) case management. For those with severe mental health issues, we are doing everything we can to ensure that the process for referral, assessment and transfer to mental health hospitals continues in as normal a way as possible.

■ Prisons: Coronavirus**Ruth Jones:****[57367]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans his Department has to introduce mass testing for covid-19 for (a) prisoners and (b) prison staff.

Lucy Frazer:

We are conducting testing for all consenting staff and prisoners at HMP Littlehey in Cambridgeshire as part of surveillance study to inform future outbreak and infection control within a vulnerable prisoner population.

Further, we will be conducting universal testing of consenting prisoners and staff at 28 prisons across England as part of a surveillance study taken forward in partnership with DHSC, PHE and the University of Southampton. This is one of several studies to be undertaken by the Department of Health and Social Care in England which also includes schools and in the wider community.

Ms Lyn Brown:**[57419]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will amend the COVID-19: National Framework for Prison Regimes and Services, published on 2 June 2020, to specify that it will be an objective to establish effective contact tracing in every part of the custodial estate as soon as is practicable.

Lucy Frazer:

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) has no plans to amend the Covid-19: National Framework for Prison Regimes and Services published on 2 June.

We have been working and continue to work with Public Health England/Wales (PHE/W) colleagues on contact tracing and establishing the most effective response to positive cases at establishments. We are currently finalising joint PHE/HMPPS guidance, which will set out how HMPPS will work with the new NHS Test and Trace service. This guidance will set out further steps to trace contacts for both staff and prisoners. This will be conducted as far as possible in accordance with national Test and Trace expectations but will take into account the specific requirements of the custodial environment

■ Prisons: Staff**Kenny MacAskill:****[59255]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of (a) operational, and (b) non-operational prison staff have received (i) a financial incentive, or (ii) extra pay since the start of the covid-19 outbreak, by grade; and if he will make a statement.

Lucy Frazer:

We are making special payments to our hardworking prison staff who continue to go above and beyond the call of duty during these exceptional times.

As at 31st May 2020, 30,799 prison staff have received a financial incentive or extra pay. This is made up of 26,272 (92%) of operational staff and 4,527 (50%) of non-operational staff in prisons.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

■ Leader of the House of Commons: Carers

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[57890\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, how many staff in his Office had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg:

The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons is part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the Hon. Gentleman to the Cabinet Office response to his parliamentary questions ([57062](#), [57075](#) and [57076](#)) on the same subject, which advise that the information requested is not held centrally.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Abortion: Northern Ireland

Carla Lockhart:

[\[58833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with reference to the Government consultation, A new legal framework for abortion services in Northern Ireland, published 4 November 2019, what estimate he has made of the number of submissions from (a) disability organisations and (b) people who identified as disabled.

Carla Lockhart:

[\[58834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with reference to the Government consultation entitled, A new legal framework for abortion services in Northern Ireland, published 4 November 2019, what estimate he has made of the the number of submissions from (a) disability organisations based in Northern Ireland and (b) individuals residing in Northern Ireland who identified as disabled.

Carla Lockhart:

[\[58835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many meetings the Northern Ireland Office had with disability charities and organisations on the Abortion (Northern Ireland) (No 2) Regulations 2020 which allow abortion on the basis of disability up until birth.

Mr Robin Walker:

[Holding answer 16 June 2020]: The public consultation, A new legal framework for abortion services in Northern Ireland, provided an opportunity for people and organisations in Northern Ireland to contribute their views on how the Government could best deliver on its statutory duty under section 9 of the Northern Ireland

(Executive Formation etc.) Act 2019 in implementing the CEDAW Report recommendations. The Government engaged with a wide range of stakeholders who reached out seeking further discussions during the consultation process. However, the consultation process did not collect personal data that would identify a respondent as a person with a disability. We carefully analysed all of the views expressed in the submissions received.

It is the Government's firm view that the Regulations properly comply with the statutory duty under section 9 of the NIEF Act, and are also compliant with the UK's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

TRANSPORT

■ Cars: Linlithgow and East Falkirk

Martyn Day:

[\[57290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many registered car owners there were in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency for the most recent period for which records are available.

Rachel Maclean:

At the end of 2019, there were 59,322 licensed cars registered to an address in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency.

■ Department for Transport: Carers

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[57069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many staff in his Department had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department for Transport (DfT) does not collect data on the number of people with caring responsibilities on its HR systems.

We are, however able to provide data on the numbers responding positively to the Civil Service People Survey question on caring responsibilities over this period. The total number for the Central DfT and its four agencies is broken down as follows:

DEPARTMENT / AGENCY

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Central DfT	535	409	322	209	267
Driver & Vehicle Licencing Agency (DVLA)	1329	1169	1099	1107	1096
Driver & Vehicle	1153	906	702	582	659

DEPARTMENT / AGENCY

Standards Agency
(DVSA)

Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA)	205	150	138	153	136
Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA)	33	27	19	17	24
Total	3255	2661	2280	2068	2182

This is not a workforce statistic and is only representative of those who completed the survey and the best available information DfT currently has.

■ Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Databases

John Spellar:

[\[57082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many requests for vehicle data were made to the DVLA in the last year for which figures are available; and how many companies (a) had access and (b) were denied access to that data.

Rachel Maclean:

In 2019, the Driver and Vehicle Agency received 25,569,164 requests for vehicle keeper data. Electronic requests were made by 942 organisations, which include local authorities, private parking companies, insurance companies and finance companies. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of those who request data making a paper application. 25 companies were denied access to vehicle data.

■ Driving Instruction and Driving Tests: Coronavirus

Mr Peter Bone:

[\[57143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether (a) instructors, (b) examiners and (c) pupils will be required to wear face coverings when driving tests and teaching restart following the covid-19 outbreak.

Rachel Maclean:

As the health and safety of staff and customers is key, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is currently working closely with the Department for Transport to prepare for a safe return to testing.

At present, its testing services are under review and it will announce details of resumption in due course.

The DVSA remains committed to resuming testing as soon as it is safe to do so and in line with further Government advice.

When providing driving lessons, all ADIs should put in place appropriate measures, in line with the latest Public Health England and Cabinet Office guidance, to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Using the latest Government guidance, the DVSA is working closely with the Approved Driving Instructors National Association Strategic Partnership (NASP) to develop appropriate plans and control measures that will enable the resumption of non-essential driving lessons.

■ Driving Instruction: Coronavirus

Mr Peter Bone:

[57144]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what social distancing measures will be required when driving tuition resumes following the covid-19 outbreak.

Rachel Maclean:

As the health and safety of staff and customers is key, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is currently working closely with the Department for Transport to prepare for a safe return to testing.

At present, its services are under review and it will announce details of resumption in due course.

When providing driving lessons, all approved driving instructors (ADI) should put in place appropriate measures, in line with the latest Public Health England and Cabinet Office guidance, to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Using the latest Government guidance, the DVSA is working closely with the Approved Driving Instructors National Associations Strategic Partnership (NASP) to develop appropriate plans and control measures that will enable the resumption of non-essential driving lessons.

Further information about safety measures can be found on line at:

www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support

Darren Henry:

[57397]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the DVSA to ensure that guidance is provided to approved driving instructors to ensure they can resume providing their services safely following the covid-19 lockdown.

Rachel Maclean:

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) recommends that, currently, approved driving instructors (ADI) should only provide lessons to candidates who have an essential need.

When providing driving lessons, all ADIs should put in place appropriate measures, in line with the latest Public Health England and Cabinet Office guidance, to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. It is the responsibility of the ADI and the pupil to consider the risks to their health and to decide if the driving lesson is essential.

Using the latest Government guidance, the DVSA is working closely with the Approved Driving Instructors National Association Strategic Partnership (NASP) to develop appropriate plans and control measures that will enable the resumption of non-essential driving lessons.

The DVSA is working closely with the Department for Transport to prepare for a safe return to driver testing. Before practical driving tests are reintroduced, the DVSA will inform the driver training industry, which will help candidates to prepare and reach the standard of driving needed to pass their test.

The DVSA will provide further updates on providing non-essential driving lessons as soon as it can.

■ **Driving Tests: Coronavirus**

Darren Henry:

[57396]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with DVSA on (a) providing access to refunds to those people whose driving theory test certificate has expired during the covid-19 outbreak and (b) resitting the driving theory test for free.

Rachel Maclean:

The two-year validity period of the theory test certificate is set in legislation. This is so the candidate's theoretical knowledge and ability to identify developing hazards remains current. To extend the validity period would require legislative change.

There is no provision in legislation for refunds of test fees in the situation where the theory test certificate has expired, or resitting the theory test free of charge.

■ **Driving: Licensing**

Alex Norris:

[57332]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to extend driving licence validity for people who need to submit paper applications due to not holding a UK passport, during the covid-19 pandemic while the DVLA are unable to process paper applications for people who are not essential workers.

Rachel Maclean:

The administrative validity period of all photocard driving licences expiring between 1 February and 31 August 2020 has been extended by seven months from the date of expiry. Drivers do not need to take any action as this extension is granted automatically.

Drivers who need to renew their entitlement to drive and cannot use the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's online service should submit a paper application in the normal way. However, these will take longer to process in the current circumstances.

The Department is urgently exploring further ways of mitigating difficulties people are facing if they cannot transact online.

■ Electric Scooters

Royston Smith:

[\[57276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of e-scooters on capacity levels in (a) cycle lanes and (b) other under-used road infrastructure.

Rachel Maclean:

The Department has not assessed the effects of trials of e-scooters on the capacity of cycle lanes or under-used road infrastructure. There is limited evidence available about the impact of e-scooters on the road network. This is why we are preparing to start trials of e-scooters. The trials will allow us to gather evidence about the impacts of e-scooters including which parts of road space they may be used. This will inform future policy for e-scooters and other micromobility vehicles.

The Department has recently laid regulations which allow local authorities to make Emergency Traffic Regulation Orders for measures needed to deal with the effects of coronavirus. Alternative publicity arrangements are also now available for other types of Order. These regulations can be used to create new cycles lanes, which e-scooters could use.

Royston Smith:

[\[57277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the number of car journeys that will be replaced by the use of e-scooters in the upcoming trials.

Rachel Maclean:

There is limited evidence available about the impact of e-scooters on the road network. Recent evidence from European cities suggests around 15-20% of e-scooter journeys could replace journeys by car.

The trials will allow us to gather evidence about the impacts of e-scooters including what mode shift they cause. This will inform future policy for e-scooters and other micromobility vehicles.

■ Ferries: Freight

Mick Whitley:

[\[59252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to protect UK seafarers employed by ferry companies in receipt of the Critical Freight Grant.

Kelly Tolhurst:

I recognise how important UK seafarers are to the maritime sector and I remain committed to supporting and protecting them. Funding via the Critical Freight Grants has been provided to maintain the flow of critical goods on 16 RoRo freight routes, with contracts given to 6 operators across the 16 routes. The funding is in place to maintain capacity on specific routes, it is not about supporting specific operators. We will continue to monitor these and all other freight routes so that critical goods continue to come into the UK.

To support seafarers, the Government has made available an unprecedented financial support package, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. Any employer with a UK bank account and PAYE scheme is eligible for a grant to cover 80% of the wages of its employees, up to £2500 per month. The scheme is available for both UK and foreign seafarers who work for firms that fulfil the two key eligibility requirements. On the 12th May the Chancellor announced that the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been extended further and will now remain open until the end of October and so should continue to aid seafarers.

■ Freight: Ferries

Mick Whitley:

[\[59251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what volume of international road freight has been moved on roll-on roll-off ferries from (a) Dover, (b) Hull, (c) Holyhead and (d) Liverpool ports in each month since 1 January 2020 to date.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Department does not collect data on roll-on roll-off cargo on a monthly basis. Data on port freight by route and type of cargo is published in port freight annual statistics. Annual port freight statistics for 2020 will be published in Summer 2021.

■ Independent HS2 Construction Commissioner

Dame Cheryl Gillan:

[\[59176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on what dates the High Speed Two Construction Commissioner made visits to High Speed Two sites from 1 January 2020 to date; and what the location was of each of those visits.

Andrew Stephenson:

The High Speed Two (HS2) Construction Commissioner's role is to provide independent decisions and mediate between the project and individuals or bodies, in unresolved disputes about HS2 Phase One and Phase 2a construction work. The role is part time and the Commissioner works eight days per month.

The Commissioner visited a number of sites in Warwickshire on 21 February 2020. He produces a quarterly report, which includes his observations from the representations he has received and the visits and meetings he has held.

As noted in his most recent report, covering the first quarter of 2020, the Commissioner's visits along the route have ceased in order to comply with Government advice regarding COVID-19. He continues to raise issues with the Department and HS2 Ltd during this period. He meets virtually with officials and continues to respond to correspondence electronically.

Compliance with Government requirements relating to the COVID-19 pandemic meant it was not possible for the Construction Commissioner and the Residents' Commissioner jointly to tour Buckinghamshire – including Amersham.

■ Network Rail: Finance

John Redwood: **[57052]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what additional funding from the public purse is planned to be made available to Network Rail in this financial year.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

My department is not planning to provide any additional funding to Network Rail above and beyond the budget allocated as part of the published Control Period 6 settlement.

■ Public Transport: Coronavirus

Bambos Charalambous: **[59245]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what guidance his Department has issued to (a) transport operators and (b) agents of transport operators on the legal powers available to them to enforce the mandatory wearing of face coverings on public transport.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The face covering regulations give operators new powers to deny access to their services if a passenger is not wearing a face covering, or to direct them to wear one or leave a service if they are not wearing a face covering. Operators have discretion over how they use these powers - they are not obliged to use them.

Government has published updated Safer Transport guidance for operators, which is available here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators>

The guidance includes information for operators on how they can use their new powers to encourage passengers to comply with the face covering regulations. This includes a suggested six-step process for escalation, where operators lead on the following five steps: 1. Engage, 2. Explain and 3. Encourage passengers to comply with the regulation through communications or direct engagement; 4. Enable use. A face covering is covering of any type that covers the nose and mouth. As these can be made at home, the government does not expect access to them to be a significant issue. There is no requirement or expectation that operators would make face coverings available, though operators could consider doing so, for example for free and/or in vending machines; 5. Entry. Operators and their staff have new powers to prevent access to a public transport vehicle, or to direct a passenger to wear a face covering or leave a public transport vehicle, if they are not wearing a face covering. Operators have discretion over how they use these powers. The final step, led by the police, is point 6 - enforcement, where the above steps fail, the police and TfL have the power to fine a passenger if they continue to refuse to comply.

■ Railway Network: Wales

Daniel Kawczynski:

[\[57132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to take steps to better link the national rail network in Wales and the private rail network in England.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The ownership status of the national railway infrastructure in Wales and England is identical on both sides of the border, however Welsh Government have delegated authority for the Wales & Borders franchise and associated train services.

Rail links between Wales and England have been strengthened recently by the electrification of the Severn Tunnel, meaning that for the first time ever an electric railway will run from Cardiff and Newport in south Wales, through the Severn Tunnel and all the way to London Paddington.

■ Railways: Fares

John Redwood:

[\[57051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the latest recorded level of monthly fare revenues received by English train operating companies is; and how that data compares to the same revenues in January 2020.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Information on passenger ticket revenue is collected by LENNON, the rail industry ticket sales database. The data held within LENNON is provided to the Department on a commercially confidential basis and is not publicly available. The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) publish aggregated information on passenger revenue from LENNON as a part of their quarterly rail usage statistics.

■ Road Traffic Control

John Redwood:

[\[57046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will issue guidance to highway authorities on using roundabouts rather than light controls for junctions on new and improved existing roads in the strategic road network.

John Redwood:

[\[57047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will issue guidance to Highways England and to highways authorities to ensure new and replacement cables and pipes are not placed under new roads and where possible diverted to verges and pavements on existing roads.

John Redwood:

[\[57048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will issue new guidance to English Highways Authorities to install segregated right turning lanes at junctions on new and improved roads forming part of a strategic local road network.

John Redwood:

[\[57049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will issue new guidance to English Highways Authorities to usually allow two way running on green at a light controlled road junction at the intersection of two roads with right filters.

John Redwood:

[\[57050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what representations he has received on road traffic delays caused by poor junction design; and what steps is he taking to tackle poor junction design to improve traffic flows.

Rachel Maclean:

Local authorities are responsible for providing appropriate traffic management schemes for their roads. They are free to make their own decisions about the streets under their care, including junction design and operation, provided they take account of the relevant legislation. The Department has provided guidance to highway authorities on various types of junction design, including those mentioned here, in the form of the Traffic Signs Manual and other documents. Chapter 6 of the Traffic Signs Manual in particular provides guidance on various methods for traffic light control. It is for local authorities to decide which methods to use for the roads in their region.

Last year the Department consulted on a proposal to add a new condition to the set of national permit scheme conditions to require that activities placing new apparatus underground should, where possible and practical, be placed under the footway, footpath or verge. Concerns were raised in consultation responses that this would be unworkable, impractical and difficult to enforce, and would adversely impact pedestrians, especially older and disabled people. The Government therefore decided not to proceed with the proposal.

■ Roads: Noise

Mrs Flick Drummond:

[\[57253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the trial of noise cameras on public roads undertaken by his Department from June 2019.

Rachel Maclean:

The acoustic camera trial is complete and 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.

■ Roads: Wales

Daniel Kawczynski:

[\[57138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to implement proposed cross-border road schemes to improve connectivity between Wales and border counties in England.

Rachel Maclean:

The second Road Investment Strategy, published with the Budget, confirmed funding for the development of the A483 Pant-Llanymynech bypass proposal in cooperation with the Welsh Government. The case for constructing this scheme and others proposed along the border between England and Wales will be considered as part of future investment decisions for the strategic and major road networks.

■ Roll-on Roll-off Ships: Irish Sea

Mick Whitley:

[\[59253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the financial viability of Holyhead-Dublin roll-on roll-off ferry services.

Kelly Tolhurst:

We have worked closely with the Welsh Government to review the viability of the Holyhead-Dublin ferry route, and agree that capacity on this route continues to meet the levels of demand to keep goods moving.

We will continue to monitor the situation, as is the case on all freight routes, and will work with the Welsh Government should circumstances on the route change.

■ Shipping: Coronavirus

Afzal Khan:

[\[57351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the 5 May 2020 International Maritime Organization publication entitled Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Recommended framework of protocols for ensuring safe ship crew changes and travel during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The UK has not placed restrictions on the transit and transfer of seafarers. I have previously written to UN organisations asking for an international solution to this issue, confirming the UK's position on crew changes, and also urged other countries to allow crew changes to take place. Many of the recommendations found in the framework are already in place in the UK and we have already provided specific guidance to the maritime sector.

■ Taxis: Coronavirus**Sir Charles Walker:**[\[59192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that licensed black cabs can continue to drive people arriving in the UK from international airports to (a) London and (b) surrounding areas after the introduction of the fourteen day quarantine period; and if he will make a statement.

Rachel Maclean:

The Government guidance: *Coronavirus (COVID-19): how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK* advises how those arriving in the UK can reduce the chance of a second wave of coronavirus in the UK and help prevent family, friends and the community from contracting coronavirus, as well as helping to protect the NHS. This includes using public transport only if no other option is available.

TREASURY**■ Businesses: Coronavirus****Caroline Lucas:**[\[57168\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what information he holds on the proportion of covid-19 business support provided by (a) his Department and (b) the Bank of England which has been allocated to companies whose business activities are aligned with the UK's net zero emissions goal as demonstrated by (i) having a business carbon reduction strategy or (ii) membership of (A) the Science Based Targets Initiative and (B) a similar coalition.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government has published aggregate application and approval figures on the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS), Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) and Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs) since 12 May but does not hold specific breakdown information relating to collective sectors or organisations which have accessed these schemes, including those aligned with the UK's net zero emission goal. The Government is actively considering what further data can be made available in the future. HMRC will publish Official Statistics covering the CJRS and the SEISS on 11 June.

We will assess the impacts of potential interventions against their contribution to our environmental goals, including our climate change and air quality targets.

■ Charities: Finance**Rachael Maskell:**[\[57269\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to provide additional support to medical charities to help those charities maintain (a) their research work and (b) provision of their wider services during the covid-19 outbreak.

Rachael Maskell:

[57271]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimates he has made of the potential costs to the NHS as a consequence of the loss of income to medical charities as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Kemi Badenoch:

Science and innovation is a priority for the Government. That is why we have committed to increase economywide investment in R&D to 2.4%, and at Budget 2020, announced the biggest ever uplift in public R&D investment. The Budget also provided the British Business Bank with £200 million of additional funding for health technology and life sciences firms. Over the next five years this is expected to attract a further £400 million of additional private investment for the sector which will also help bring new and promising health innovation to the market and reach more people.

To deal with the immediate situation, 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. 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.

Health services have never been more needed than they are now. 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 funding awarded to this sector and the types or organisations supported is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/22-million-awarded-to-life-saving-health-charities-during-virus-outbreak>.

■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Paul Holmes:

[57400]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of limited companies that (a) operate an annual payroll for the tax year 2019-2020 and (b) qualify for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Paul Holmes:

[57401]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of limited companies that operate an annual payroll system that made an RTI notification of payment to HMRC after 20 March 2020.

Jesse Norman:

No such estimates have been made.

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[57911]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether key workers working for an employer in receipt of public funding and classified on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable will be eligible to be furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Jesse Norman:

Those working for fully funded public sector organisations, including those that need to shield, should be paid as normal out of existing budgets.

Arrangements should be made to facilitate working from home wherever possible, and reprioritisation and redeployment should be considered to minimise issues with service delivery.

Where an employee needs to shield in a public sector organisation that is not fully funded by public grants, and working from home is not possible, furloughing may be appropriate. However, CJRS claims should remain proportionate to the impact on revenue disruption, and those that need to shield should be furloughed before other staff.

Nadia Whittome:[\[58842\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential difficulties caused to businesses of the length of the notice period between the announcement on the future of the job retention scheme on 29 May 2020 and the cut-off date for an employee to be furloughed on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme by 10 June 2020.

Jesse Norman:

At the end of May the Government sought to give employers as much certainty as possible on how the CJRS will work until the end of October.

Closing the scheme to new entrants is necessary for a gradual closure of the scheme. The focus is now on bringing those currently furloughed back into productive employment.

■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Supply Teachers**Dan Jarvis:**[\[59223\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether agency supply teachers will be eligible for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme during the school summer holiday period.

Jesse Norman:

Agency supply teachers are eligible for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme during the school summer holiday period, where they are otherwise eligible for the scheme.

■ Economic Situation: Coronavirus**Caroline Lucas:**[\[57169\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on what date he plans to publish his fiscal and spending plans for economic recovery post-covid-19; what criteria he is using to ensure that projects which receive funding are aligned with the UK's net zero emissions target; and if he will make a statement.

Kemi Badenoch:

Our economic response to coronavirus was designed to keep people in work, protect people's incomes, and support businesses to give us the best chance of recovering quickly as the economy reopens. These measures have been on a scale unmatched by any government in recent history.

Now, our thoughts, our energies, our resources must turn to looking forward, to planning for the recovery. We will develop new measures to grow the economy, to back business, to boost skills, and to help people thrive in the new post-Covid world. As the Chancellor has said, a new national collective effort has begun: to reopen our country and kickstart our economy.

We will set out further details in due course and, as with all economic and fiscal policy, will assess the impacts of potential interventions against their contribution to our environmental goals, including our climate change and air quality targets.

■ Electronic Publishing: VAT**Daisy Cooper:**[\[57384\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of ending the levying of VAT on audio books.

Jesse Norman:

An extension of the zero rate of VAT has been introduced to provide consistency in approach between certain physical and digital publications.

Audiobooks are already taxed consistently at the standard rate in both physical and digital format.

The Government keeps all taxes under review, including VAT.

■ Enterprise Investment Scheme**Seema Malhotra:**[\[57216\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will amend rules of the Enterprise Investment Scheme to help protect Future Fund investors from losing relief on previous investments.

Jesse Norman:

The Government intends to amend the legislation for both the Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS) and the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS) to ensure that individuals who have made EIS or SEIS investments prior to a Future Fund loan investment in the same company will not lose relief on those existing investments when the Future Fund loan converts to shares or is repaid.

This will ensure that investors who have used the EIS or SEIS for a previous investment are not disincentivised from providing further support to innovative companies eligible through the Future Fund.

The legislation will take effect from the start date of the Future Fund, which is 20 May 2020.

■ Food: Wholesale Trade

Sir Charles Walker:

[59191]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of extending the (a) Business Rates Relief and (b) Hospitality, Retail and Leisure Grant to the food and drink wholesale sector; and if he will make a statement.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government recognises that this is a very challenging time for businesses in a wide variety of sectors.

Businesses occupying properties for retail, hospitality or leisure purposes are likely to have been particularly affected by COVID-19 due to their reliance on customer footfall. The Government has provided enhanced support to these businesses through a twelve-month business rates holiday. The Government also recognises that small businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors are less likely than larger businesses to have sufficient cash reserves to meet their high fixed property-related costs. To help these small businesses, the Government created the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund, which gives grants of up to £25,000 to businesses which occupy properties used for these purposes with a rateable value below £51,000.

Local Authorities (LAs) can choose to make discretionary grants to businesses in retail, hospitality and leisure 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. While food and drink wholesalers are not one of the priority groups which Government has asked LAs to focus on, LAs may choose to make payments 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 (with the exception of grants from the SEISS).

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. 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>.

■ Government Assistance: Coronavirus

Caroline Lucas:

[57164]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what financial support will be made available to people who (a) lose income and (b) are forced to close their businesses in the event of local, rather than national, covid-19 lockdown restrictions being imposed.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government has announced unprecedented support for business and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency including almost £300 billion of guarantees – equivalent to 15% of UK GDP. The support measures which remain open to businesses and individuals include:

- A 12-month business rates holiday for all eligible retail, leisure and hospitality businesses in England
- Small business grant funding (SBGF) of £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief
- The retail, hospitality and leisure grant fund (RHLGF)
- A Discretionary Grant Fund for Local Authorities in England
- The Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)
- The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)
- The Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS)
- The Covid Corporate Financing Scheme (CCFF)
- The Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBL) for small and micro enterprises
- VAT deferral for up to 12 months
- The Time To Pay scheme, through which businesses and self-employed individuals in financial distress, and with outstanding tax liabilities, can receive support with their tax affairs
- A £20 per week increase to the Universal Credit (UC) standard allowance and Working Tax Credit basic element
- A relaxation of UC minimum income floor for all self-employed UC claimants
- An increase in the Local Housing Allowance rates for UC and Housing Benefit claimants
- A rebate scheme reimbursing employers with less than 250 employees for up to 2 weeks of Statutory Sick Pay per employee.

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>.

The Government continues to closely monitor the impact of COVID-19 and support packages remains under review.

■ Government Assistance: Northern Ireland**Mr Gregory Campbell:****[59189]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, what the average furlough

payments were to (a) employees and (b) self-employed people in Northern Ireland in the first month after the commencement of those schemes.

Jesse Norman:

The average payment for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme per furloughed employee in Northern Ireland is not available.

Payments for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) covered a period of three months. As of 31 May 2020 the average payment from the SEISS to individuals in Northern Ireland was £2,900.

■ **Hospitality Industry: Coronavirus**

Daisy Cooper:

[\[57382\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of (a) reducing the rate of VAT on food and drinks, (b) reducing the rate of duty on beer and (c) extending business rates relief to support the re-opening of (i) pubs and (ii) the hospitality industry following the covid-19 outbreak.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has announced unprecedented support for businesses to protect against the current economic emergency. The support available to individuals and businesses includes a business rates holiday, grants to smaller businesses and a package of Government-backed and guaranteed loans, which make over £20 billion of additional support available above an initial £300 billion of guarantees.

VAT is an important source of revenue for the Exchequer, raising £130 billion in 2019/2020, and plays an important part in funding the Government's spending priorities including hospitals, schools and defence. While all taxes are kept under review, there are currently no plans to extend VAT reliefs further. However, to support brewers and drinkers, at the Budget the Government froze beer duty for the third consecutive Budget.

■ **Merchant Shipping: Coronavirus**

Mick Whitley:

[\[57375\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of redundancies amongst maritime workers at (a) P&O Ferries and (b) Stena Line on the UK's capacity to move (i) freight and (ii) passengers on international roll-on roll-off ferry routes during and after the covid-19 pandemic.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government recognises that the news regarding job losses at P&O and Stena will be distressing for employees and their families.

The Government has already announced a range of measures to support all businesses, including roll-on roll-off ferry operators, and we encourage all firms to draw on this unprecedented package of support.

In addition, on 24 April Government committed up to £35m to keeping freight flowing on critical routes into and across the UK.

■ Musicians: Non-domestic Rates

Daisy Cooper:

[\[57378\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of including recording, mixing and mastering studios which require musicians to perform together in the business rates deferral scheme that has been extended to live music venues.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has provided enhanced support to the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors through business rates relief given the direct and acute impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on those sectors.

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.

Businesses not eligible for business rates relief may benefit from the Government's wider COVID-19 business and employment support package.

■ Office for Environmental Protection

Caroline Lucas:

[\[57156\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure the adequate funding of the proposed Office for Environmental Protection from the point at which that office becomes operational.

Caroline Lucas:

[\[57157\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the adequacy of funding allocated to the proposed Office for Environmental Protection; and if he will make a statement.

Kemi Badenoch:

The government is committed to establishing the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) which will play an important role in upholding environmental standards and helping fulfil the government's ambition to be the first generation to leave the environment in a better condition than we inherited it. Sufficient funding will be made available to enable it to fulfil its statutory advice, scrutiny, and enforcement functions.

■ Private Rented Housing: Coronavirus**Simon Baynes:**[\[59263\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to support people who rely solely on rent from tenants for income during the covid-19 outbreak.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Chancellor has announced unprecedented support for businesses affected by Coronavirus including giving them access to cash to pay their rent, salaries or suppliers. The Government has also taken steps to protect commercial tenants from eviction and is working with the sector to publish a Code of Practice to guide and encourage all parties to work together to protect viable businesses and ensure a swift recovery.

In the residential sector, we recognise the pressures which residents and landlords are facing. That is why the Government has extended the suspension of evictions from social or private rented accommodation for a further 2 months and included Buy-to-let mortgages in the extension to the window for applying for a mortgage holiday until 31 October 2020.

■ Public Houses: Coronavirus**Daisy Cooper:**[\[57383\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing incentives for pub companies to write-off rent due from tenants during the covid-19 lockdown in return for offset tax liability.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government has been very clear that we expect landlords, tenants and lenders to work together to find financial solutions that work for all parties, and many are continuing to do so. To help enable that and to ensure best practice is exemplified across all businesses, the Government is working with the sector to publish a Code of Practice to guide and encourage all parties to work together to protect viable businesses and ensure a swift recovery. This is additional to the unprecedented support for businesses affected by Coronavirus including giving them access to cash to pay their rent, salaries or suppliers and the steps taken to protect commercial tenants from eviction. The government keeps all policies under review.

Jessica Morden:[\[59198\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with representatives from pub companies on financial support for pub tenants during the covid-19 outbreak.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government has announced unprecedented support for business and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency including almost £300 billion of guarantees – equivalent to 15% of UK GDP. The hospitality sector continues to have access to a range of government support measures including, but not limited to:

- A 12-month business rates holiday for all eligible retail, leisure and hospitality businesses in England
- Small business grant funding (SBGF) of £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief
- The retail, hospitality and leisure grant fund (RHLGF)
- A Discretionary Grant Fund in England
- The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)
- The Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)
- The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)
- The Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBL) for small and micro enterprises
- VAT deferral for up to 12 months
- Protection for commercial leaseholders against automatic forfeiture for non-payment until June 30, 2020

We continue to engage with businesses and value their feedback. Support measures for businesses, including pubs, remains under constant review.

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>.

■ Travel Agents: Repayments

Patricia Gibson:

[59234]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will take steps to ensure that travel agents are eligible for full refunds for transaction fees in the event that holidays are cancelled as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

John Glen:

The Government remains committed to helping businesses and workers through the present very difficult time, and has announced unprecedented support, including a range of grant and tax deferral schemes, and £300 billion of guarantees, equivalent to 15 per cent of UK GDP.

The terms on which transaction fees for card purchases may be refunded are a commercial arrangement between businesses and their acquirers (the financial services firms which process card payments on behalf of businesses). Some acquirers are taking voluntary measures to support their business customers, for example through waiving fees, and the Government welcomes such action.

■ Treasury: Correspondence

Sir David Amess:

[57053]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether it is his Department's policy to respond to all correspondence from Members of Parliament with (a) a generic Dear Colleague

letter months after the initial query or (b) a detailed and prompt answer addressing the points that have been raised by that Member.

Kemi Badenoch:

It is the Treasury's policy to respond to correspondence from Members with an individual reply that addresses the points the member has raised, within 15 working days. However, the unprecedented volumes of correspondence received since the outbreak of COVID-19 has caused delays in responding.

Detailed Dear Colleague letters have occasionally been issued to Members to update them on changes to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme and to help them reply to their constituents as quickly as possible. The Treasury is working with any Members who have highlighted they cannot use the Dear Colleague letter to reply to their constituents and will provide a further reply to those Members as soon as possible.

■ **Treasury: Social Distancing**

John Spellar:

[\[57080\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect of distanced working during the covid-19 lockdown on the proposals for the closure of local branches of his Department's offices.

Jesse Norman:

HMRC remain committed to their locations strategy of moving to regional centres and specialist sites. Timescales for some existing office closures are currently under review due to the impact of COVID-19 on the construction of some regional centres. As is always the case, if there are ways in which HMRC can improve how they deliver their vital public services then they will seek to implement those improvements. This includes reviewing how HMRC have been able to respond to COVID-19 and determining whether and how they might be able to sustain any changes to ways of working that are proven to lead to better outcomes for both HMRC and taxpayers.

■ **World Economy: Coronavirus**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[59236\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with his (a) G8, (b) G20 and (c) other international counterparts on (i) the global recession as a result of covid-19, ii) potential cancellation of world debt and (c) plans to support recovery of the global economy.

John Glen:

The UK Government continues to engage very closely and regularly with the international community, including the G7, G20, and various international organisations, to respond to the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. G7 Finance Ministers continue to convene regularly to work together on critical economic issues. G20 Finance Ministers last met on April 15 and will next meet on July 18 to

continue to coordinate the international response to the pandemic and support the global recovery.

The UK recently led the development of the G20 Action Plan, which brings together ambitious and wide-ranging commitments to address the economic impact of the virus, including to work with international counterparts to secure a strong global economic recovery. Additionally, as part of this, the Chancellor and his G20 counterparts agreed to a temporary suspension on debt service repayments from the poorest countries. We are working closely with G20 partner countries and international organisations to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan and ensure it maintains efficacy. The UK Government will also work through the G20 and Paris Club of official creditors to closely monitor sovereign debt vulnerabilities in developing countries.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Carer's Allowance: Expenditure

Martyn Day:

[57288]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the cost to the public purse was of providing carer's allowance to people in (a) the UK, (b) Scotland and (c) Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency in the most recent period for which figures are available.

Justin Tomlinson:

The cost of providing Carer's Allowance in Great Britain was £2,883 million for the period 2018/19. Executive competence for Carer's Allowance in Scotland was transferred to the Scottish Government on 3rd September 2018. This figure therefore includes Scottish data up until 3rd September 2018 only.

Carer's Allowance is paid to people living in Scotland by DWP on behalf of the Scottish Government under an Agency Agreement. The Scottish Government is responsible for providing relevant data as such we cannot provide figures at either the Scotland or constituency level.

Information relating to benefit expenditure is published and available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/benefit-expenditure-and-caseload-tables-2020>

■ Carers' Benefits

Darren Jones:

[58765]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Coronavirus (Scotland) (No.2) Act 2020, whether he plans provide unpaid carers with a supplementary Carer's Allowance payment.

Justin Tomlinson:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to Parliamentary Question [54856](#) on 9 June 2020.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Carers

Sir Edward Davey:

[57070]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many staff in her Department had caring responsibilities in each of the last five years.

Mims Davies:

We use the annual Civil Service People Survey to understand how many of our staff have caring responsibilities.

The below table sets out the relevant question and answer from that survey back to 2015. It's worth noting that the People Survey is voluntary, and the extent to which those who completed the survey are representative of the wider workforce is unknown, however this is the best available information that the department currently holds.

We recognise that caring responsibilities may have changed as a result of the current crisis and staff are being encouraged to reflect this in an amended or new Carer's Passport.

NUMBERS OF DWP STAFF WHO LOOK AFTER OR GIVE HELP OR SUPPORT TO ANY FAMILY MEMBERS, FRIENDS, NEIGHBOURS OR OTHERS WHO HAVE A LONG-TERM PHYSICAL OR MENTAL ILLNESS OR DISABILITY, OR PROBLEMS RELATED TO OLD AGE: 2015 TO 2019		DWP PEOPLE SURVEY COMPLETION RATE
2015	16,823	73%
2016	16,324	68%
2017	16,702	69%
2018	17,109	68%
2019	19,914	67%

■ Food Banks

Chris Stephens:

[R] [57261]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans to place in the Library a copy of her Department's internal review of the drivers of food bank usage.

Will Quince:

The Department is conducting a literature review on the factors driving the use of food banks, which we aim to publish before the end of the summer; at which point it will be placed in the Library.

■ Health and Safety Executive: Finance

Andy McDonald: [\[55997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 2 June 2020 to Question 49704 on Health and Safety Executive: Finance, how (a) many extra (i) call centre employees and (ii) inspectors and (b) much extra equipment will be made available to the Health and Safety Executive as a result the £14 million additional funding for the Health and Safety Executive announced in the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's statement on 12 May 2020.

Andy McDonald: [\[55998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 2 June 2020 to Question 49705 on Health and Safety Executive: Finance, how long he estimates it will take for all extra (a) call centre employees, (b) inspectors and (c) equipment to be made available to the Health and Safety Executive as a result the £14 million additional funding for the Health and Safety Executive announced in the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's statement on 12 May 2020.

Andy McDonald: [\[55999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 2 June 2020 to Question 49706 on Health and Safety Executive: Inspections, what estimate she has made of the number of additional (a) physical and (b) remote inspections by the Health and Safety Executive that will take place as a result of the £14 million additional funding for the Health and Safety Executive announced in the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's statement on 12 May 2020.

Mims Davies:

[Holding answer 11 June 2020]: The additional £14m funding for the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is available until March 2021. HSE is developing a rolling programme of activity building on the way it has already tackled approximately 6000 Covid-19 related concerns and will draw down funds throughout the year to bring in additional inspectors, call centre staff and equipment. It is therefore not possible to give set totals at this stage.

■ Health Professions: Coronavirus

Kate Osamor: [\[57304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether he plans to classify covid-19 as an occupational disease for health workers; and if he will make a statement.

Mims Davies:

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) provides the national reporting framework for responsible persons (usually employers in relation to employees) to report certain cases of injury, occupational disease and dangerous occurrences to the Health and Safety Executive.

In relation to the current outbreak, where an individual has either been exposed to coronavirus (SARS- COV-2) or contracted Covid-19 as a direct result of their work, those instances are reportable under RIDDOR.

■ **Housing Benefit: Linlithgow and East Falkirk**

Martyn Day: [57296]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many working households in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency were in receipt of housing benefit in the most recent year for which data is available.

Will Quince:

Housing Benefit statistics by employment status and parliamentary constituency is published and available at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

■ **Poverty: Children**

Chris Stephens: [R] [57260]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of the potential effect of the two-child limit on the (a) extent and (b) depth of child poverty.

Will Quince:

The Government has committed to annual statistics releases related to the operation of this policy.

Statistics for 2018/19 can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-tax-credit-and-universal-credit-claimants-statistics-related-to-the-policy-to-provide-support-for-a-maximum-of-2-children-april-2019>

Statistics related to 2019/20 will be published in the summer.

■ **Poverty: Linlithgow and East Falkirk**

Martyn Day: [57297]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many working households in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency are classed as being in poverty in the most recent year for which data is available.

Will Quince:

The national and regional statistics on the number of people living in working households in low income as set out in the annual 'Households Below Average Income' publication are not available at constituency level as the sample size would not be sufficient to produce robust estimates.

■ Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

Dr Rupa Huq:

[58035]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 9 June 2020 to Question 54982 on Social Security Benefits: Medical Assessments, what her timetable is for that consultation and evaluation process.

Justin Tomlinson:

DWP has commissioned a survey of claimants who have had experience of a telephone assessment. The survey will be undertaken over Summer 2020 and the findings will be published in line with Government Social Research Protocols.

■ Unemployment: Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell:

[57272]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people were not in employment, education or training in (a) the UK and (b) York in the most recent period prior to the covid-19 outbreak for which such information is available; and what her most recent estimate is of the number of those people.

Mims Davies:

Statistics on NEETs can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-neet>

■ Universal Credit: Coronavirus

Jonathan Reynolds:

[51934]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate her Department has made of the amount of universal credit payments that are suspected to have been claimed fraudulently since the start of the covid-19 outbreak.

Will Quince:

Between 16th March 2020 and 29th May 2020, 129,000 Universal Credit claims were referred to the Department as at least one aspect of the claim was suspected to be incorrect. These referrals can occur for a number of reasons and will not all relate to fraud; some may be a simple misunderstanding by a claimant. Where DWP has a doubt about a person's identity, no payment is made until that doubt has been cleared.

The figure includes referrals made by DWP staff and referrals to our Serious and Organised Crime team. Over 2.3 million new claims were made for Universal Credit during this period. We continue to monitor the level of referrals received in order to identify trends.

The Department continues to take the issue of benefit fraud extremely seriously. We have taken decisive action, creating our Enhanced Checking Service (ECS). ECS is a team of fully trained fraud investigators and is responsible for conducting additional checks on claims where front line staff have expressed doubt over a claimant's entitlement to benefit. We have also maintained our Serious and Organised Crime

and Economic Crime Group activity during this period, ensuring we continue to respond to risks and threats referred to us.

In addition, we are able to identify claims made during this period so we can review them as required once we return to business as usual. If benefit fraud is identified, we will ensure that appropriate action is taken.

**The figure relating to the number of fraud referrals received by the Department has been sourced from internal management information and was not intended for public release. It should therefore not be compared to any other figures subsequently released by the Department. This figure has been rounded to the nearest thousand.*

■ **Universal Credit: Self-employed**

Kate Osamor:

[56085]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department has made an estimate of the number of self-employed workers who will have claimed universal credit by October 2020.

Mims Davies:

The information requested is not available.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Manufacturing Industries: Carbon Emissions

Alexander Stafford:

[56205]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what additional (a) support and (b) funding the Government plans to provide to the manufacturing industry sector to help that sector achieve carbon neutral status.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 16 June 2020. The correct answer should have been:

Nadhim Zahawi:

While we are rightly focusing on taking action to tackle the immediate Covid-19 crisis, we continue to prioritise efforts to deal with the serious challenges of climate change.

The Government remains committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. We will continue backing this objective by funding programmes that accelerate the shift to electrification. For example, the Faraday Challenge is providing £274 million to ensure the UK leads the world in the design, development, and manufacture of batteries for the electrification of vehicles.

The 2017 Made Smarter Review highlighted the economic ~~(£455bn GVA + 175,000 jobs)~~ and environmental opportunities ~~(4.5% reduction in CO2 emissions)~~ for the UK's manufacturing sector until 2027. This includes £455 billion Gross Value Added, the creation of 175,000 jobs, and a 4.5% reduction in CO2 emissions. The development of low carbon technologies will benefit the UK economy, as well as reduce carbon emissions, including through the creation of new jobs.

We will establish the world's first net zero carbon industrial cluster by 2040 and at least one low carbon cluster by 2030. This is the second mission under the Clean Growth Grand Challenge, launched in December 2018, and is the most relevant to those manufacturing industries that often co-locate in clusters. UK Research & Innovation is delivering up to £170 million to support the deployment of low carbon technologies in one or more clusters.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

CABINET OFFICE

■ Advance from the Contingencies Fund

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Michael Gove): [\[HCWS298\]](#)

The Cabinet Office has sought a repayable cash advance from the Contingencies Fund of £270,100,000.

The requirement has arisen due to increased costs relating to urgent expenditure, including that relating to the COVID-19 response.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £107,100,000 and £163,000,000 of capital has been sought in a Main Estimate for the Cabinet Office. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £270,100,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Update on Trade Negotiations with Australia and New Zealand

Secretary of State for International Trade (Elizabeth Truss): [\[HCWS297\]](#)

Today, the Government publishes its approach to trade negotiations with Australia and New Zealand, as well as providing an update on its approach to accession to Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

New Zealand and Australia rank among our closest friends. We share a language, head of state and a system of common law, and we have a proud shared history. We also have a common set of values. Like the UK, both nations have always stood up for what is right and maintained a fierce belief in the merits of trade openness, the rule of law, international co-operation, and democratic government.

But what we have never had with either is a free trade agreement. That can change now the UK has left the EU. Our future success as a country depends partly on using our new-found status as an independent trading nation to strengthen ties with old allies beyond Europe. Ambitious, wide-ranging free trade agreements with old friends like Australia and New Zealand are a powerful way for us to do that and make good on the promise of Brexit.

From a purely economic perspective, deals with both countries can help deliver the things that our people care about – better jobs, higher wages, greater choice, and lower prices.

UK businesses traded £21bn worth of goods and services with Australia and New Zealand combined in 2019. Trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand could increase UK exports to Australia and New Zealand by around £1 billion – with beverages firms, the automotive industry and professional services among those expected to

benefit. Opportunities for these agreements include additional access for UK services and investment, removing tariffs and other barriers to trade in goods and the chance to shape the future of digital trade.

An ambitious UK-Australia trade agreement could increase UK GDP by up to £500 million and UK workers' wages by up to £400 million. It can enable Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to export more goods and services to Australia, building on the 13,400 UK SMEs that already exported goods there in 2018.

A cutting-edge agreement with New Zealand could increase UK workers' wages by up to £200 million. New Zealand and the UK also share a particular ambition to work together to promote clean growth through trade – a key contribution to a low-carbon economic recovery.

But perhaps more importantly than the pure economics, both these countries are vital to the UK's future place in the world and our future sovereign capability.

The pandemic has given oxygen to the politics of protectionism across the globe, and to those who advocate closed, statist economies. Trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand are important in helping our country and the world move beyond coronavirus.

Strengthening ties between nations who believe in free trade is a powerful way to defend the principles of open markets and international cooperation, and in doing show that free trade is still the best way forward for the world after coronavirus.

Strategically, our aim is to place the UK at the centre of a network of modern free trade agreements, turning our country into a global hub for businesses and investors who want to trade in dynamic areas of the world – especially in the Asia-Pacific.

Pivoting towards the Asia-Pacific will help diversify our trade, make our supply chains more resilient and make the UK less vulnerable to political and economic shocks in certain parts of the world. This economic security is important at a time of increased turbulence and uncertainty in the world.

It will also help us forge a leadership position among a network of countries committed to free trade – and strengthen the club of like-minded democracies who share our commitment to advance trade liberalisation, fight protectionism and defend international rules.

Australia and New Zealand are both big players in the Asia-Pacific and share our commitment to free trade. They are also prominent members of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership – a club of eleven countries representing 13% of global GDP.

The UK had more than £110 billion-worth of trade in 2019 with the 11 countries in the group and we are determined to increase our trade through membership. CPTPP will help us diversify our trade and join a strong, modern trade agreement between countries committed to free and fair trade in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. Both Australia and New Zealand support our membership, and free trade agreements with both countries would be an important step towards our eventual accession.

Today, the Department for International Trade is publishing three documents:

1. UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement: the UK's strategic approach
2. UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement: the UK's strategic approach
3. An update on the UK's position on accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

We will be placing copies in the House libraries. For Australia and New Zealand, these documents include:

- The Government's negotiating objectives for each trade agreement
- A scoping assessment providing a preliminary assessment of the potential long-term economic impacts for each agreement
- The Government's response to the public consultations on each agreement, setting out how these have informed our policy development.

As with our whole trade agreement programme, these agreements need to work for the UK. We have been clear that future agreements with Australia and New Zealand must work for UK consumers, producers and companies. We remain committed to upholding our high environmental, labour, food safety and animal welfare standards in our trade agreements with these countries. The Government has been clear that when we are negotiating trade agreements, we will protect the National Health Service (NHS). Our objectives reinforce this.

We are engaging with the devolved administrations, crown dependencies and overseas territories to ensure that we develop agreements that works for the whole of the UK. The Government is committed to transparency and we will continue to ensure that parliamentarians, businesses, and the range of civil society stakeholders have access to information on our trade negotiations.

Negotiations with Australia and New Zealand will be carried out by video conference, ensuring that talks can progress during the coronavirus pandemic. We will continue to conduct talks remotely until it is safe to conduct talks in person.