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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ **Aerospace Industry: Redundancy**

Jane Stevenson:

[\[65200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to prevent redundancies in the aerospace sector.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The UK's aerospace sector is benefiting from over £6 billion of support from the Government's Covid-19 business support measures, including: the Coronavirus Corporate Financing Facility; our sector specific support measures for research and development; our supply chain innovation and performance improvement programmes; and export finance support for aerospace, expected over the next 18 months.

In addition, we remain in active discussion with the industry, including at sector level through the Aerospace Growth Partnership.

We will continue to support the aerospace industry to get back on its feet to protect jobs across the whole of the UK.

■ **Carbon Emissions: Greater Manchester**

Jeff Smith:

[\[63396\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to (a) provide support to Greater Manchester's 2038 carbon neutral target and (b) ensure that the regulatory framework supports net zero innovation and new technologies to help Distribution Network Operators meet increased consumer demand for low carbon energy sources.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Local Energy Programme launched in 2017 is supporting Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the clean energy economy. BEIS has allocated £500k directly to Greater Manchester Combined Authority since 2017 to develop innovative business models (for decarbonisation) and public sector leadership (for climate change and zero carbon targets) in support of their 2038 target, which are then shared with other Local Authorities. We are currently working with Greater Manchester Combined Authority on innovative technologies and local energy market approaches to accelerate Manchester's progress towards net-zero, and to make the city an international leader in the transition to clean energy systems

The regulatory price control for Distribution Network Operators is by law a matter for Ofgem, the independent energy regulator. Since the start of the last price control (RIIO ED1) in 2015, around £270m of innovation funding has been allocated to

Distribution Network Operators, which is already supporting the move to net zero. In their Decarbonisation Action Plan (link to Plan [here](#)), Ofgem stated that they would be 'reviewing the way our energy systems are managed to ensure they are fit for a net-zero future'. BEIS is working with Ofgem to ensure that Net Zero innovation and new technologies can assist network operators to meet increased consumer demand for low carbon energy sources.

■ Climate Change: Coronavirus

Alan Brown:

[63399]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will make it its policy to prioritise meeting climate change targets as part of a green economic recovery from the covid-19 outbreak.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

As we recover from COVID-19, the Government intends to deliver a UK economy which is cleaner, more sustainable and more resilient. The UK was the first major economy to legislate our 2050 Net Zero target last year and tackling climate change should be at the heart of our economic recovery.

In delivering the UK's net zero target, we are looking to position the UK as a world leader in low carbon technologies, services, and systems. The UK has a strong base to grow from there are almost half a million jobs in low carbon businesses and their supply chains across the country and low carbon exports are already worth billions of pounds each year.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Overseas Aid

Yasmin Qureshi:

[63285]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which official development assistance programmes funded by his Department are targeted at supporting women and girls.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The UK's Gender Equality Act 2014 (an amendment to the International Development Act 2002), legally requires all overseas development funding to meaningfully consider the impact of how it will contribute to reducing gender inequality.

The Department works with trusted delivery partners, such as the World Bank, to ensure that women and girls are accounted for throughout the delivery process. The Department uses its position as a Board member to ask all delivery partners to disaggregate the data they receive, to show how each project levels the playing field for women and girls.

Our two research and innovation funds, the Newton Fund and the Global Challenges Research Fund, recognise the importance of women and girls. Both funds define gender equality as an eligible research for development objective and all funding calls require applicants to submit their Gender Equality Statement, against which funding applications are assessed.

Some examples of the Funds' gender work include: the [Gender, Justice and Security Hub](#), which delivers innovative, interdisciplinary research on the challenge of achieving gender justice and inclusive security in conflict-affected societies; the Newton-Bhabha partnership with India, which has funded [research into maternal care](#) across a range of eight lower- and middle-income countries; and a project in Brazil with [Sempreviva Organização Feminista](#), which aims to develop skills in sustainable agriculture and commerce to help women in rural Brazil have better access to markets, both as producers and consumers.

■ Hospitality Industry: Coronavirus

Daisy Cooper:

[\[65201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the guidance entitled, Keeping workers and customers safe during covid-19 in restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services, published on 23 June 2020, restricts the number of customers permitted to be present in hospitality premises to a maximum of 30.

Paul Scully:

Pubs and restaurants will be allowed to have more than 30 people on the premises provided COVID-19 secure guidelines are being followed and other social distancing measures are still in place. This includes limiting those at a table to groups from a maximum of two households. These types of venues are not subject to the 30-person limit because of the way a gathering is defined in law. These types of venues can be thought of as being comprised of many smaller gatherings.

■ Hunterston B Power Station: Electricity Generation

Alan Brown:

[\[63405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the planned shutdown date is for Hunterston (B) nuclear power station; what the electricity generation capacity is of that power station; and what plans his Department has to replace that capacity.

Alan Brown:

[\[63406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the planned shutdown date is for Hartlepool nuclear power station; what the electricity generation capacity is of that power station; and what plans his Department has to replace that capacity.

Alan Brown:

[\[63407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the planned shutdown date is for Heysham nuclear power station; what the electricity generation capacity is of that power station; and what plans his Department has to replace that capacity.

Alan Brown:

[\[63408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the planned shutdown date is for Hinkley Point (B) nuclear power station; what the electricity generation capacity is of that power station; and what plans his Department has to replace that capacity.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The shutdown of nuclear power stations is a matter for the operator and the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

EDF Energy's published closure dates and the generating capacity for stations is set out in the following table.

POWER STATION	EDF ENERGY'S PUBLISHED CLOSURE DATE	GENERATING CAPACITY
Hunterston B	March 2023	965 MW
Heysham 1	March 2024	1,155 MW
Hartlepool	March 2024	1,180 MW
Hinkley Point B	March 2023	955 MW

In order to meet our target of net zero emissions by 2050, we will need to have a significant expansion in low carbon electricity generation. This includes renewables, carbon capture usage and storage, and nuclear. We also have the capacity market mechanism which ensures the right incentives are in place to deliver the level of electricity required.

■ Industrial Health and Safety: Coronavirus

Steve McCabe:

[\[63222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 9 June 2020 to Question 51571 on Industrial Health and Safety:

Coronavirus, whether the easing of covid-19 lockdown restrictions will affect the right of clinically vulnerable people to access (a) the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and (b) other support in the event that their employer cannot provide a safe working environment.

Paul Scully:

As stated in the answer I gave the Hon. Member on 9 June 2020 to Question 51571, employees 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.

Employers have a legal duty to make sure the workplace is safe for their employees and should consider whether a person has a disability or is clinically vulnerable in their risk assessment. Employers must also consider reasonable adjustments for

people with disabilities. In the first instance, employers should support clinically vulnerable employees in working from home, including moving them to another role if required. Where it is not possible to work from home, employers should provide the safest onsite roles available to enable them to follow social distancing measures.

If an employer is unable to provide a safe working environment, clinically vulnerable employees can still access a range of government packages including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (for employees who have already been furloughed for a full three-week period prior to 30 June) and the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme. This support will build on the £1bn announced at Budget to support the financial security of vulnerable people, through a half billion boost to the welfare system, and a half billion-pound Hardship Fund for Local Authorities.

■ **Innovation: Coronavirus**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[63429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will fund innovation and skills hubs as part of the economic recovery from the covid-19 outbreak.

Amanda Solloway:

Ensuring that our businesses have access to the skills they need will be key to supporting economic recovery. We are working closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Department for Education, the Department for Work and Pensions and HM Treasury on ensuring that skills support is an important part of the response to impact of Covid-19 on the economy. As part of our recovery and our wider R&D ambitions, we will be supporting University-Business engagement through a range of approaches, including collaborative research, innovation and skills activity.

■ **Manufacturing Industries: Coronavirus**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[63416\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help ensure the economic resilience of supply chains during the covid-19 outbreak.

Paul Scully:

We have put in place an unprecedented package of Government support to help with business continuity and to give businesses and their suppliers the support they need to help ensure they can get back up and running after the Covid-19 crisis.

We have also worked closely with businesses, business bodies, trade unions, Public Health England and workplace safety experts to develop “national consensus” on the safest ways of working across the economy, with specific guidance drafted for different types of workplaces.

■ Nuclear Power

Alan Brown: [\[63409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what new nuclear projects are under consideration for a Regulated Asset Base finance model; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

We consulted in 2019 on a Regulated Asset Base (RAB) model as a possible funding model for new nuclear projects. The RAB is a generic framework and each project has its own considerations that should be taken into account when looking at how it should be financed. We will respond to the consultation in due course.

■ Nuclear Power Stations

Alan Brown: [\[63412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much money has been allocated to the nuclear sector deal; what the agreed spend is to date; and what progress has been made against agreed milestones; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Total funding in the Nuclear Sector Deal – from both the Government and industry – is £204 million, of which £172 million is from the Government. Publicly committed Government funds to date are approximately £113 million, with further announcements being considered. Good progress has been made on the Sector Deal, including:

- Publication of a National Decommissioning and Waste Management Pipeline in June 2019.
- Up to £16 million in research and development grants for advanced manufacturing, awarded in November 2019.
- Support from the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund to a Rolls-Royce-led UK consortium to develop a Small Modular Reactor, announced in November 2019.
- Publication of a Nuclear Sector Gender Roadmap and Gender Commitment in December 2019.

■ Nuclear Reactors: Finance

Alan Brown: [\[63411\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much funding has been allocated to the development of small modular reactors; what the spend is to date; what progress has been made against agreed milestones; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Government has awarded £18 million, match funded by industry, to the UK Small Modular Reactor (SMR) consortium for Phase 1 of a programme to develop an SMR in the UK. This is part of a greater bid into the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. Approval will be sought for the remaining £215.5 million in Government grant funding (matched by industry) in due course.

As at 15 June, costs of £7 million of the £18 grant funding had been incurred. Phase 1 is due to complete in April 2021

Additionally, the Government has provided up to £7 million to regulators to build the capability and capacity needed to support and assess advanced nuclear technologies.

Ofgem**Wera Hobhouse:**[\[63454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to publish a revised Strategy and Policy Statement in 2020.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

With regards to energy, under the Energy Act 2013, a Strategy and Policy Statement (SPS) requires that my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State set out the Government's strategic priorities in formulating its policy for the energy sector. The forthcoming Energy White Paper will address the transformation of our energy system, promoting high-skilled jobs and clean, resilient economic growth as we deliver net-zero emissions by 2050.

Personal Care Services: Coronavirus**Dan Jarvis:**[\[65124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when his Department plan to review the date for the re-opening of sports massage therapist services as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

Paul Scully:

The Government has published safer working guidance on 23 June for close contact services, including sports massage therapist services. Following the Prime Minister's announcement, hairdressers and barbers in England will be able to reopen from 4 July, once they are following the COVID-secure guidelines. Other close contact services, like sports massage therapists, remain closed until further notice.

We are taking a phased, cautious approach to reopening our economy, working with businesses, trade associations and medical experts on the safest way to reopen close contact services like sports massage therapists where there is often greater risk of transmission due to prolonged periods of face-to-face contact and close proximity between staff and customers.

We intend to allow close contact services to re-open as soon as it is safe to do so.

■ Public Houses: Coronavirus**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[65092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of enabling pubs and bars to host music performances from the 4 July 2020 in accordance with covid-19 social distancing guidelines.

Paul Scully:

Following my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's announcement, all pubs, restaurants, bars, and cafes in England can begin to offer services to customers from Saturday 4 July as long as they follow the safer working guidelines.

Guidance is clear that venues should not permit indoor performances, including drama, comedy and music, to take place in front of a live audience.

Indoor performances or loud music can increase the risk of aerosol transmission from either the performer(s) or their audience.

■ Renewable Energy**Alan Brown:** [\[63410\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what new renewable energy projects are under consideration for a Regulated Asset Base finance model; and if he will make a statement.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Government's main support mechanism for new renewable electricity projects is the Contracts for Difference Scheme. The Renewable Heat Incentive currently supports new renewable heat projects.

■ Renewable Energy: Scotland**Alan Brown:** [\[63400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will provide a ringfence for early-stage technologies within the Contracts for Difference mechanism to support for Scotland's wave, tidal and floating wind sectors.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The next Contracts for Difference allocation round is planned for 2021. A consultation on potential changes closed on 29 May. We are now considering submissions, including from those sectors requesting a ringfenced or minimum allocation, and will publish a response in due course.

Alan Brown: [\[63401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support the Government plans to provide to ensure a sustainable small-scale renewable energy sector in Scotland; and if he will make a statement.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Smart Export Guarantee, which came into force across Great Britain in January 2020, mandates that small-scale low-carbon electricity generators have the right to be paid for the renewable electricity they export to the grid.

This reflects our continued commitment to ensuring that low-carbon electricity – whether at the household level or the national level – is central to the transition to the smart and flexible energy systems of the future.

■ Small Businesses: Trade Agreements**Marco Longhi:**[\[63513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for International Trade on maximising regional benefits for SMEs in trade discussions and negotiations.

Paul Scully:

My Rt. Hon. Friends the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Secretary of State for International Trade regularly discuss a range of issues relating to domestic and international objectives.

Trade is essential to the UK's success in the longer-term. For example, removing trade barriers with the US through a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement could deliver significant gains to every part of the UK, especially for the 31,600 Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) across the UK already exporting to the US and providing new opportunities to businesses and entrepreneurs.

The UK and US have set out a mutual commitment to rapidly agree a standalone SME chapter and continue the UK-US SME dialogue. We will continue to seek SME-friendly provisions throughout a UK-US FTA.

■ Tidal Power and Wave Power: Finance**Alan Brown:**[\[63404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what Government funding is available for a feasibility and development project for (a) tidal and (b) wave energy projects; and if he will make a statement.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Government regularly makes funding available for innovative energy projects. Tidal and wave energy companies are welcome to bid into calls for the Energy Entrepreneurs fund and the UKRI SMART Grants programme. Government funds feasibility and assessment work for low technology readiness level (TRL) technologies through the ORE Supergen.

■ Tourism: Coronavirus

Charlotte Nichols:

[63525]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps is he taking to prevent travel companies asking customers to pay the balance on holidays that have not been confirmed as going ahead.

Paul Scully:

Package travel agencies are required to comply with the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018, which protect consumers who have bought package holidays. Consumers are entitled to a full refund if a package holiday is cancelled due to unavoidable and extraordinary circumstances, which should be issued within 14 days.

Further information on the rights and responsibilities of consumers and businesses was published on 30 April by the Competition and Markets Authority who have also set up a covid-19 taskforce for consumers to register complaints, available through: <https://www.coronavirus-business-complaint.service.gov.uk/>.

Where payments were made using a credit card meeting certain criteria, redress may also be sought from the credit card company under Section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974.

■ Travel: Coronavirus

Dr Dan Poulter:

[63304]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of supporting the issuing of refund credit notes by small and specialist travel businesses during the covid-19 outbreak.

Paul Scully:

The Government recognises the challenges some businesses are experiencing in processing refunds for cancelled travel arrangements. Package travel agencies are required to comply with the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018, which protect consumers who have bought package holidays. Consumers are entitled to a full refund if a package holiday is cancelled due to unavoidable and extraordinary circumstances, which should be issued within 14 days. Many businesses are also offering consumers refund credit notes or alternative dates, which consumers are able to choose should they wish. Travel operators should be clear with consumers as to the terms of refund credit notes provided, including what insolvency protections underpin them. The Government is clear that refunds must be paid when asked for by the consumer.

■ Universities: Research

Douglas Chapman:

[\[65135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support research at universities across the UK.

Amanda Solloway:

On 27 June, the Government announced a package of support for UK universities to ensure that the university research base can fully contribute to the UK recovery and our economy in the longer-term. The University Research Stabilisation package will give greater job protection to thousands of researchers, scientists and technicians working at UK universities, and will enable universities facing potential decline in income for research as a result of COVID-19 to continue their research and innovation activities.

Around £280 million of UK government investment will be made immediately available to support researchers' salaries and other costs such as laboratory equipment and fieldwork. This includes £200m of new funding, together with up to £80 million of existing funding from UK Research & Innovation (which is being freed-up from likely grant underspends for redistribution to support R&D in our universities). From the Autumn, UK Government will provide a package for universities across the UK consisting of low-interest loans with long pay-back periods, supplemented by a small amount of government grants, to cover up to 80% of a university's income losses from international students for the academic year 2020/21, up to the value of their non-publicly funded research activity. Universities will need to demonstrate how these funds are being utilised to sustain research in areas typically funded by charities and business.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility

Mr William Wragg:

[\[65138\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for oversight of all Government Departments' preparations for Brexit.

Mr William Wragg:

[\[65139\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for oversight of all communications and other Government interventions to ensure businesses and citizens get ready for Brexit.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65140\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for oversight of the devolution consequences of Brexit.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65141\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for Brexit preparedness and legislation.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65142\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for oversight of constitutional affairs and efforts to maintain the integrity of the union and defend democracy.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65143\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for oversight of work on cross-government efficiency, transformation and resilience.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65144\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for oversight of cross-government work on veterans' issues.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65145\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for oversight of the Cabinet Office Equalities Hub.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65146\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for constitutional policy and democracy.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65147\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for the integrity of the Union.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65148\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for the Government Communication Service.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65149\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for FOI and transparency.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65150\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for Knowledge Management.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65151\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for the UK Statistics Authority.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65152\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for Cabinet Office parliamentary business.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65153\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for Controls (Communications).

Mr William Wragg: [\[65154\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for Cabinet Office domestic (including Cabinet Office HR, Finance and Security).

Mr William Wragg: [\[65155\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for Controls (commercial, digital, property).

Mr William Wragg: [\[65156\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for Commercial models.

Mr William Wragg: [\[65157\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2020 to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for Cyber and resilience.

Mr William Wragg: [\[66095\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

Mr William Wragg: [\[66096\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for Government property.

Mr William Wragg: [\[66097\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for the Government Commercial Function.

Mr William Wragg: [\[66098\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June to Question 59509 on Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility, which Minister is responsible for public bodies and appointments policy.

Chloe Smith:

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office is responsible for the supervision of the overall work of the Cabinet Office across all policy areas.

Further to the answer given to PQ [43737](#) on 11 May 2020, details of areas of responsibility for junior ministers will be published in due course.

■ Civil Servants

Sir Edward Davey: [\[63210\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many civil servants (a) in each ethnic group and (b) of each gender have been employed by each Government Department in each of the last five years.

Sir Edward Davey: [\[63211\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people have been recruited into the Civil Service in each Government Department in each of the last five years, by (a) ethnicity and (b) gender.

Sir Edward Davey: [\[63212\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many LGBTQ+ people were employed as civil servants in each Government Department in each of the last five years.

Sir Edward Davey: [\[63213\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many civil servants employed by each Department were disabled in each of the last five years.

Chloe Smith:

The data requested for 2015-2018 is published here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/datasets/civilservicestatistics>

The data for 2019 is published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/civil-service-statistics-2019>

Note in all cases the data depends on self-declaration and a significant proportion of civil servants will choose not to do so.

Contact Tracing: Computer Software**Rachel Reeves:****[64173]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Answer of 22 June 2020 to Question 60837 on Contact Tracing: Computer Software, if he will publish the results of the peer review carried out by the GDS into Zuhlke Engineering.

Chloe Smith:

The answer to PQ 60837 did not mention a peer review into Zuhlke Engineering. GDS peer reviews are not conducted on organisations or companies.

Contracts**Helen Hayes:****[64265]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish his Department's processes to monitor the performance of contracts which involve significant amounts of sub-contracting.

Chloe Smith:

The Cabinet Office follows government procurement policy. Guidance is already published on GOV.UK, and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/contract-management>

Contracts: Coronavirus**Helen Hayes:****[64264]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of private contracts issued by the Government during the covid-19 outbreak which have subsequently been sub-contracted to other firms.

Chloe Smith:

This information is not held centrally.

Coronavirus: Disease Control**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:****[65185]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the guidance entitled Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do after 4 July updated on 24 June

2020, what the limited set of circumstances when groups of more than 30 people may gather are.

Penny Mordaunt:

As stated in the guidance published at the link below, the limited set of circumstances under which gatherings in groups of larger than 30 people will be permitted will be set out in law before 4 July.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do-after-4-july>

■ **Electronic Government: Fraud**

Mr Barry Sheerman: [63230]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he is taking to combat phishing scams in relation to gov.uk services; and what discussions he has had with search engine providers on screening those scams out of search results.

Chloe Smith:

[GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) is the government's website and online brand. We take steps to ensure this is protected so that people can rely on it as a trusted source for information and do not fall victim to phishing scams.

We ensure that government information and services are correctly listed and rank highly in search engine results so that they are easy for people to find and identify as government information and services. When we identify misleading or scam websites, we immediately report them to the search provider as part of our established process on misleading and scam websites.

■ **Opinion Polls: Coronavirus**

Layla Moran: [63475]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of money spent by the Government on opinion polling in relation to covid-19 (a) overall and (b) in each of the last six months.

Chloe Smith:

I refer the Hon. member to the answer given to PQs [62462](#), [62463](#) and [62562](#) on 25 June 2020.

DEFENCE

■ **Armed Forces: Sanitary Protection**

Mrs Sharon Hodgson: [63249]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to ensure that female service personnel are provided with sanitary products when on operations.

James Heappey:

The policy on provision of sanitary products to Service personnel overseas is currently under review.

I will write to the hon. Member to update her once that review is completed.

■ Armed Forces: Sick Leave**Layla Moran:**[\[63480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the number of working days lost by each armed forces branch as a result of staff mental ill health in (a) 2010 and (b) 2019.

Johnny Mercer:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) takes the health and wellbeing of its personnel very seriously. A Health and Wellbeing Strategy for all MOD employees, military and civilian, was published in mid-2015 (updated in August 2016) and is designed to provide guidance to the Chain of Command and civilian line managers on how to manage the health needs, both mental and physical, of their people. The aim is to maximise the number of people fit to work, managing people back to work after a period of sickness, so that they are fit and able to meet the requirements of Defence outputs, including operational effectiveness.

Whilst the MOD records the medical employability and deployability of Service personnel, more specific information about the level of sickness absence in the Armed Forces is not held centrally. As at 1 January 2020, medical employability for the trained UK Armed Forces was 98.4 per cent.

■ Defence: Procurement**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[65089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reason senior responsible owners have the power to declare initial operating capability, even when specified requirements have not been achieved.

Jeremy Quin:

Our senior responsible owners are closely engaged with their programme and project teams and clearly understand progress being made towards the delivery of the capabilities they are responsible for, including any challenges or risks to delivery. They are therefore able to weigh up all the factors to plan and manage course of action that deliver the right capabilities at the right time, including declaring initial operating capability.

Sometimes senior responsible owners are able to bring a capability into service more quickly than originally intended to deliver a benefit to Defence. In doing so they will undertake a rigorous assessment, identifying outstanding actions which require mitigation in the short-term and develop a plan to address these within an acceptable timeframe. This prevents a capability which can provide an operational benefit to defence being needlessly withheld.

■ Saudi Arabia: Military Aid

Layla Moran:

[\[64304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Saudi pilots have been trained at RAF bases in the UK in each of the last 10 years.

James Heappey:

The number of Saudi pilots who have started a training course or programme in each of the last 10 years is detailed in the table below. It should be noted that as some of the programmes can last up to four years there are currently pilots still in training.

YEAR	NUMBER OF SAUDI PILOTS STARTING TRAINING IN UK
2010	3
2011	4
2012	0
2013	24
2014	24
2015	16
2016	23
2017	10
2018	0
2019	0
2020	0

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Arts: Government Assistance

Tracy Brabin:

[\[66161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what Government support is available to freelancers in the creative industries who are not eligible to apply for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme or Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Caroline Dinenage:

We know that freelancers and individual artists across the creative industries are facing enormous difficulties as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak. The Government's response has been one of the most generous and comprehensive in the world,

including the Self Employment Support Scheme and Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. In addition, the Government has adapted the welfare system so that the self-employed can access Universal Credit in full, to help people get quicker and more generous support when they need it most.

To ensure we are assisting all our sectors as effectively as possible, regular ministerially-chaired roundtables are held with business representative organisations and trade associations from across the creative industries. In addition, officials are in regular contact with stakeholders from these sectors, and we continue to speak with HM Treasury colleagues to ensure that the full spectrum of government support reaches the UK's world-leading creative industries.

■ **Broadband and Mobile Phones**

Ruth Jones:

[64332]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps his Department has taken to increase mobile and broadband coverage.

Matt Warman:

The Government is committed to delivering nationwide coverage of gigabit capable broadband as soon as possible. This will be done through promoting network competition and commercial investment wherever possible and by intervening with public subsidy where necessary.

To deliver this we are taking action to reduce barriers to commercial deployment including through the Telecommunications Infrastructure (Leasehold Property) Bill currently before Parliament. This will make it easier to connect tenanted properties with an unresponsive landlord. At Budget 2020, we also committed to invest £5 billion to deliver gigabit capable deployment to the hardest to reach areas across the UK.

This investment is on top of our existing funding for gigabit broadband, including the £200 million Rural Gigabit Connectivity programme. In addition in March 2020 the Government's broadband Universal Service Obligation went live. This provides everyone in the UK with the legal right to request an upgraded broadband connection that provides a minimum download speed of 10 Mbps and upload speed of 1 Mbps.

With regards to mobile connectivity, the Government announced in March 2020 that it had agreed a £1 billion deal with the mobile network operators to deliver the Shared Rural Network. This will see operators collectively increase mobile phone coverage throughout the UK to 95% by the end of 2025, underpinned by legally binding coverage commitments.

The Government is also committed to being a world leader in 5G technology and providing a 5G signal to a majority of the population by 2027. As a part of this, we have invested millions in a programme of 5G Testbeds and Trials, including the recent £30 million 5G Create competition.

■ Broadband: Rural Areas

Dr Lisa Cameron:

[\[64222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans his Department has to work with internet providers throughout the UK to ensure that rural areas have adequate level of connectivity.

Matt Warman:

The UK Government has legislated to implement the Universal Service Obligation (USO), which launched on 20th March 2020. The USO is a UK-wide measure which provides eligible households with the legal right to request a broadband connection that provides download speeds of at least 10Mbps and an upload speed of at least 1Mbps up to a Reasonable Cost Threshold of £3,400 per premise. The eligible premises are predominantly located in rural areas.

In addition, the Government's Superfast programme has invested more than £1.8bn of public money, to connect over 5.2 million homes and businesses to superfast broadband, providing download speeds of at least 24 Mbps. Over 96% of the UK now has access to these speeds. Building Digital UK (BDUK) continues to work closely with Local Authorities and Devolved Administrations to deliver improved connectivity through the programme, overwhelmingly focussing on premises in rural areas.

The Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme, which is part of the Government's £200 million Rural Gigabit Connectivity programme, provides vouchers of up to £3,500 for SMEs and up to £1,500 for residents in rural areas to connect to gigabit-capable broadband. This government will also be investing an additional £5 billion to ensure that premises in the hardest to reach areas are able to access gigabit-capable broadband.

Alongside this investment in broadband, the Government announced in March 2020 that it had agreed a £1 billion deal with the mobile network operators to deliver the Shared Rural Network. This will see operators collectively increase mobile phone coverage throughout the UK to 95% by the end of 2025, underpinned by legally binding coverage commitments.

■ Charities: Ethnic Groups

Rachael Maskell:

[\[63421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which BAME charities are in receipt of (a) (i) direct or (ii) indirect funding from a Government department or (b) direct funding from a local authority.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[63422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which LGBTQ+ charities are in receipt of (a) (i) direct or (ii) indirect funding from a Government department or (b) direct funding from local authorities.

Rachael Maskell:

[63423]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which charities supporting women in receipt of (a) (i) direct or (ii) indirect funding from a Government department or (b) direct funding from local authorities.

Rachael Maskell:

[63424]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which charities supporting disabled people are in receipt of (a) (i) direct or (ii) indirect funding from a Government department or (b) direct funding from local authorities.

Mr John Whittingdale:

On 8 April the Chancellor announced a £750 million funding package for charities. This includes £360 million of targeted funding by central government departments for charities providing vital services during the Covid-19 pandemic. Individual government departments have allocated this funding in line with their usual internal procedures. In addition, part of this package will include an open fund aimed at smaller charities and social enterprises working with vulnerable people affected by the crisis in England delivered through the National Lottery Community Fund.

My department and the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF - our distribution partners for the Coronavirus Community Support Fund) have been - and continue to - engage extensively with diverse and underrepresented groups during the development of the response and are working with a number of organisations to improve the reach of the Coronavirus Community Support Fund. A diverse advisory panel has been set up to support the distribution process for the fund.

No DCMS funds have been allocated to local government for onward distribution. The department does not hold information on direct funding allocated by local government.

Announcements and the breakdown of government funding can be found on the gov.uk website here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/financial-support-for-voluntary-community-and-social-enterprise-vcse-organisations-to-respond-to-coronavirus-covid-19>. Details of the funds awarded by The National Lottery Community Fund and by DCMS will be published in due course. Individual departments will be responsible for publishing their own data.

■ Commercial Broadcasting: Radio

Douglas Chapman:

[64941]

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

Mr John Whittingdale:

We recognise there has been a significant negative impact on radio advertising revenues as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and have worked closely with

commercial radio broadcasters and trade bodies to support the industry through this exceptionally challenging period.

In addition to the wider economic support available to UK businesses, the government has brokered sector-specific support for commercial radio. Discussions with Arqiva, the UK's transmission network operator, have resulted in a package of assistance on transmission costs with six months free transmission for Arqiva's small station customers.

■ **Cricket: Coronavirus**

Sir Oliver Heald:

[\[64808\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the timeframe is for the restarting of cricket as the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased; and if he will make a statement.

Nigel Huddleston:

Officials are working very closely with the ECB on plans to deliver the safe return of club cricket as soon as possible. We are working at pace to shape guidance that will allow the safe return of competitive cricket and other team sports. Any shared sporting equipment may risk transmission, but these risks can be mitigated with good hygiene practice as being adopted across a wide range of sectors. I hope to make further progress on this in the coming weeks so that teams can enjoy a great cricketing summer.

■ **Digital Broadcasting: Radio**

Douglas Chapman:

[\[64943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent progress he has made on the roll out of small-scale DAB radio; and if he will make a statement.

Mr John Whittingdale:

Ofcom, the UK's independent regulator, is responsible for licensing small-scale DAB radio services. Following a consultation with the radio industry in 2019, Ofcom published a policy statement in April 2020 on the approach to licensing small scale DAB services, using powers given to them in The Small-scale Radio Multiplex and Community Digital Radio Order 2019. In June 2020 Ofcom confirmed that they plan to advertise Round One of the small-scale radio multiplex licences in September 2020.

■ **Football Association Premier League: Illegal Broadcasting**

Daisy Cooper:

[\[65023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, following his confirmation at the daily press conference on 17 June, that all but 5 countries worldwide broadcast the restart of the Premier League on 17 June 2020, whether Premier League football was legally aired by any broadcaster in Saudi Arabia on that date.

Nigel Huddleston:

beIN Media Group own the rights to broadcast Premier League football in the Middle East and North Africa. beIN Media is currently unable to operate in Saudi Arabia, so Premier League football cannot be viewed legally in Saudi Arabia at this time.

■ Gyms: Coronavirus**Dan Jarvis:**[\[65123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when his Department plans to review the date for the re-opening of indoor gyms as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

Nigel Huddleston:

Sports and physical activity facilities play a crucial role in supporting adults and children to be active. The Government has made it clear that it will adopt a phased approach based on scientific and medical advice, and that the primary goal is to protect public health. The Government is in discussions with representatives from the physical activity sector, and is working towards the re-opening of indoor sports venues and facilities, including gyms, as soon as it is safe to do so.

■ Holiday Accommodation: Bristol**Thangam Debbonaire:**[\[63374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the number of short-term lets in Bristol.

Nigel Huddleston:

We recognise that these are extremely difficult conditions for hospitality businesses across the country, including short term lets. My officials and I continue to engage with short term holiday accommodation stakeholders to monitor the impact. No specific assessment has been made on COVID-19's effect on the number of short term lets in Bristol.

In preparation for parts of the sector reopening on 4 July, we have published reopening guidance on Gov.uk for hotels and other guest accommodation, including short term holiday lets.

We will continue to engage with stakeholders to assess how we can most effectively support tourism's recovery across the UK.

■ Holiday Accommodation: Coronavirus**Thangam Debbonaire:**[\[63375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the number of short-term lets in the UK.

Nigel Huddleston:

We recognise that these are extremely difficult conditions for hospitality businesses across the UK, including those in the short term lets market. We also greatly appreciate this market's work in housing key workers and vulnerable groups during this crisis.

My officials and I continue to engage with short term holiday accommodation stakeholders to monitor the impact. No specific assessment has been made on COVID-19's effect on the number of short term lets in the UK.

We have worked very closely with accommodation stakeholders to prepare reopening guidance for hotels and other guest accommodation, including short term holiday lets.

As the sector reopens from 4 July onwards, we will continue to engage with stakeholders to assess how we can most effectively support tourism's recovery across the UK.

Local Broadcasting: Radio**Douglas Chapman:**[\[64942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps his Department has taken to ensure that local radio stations continue to provide news to local communities (a) during and (b) after the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The government recognises the vitally important provision of local news and current affairs by local radio stations, particularly during these unprecedented and challenging times.

The BBC and commercial radio broadcasters are operationally and editorially independent of government. However, the BBC has introduced a package of measures that it hopes will keep the nation informed, educated, and entertained through these unprecedented times, including increasing local news output between 6am and midday on all BBC local radio stations.

Commercial radio has increased its support to listeners and their communities through the provision of additional Covid-19 related content. The wider economic support available to UK businesses and from the package brokered by Government with Arqiva, the UK's transmission network operator, which will provide six months free transmission for Arqiva's small station customers, provides crucial support to maintaining news services across commercial radio.

As regards commercial stations, the local programming and content requirements for holders of local analogue commercial radio licenses are set by Ofcom under the relevant legislative framework – primarily the Broadcasting Act 1990 and the Communications Act 2003. These are matters for Ofcom.

Douglas Chapman:[\[65133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what support his Department has provided to community radio stations during the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The Community Radio Fund was set up in 2005 and has an annual budget of £400,000, which is used to help support community radio stations across the UK. It is administered by Ofcom, and applications are assessed by an independent panel.

For the financial year 2020-21, we have worked with Ofcom to use this Fund to provide emergency cash grants to help community radio stations to meet urgent liabilities and to keep themselves in business. Ofcom announced details of 81 awards on 4 June - allocating a significant proportion of the Fund's budget for the year - and will be inviting applications for a further emergency funding round shortly to ensure that the full amount goes to those stations most in need of support at this time.

We are continuing to liaise with stakeholders across the sector regarding ways in which the Government can support community radio through Covid-19 and beyond.

■ Proud Trust: Finance**Jackie Doyle-Price:**[\[64176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if steps he has taken to ensure that funding allocated to the Proud Trust in relation to the tampon tax scheme has been spent in compliance with that scheme.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The Proud Trust received funding through the 2017/18 round of the Tampon Tax Fund. DCMS has grant agreements with all successful Tampon Tax Fund applicants which require organisations to deliver the projects in compliance with the aim of the Fund which is to support disadvantaged women and girls. DCMS maintain close relationships with their grant recipients, including regular scrutiny of their progress against grant agreements. The Proud Trust is required to report on the activities, outcomes and finances of the project funded through the Tampon Tax Fund as part of their grant agreement.

■ Sanitary Protection: VAT**Jackie Doyle-Price:**[\[64175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will list the organisations and projects that have benefited from grants from the Tampon Tax Fund in the 12 months; and what steps he has taken to ensure that those grants have been used to support women's causes.

Mr John Whittingdale:

Details of successful applicants to the Tampon Tax Fund since the 2017/18 round of funding are publicly available on gov.uk. The government grants register also provides information regarding grant awards made by government departments.

The Tampon Tax Fund provides funding to organisations and projects that support disadvantaged women and girls. Applications to the Tampon Tax Fund must detail how a project will do this. DCMS has grant agreements with all successful applicants which require the project to deliver in line with this commitment, including when

delivering any onward grant funding. DCMS maintain close relationships with their grant recipients, including regular assessment of their progress against grant agreements.

■ Sports: Coronavirus

Rosie Cooper:

[\[64119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to support community sport groups during the covid-19 lockdown to ensure that they can resume activity once it is safe to do so.

Nigel Huddleston:

Sports and physical activity facilities play a crucial role in supporting adults and children to be active and the Government is committed to reopening facilities as soon as it is safe to do so. The government has announced that indoor fitness and dance studios, and indoor gyms and sports venues/facilities would remain closed but from 4 July other indoor other indoor facilities, including indoor games, recreation and entertainment venues would reopen.

As with all aspects of the Government's response to Covid-19, we will be guided by the science to ensure that as restrictions are eased people can return to activity safely.

Sport England has also announced £210 million of funding to help sport and physical activity organisations deal with the short and long term effects of the pandemic.

■ Swimming Pools: Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell:

[\[63427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will publish the evidence used to determine that swimming pools are not yet considered safe to open with social distancing in place.

Nigel Huddleston:

The consideration of different venues and the activities involved are underpinned by understanding the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 associated with particular activities.

We recognise the importance of re-opening our indoor and outdoor pools and we agree that swimming is a great way for people of all ages to stay fit and healthy. There are concerns about transmission around points of contact within such facilities, like changing rooms due to the high volume of contacts. As such, we need to provide reassurance that these facilities will be safe, and are working hard to achieve this in the coming weeks.

The Government is actively working towards a safe way to re-open these facilities, with supporting guidance.

Jane Hunt:

[63541]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the report entitled, The Importance of Pools Post-lockdown, published by Swim England.

Nigel Huddleston:

I recognise the impact that COVID-19 has had on the sport and physical activity sector. Sports and physical activity facilities including swimming pools play a crucial role in supporting adults and children to be active.

The Government is committed to reopening facilities as soon as it is safe to do so and I welcome the work Swim England are doing with the sector to produce guidance on the re-opening of swimming pools. As with all aspects of the Government's response to Covid-19, we will be guided by the science to ensure that as restrictions are eased people can return to activity safely.

Alberto Costa:

[64950]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the closure of swimming pools on professional and amateur swimming clubs.

Nigel Huddleston:

The consideration of different venues and the activities involved are underpinned by understanding the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 associated with particular activities.

We recognise the importance of re-opening our indoor and outdoor pools and we agree that swimming is a great way for people of all ages to stay fit and healthy. There are concerns about transmission around points of contact within such facilities, like changing rooms due to the high volume of contacts. As such, we need to provide reassurance that these facilities will be safe, and are working hard to achieve this in the coming weeks.

The Government is actively working towards a safe way to re-open these facilities, with supporting guidance.

■ Tourism

Sally-Ann Hart:

[63548]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to encourage local authorities to market and promote their areas as part of a wider scheme to promote domestic tourism and support the tourism and hospitality sectors.

Nigel Huddleston:

We recognise that these are extremely difficult conditions for tourism businesses across the country, including those along the South East coast. We continue to listen to people's priorities for recovery and will closely monitor the ongoing impact on the tourism industry.

We are looking into ways we can work with local authorities to celebrate the UK's diverse tourism offer once it reopens. We are actively considering all the recovery ideas suggested to us by stakeholders, including schemes to promote domestic tourism.

Through the Cultural Renewal Taskforce and the Visitor Economy Working Group, we have worked very closely with the tourism sector to develop Covid-secure guidance which will help tourism businesses reopen safely. Guidance documents covering hotels and other guest accommodation, the visitor economy and pubs and restaurants are published on Gov.uk.

VisitEngland have also introduced an industry standard quality mark that tourism businesses can acquire if they are compliant with Covid-19 secure guidance. The 'We're Good To Go' industry standard mark is part of VisitEngland's 'Know Before You Go' campaign, which encourages the public to find out what is open and when. This campaign points consumers toward Destination Management Organisations' websites, helping people to access up to date local information.

■ Tourism: Coronavirus

Sir Edward Davey:

[63215]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the coastal tourism industry; and if he will make a statement.

Nigel Huddleston:

We recognise the COVID-19 crisis has significantly impacted the coastal tourism industry. DCMS, DEFRA, MHCLG and VisitEngland remain in regular contact with tourism stakeholders and Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) in coastal regions to closely monitor the situation and to assess the economic effects.

The Chancellor has announced a host of measures to support businesses and individuals through the crisis, including those in the tourism sector. This includes the recently extended Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Bounce Back Loans scheme.

Through VisitEngland, we announced a £1.3 million scheme to provide financial support to DMOs at risk of closure due to COVID-19. The DMO Resilience Fund has supported a number of coastal DMOs around the country, as well as the National Coastal Tourism Academy, enabling them to continue their vital business support work.

From 4 July, people will be allowed to enjoy holidays at the coast in England. To help coastal tourism businesses prepare, we have published reopening guidance on Gov.uk for the visitor economy as well as hotels and other guest accommodation.

We set up the Cultural Renewal Taskforce to help our sectors' businesses prepare to reopen when it is safe to do so. Within this taskforce, I meet regularly with stakeholders through the Visitor Economy Working Group. We will continue to

engage with the industry to assess how we can most effectively support the coastal tourism's recovery.

Sir Edward Davey:

[63216]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the effect of covid-19 on the Cornish tourism industry; and if he will make a statement.

Nigel Huddleston:

We recognise the COVID-19 crisis has significantly impacted tourism across the UK, including in Cornwall. Both DCMS and VisitEngland remain in regular contact with tourism stakeholders and Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) in the South West - including the South West Tourism Alliance and Visit Cornwall - to closely monitor the situation and to assess the economic effects.

The Chancellor has announced a host of measures to support businesses and individuals through the crisis, including those in the tourism sector. This includes the recently extended Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Bounce Back Loans scheme.

Through VisitEngland, we announced a £1.3 million scheme to provide financial support to DMOs at risk of closure due to COVID-19. The DMO Resilience Fund has supported a number of DMOs in the South West, including £22,400 support for VisitCornwall, enabling them to continue their vital business support work.

From 4 July, people will be allowed to enjoy holidays in England. To help tourism businesses prepare, we have published reopening guidance on Gov.uk for the visitor economy as well as hotels and other guest accommodation.

We set up the Cultural Renewal Taskforce to help our sectors' businesses prepare to reopen when it is safe to do so. Within this taskforce, I meet regularly with stakeholders through the Visitor Economy Working Group. We will continue to engage with stakeholders to assess how we can most effectively support tourism's recovery across the UK.

Thangam Debbonaire:

[63376]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the tourism industry in Bristol.

Nigel Huddleston:

We recognise the COVID-19 crisis has significantly impacted tourism across the UK, including in Bristol. DCMS and VisitEngland remain in regular contact with tourism stakeholders and Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) to closely monitor the situation and to assess the economic effects in all regions.

The Chancellor has announced a host of measures to support businesses and individuals through the crisis, including those in the tourism sector. This includes the

recently extended Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme and the Bounce Back Loans scheme.

Through VisitEngland, we announced a £1.3 million scheme to provide financial support to DMOs at risk of closure due to COVID-19. The DMO Resilience Fund has supported a number of DMOs in the South West, including £22,400 support for Visit Bristol, helping them to continue their vital business support work.

From 4 July, people will be allowed to enjoy holidays in England. To help tourism businesses prepare, we have published reopening guidance on Gov.uk for the visitor economy as well as hotels and other guest accommodation.

We will continue to engage with stakeholders - including through the Cultural Renewal Taskforce and the Visitor Economy Working Group - to assess how we can most effectively support tourism's recovery across the UK.

Thangam Debbonaire:

[63377]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the tourism industry in the UK.

Nigel Huddleston:

We recognise that these are extremely difficult conditions for tourism businesses across the country. DCMS and VisitEngland remain in regular contact with tourism stakeholders and Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) to assess the economic effects on the industry.

I encourage affected tourism businesses to continue to explore the Government's economic support package, which includes the extended Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme and the Bounce Back Loans scheme.

Through VisitEngland, we announced a £1.3 million scheme to provide financial support to DMOs at risk of closure due to COVID-19.

In preparation for parts of the sector reopening on 4 July, we have published reopening guidance on Gov.uk for the businesses in the visitor economy as well as hotels and other guest accommodation. VisitEngland have also introduced an industry standard quality mark that tourism businesses can acquire if they are compliant with COVID-19 secure guidance.

We will continue to engage with stakeholders - including through the Cultural Renewal Taskforce and the Visitor Economy Working Group - to assess how we can most effectively support tourism's recovery across the UK.

EDUCATION

■ Apprentices

Karin Smyth:

[\[63389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to increase the number of level 2 and level 3 apprenticeships.

Gillian Keegan:

Employers are at the heart of our reforms to apprenticeships, designing high-quality standards that deliver the skills that they need, and determining which apprenticeships they offer and when. Of the 554 standards now available, 316 are available at Levels 2 and 3 across a range of sectors.

In response to COVID-19 we have introduced a broad range of flexibilities, including encouraging the remote delivery of apprenticeships, to ensure that apprentices can continue with their learning, as far as possible, and to support the continued take up of apprenticeships at all levels by employers.

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

■ Assessments: Coronavirus

Bill Esterson:

[\[65115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the covid-19 outbreak on exam results for school students sitting exams in summer 2021.

Nick Gibb:

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

■ Children: Coronavirus

Sir David Evennett:

[\[63232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support his Department has provided to vulnerable and disadvantaged children during the covid-19 outbreak.

Vicky Ford:

Identifying and supporting vulnerable children is a top priority for the government. Attending school is a strong protective factor for many vulnerable children and young people. This is why educational establishments have remained open for these

children throughout the COVID-19 outbreak. We are closely monitoring the attendance of vulnerable children and encouraging attendance where that would be in their best interests. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, has written to all education settings and Directors of Children's Services in England to encourage attendance for these children.

Approximately 112,000 of the children in attendance on 18 June had an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a social worker, up from 92,000 on 11 June. We estimate this represents 22% of all children classified as 'children in need' or who have an EHC plan, up from 18% on 11 June. Approximately 101,000 of the children in attendance on 18 June were classified as 'otherwise vulnerable', up from 83,000 on 11 June.

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, has also stressed the need for schools, local authorities and social workers to maintain contact and supporting services for vulnerable children and young people throughout this period. Officials from the department and re-deployed Ofsted inspection teams are working with local authorities directly to ensure the systems and processes for maintaining contact with vulnerable children are robust in every local authority in England. The department has issued detailed guidance explaining how education providers can support vulnerable children, including to monitor and encourage attendance.

Where vulnerable children and young people are not attending a nursery, school or further education setting, we have asked local authorities and educational settings to ensure every vulnerable child knows that their setting is there to support them and that systems are in place to keep in touch with those children who are unable to attend.

We are also providing digital devices (laptops and tablets) and/or internet access (4G hotspot devices) to some vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people who do not currently have access to them from other sources, such as their school. The department has ordered over 200,000 laptops and tablets and allocated devices to local authorities and academy trusts based on its estimates of the number of eligible children that do not have access to a device. We are working to provide these devices in the shortest possible timeframe; deliveries to schools and local authorities began in May and have continued throughout June. As of 14 June, we have shipped over 100,000 laptops and 20,000 4G routers.

Furthermore, due to the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 outbreak, we recognise families will face increased pressure on household budgets over the coming months. That is why we are launching a Covid Summer Food Fund which will enable children who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals to be supported over the summer holiday period.

We have also supported charities that provide vital services for vulnerable children and young people. This includes providing £1.6 million for the NSPCC to expand its helpline so that adults can report their concerns about any child's wellbeing. We have invested more than £7 million to Barnardo's for the See, Hear, Respond service that

offers targeted help to vulnerable children, young people and their families affected by COVID-19 with measures put in place to stop its spread. The Vulnerable Children National Charities Strategic Relief Fund opened in June, and is a £7.6 million joint Department for Education and Home Office fund for national children's charities that offer services to safeguard vulnerable children that have financially suffered due to the impact of COVID-19. We have also announced more than £12 million for 14 innovation projects in social services, each taking a holistic, family-based approach to addressing the increased risk some children and young people are facing.

■ Dance: Coronavirus

Dan Jarvis:

[\[65125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he will allow indoor dance lessons to resume, where the lessons consist only of members of two different households with social distancing measures in place.

Alberto Costa:

[\[66100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance his Department has provided to dance schools to prepare for their safe reopening as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

Nick Gibb:

Indoor dance lessons for children are considered to be an out-of-school setting. Out-of-school settings are currently not able to reopen. However, as my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, confirmed on 23 June, holiday clubs and out-of-school clubs for children will be able to restart over the summer, subject to the science and with safety measures in place. Adjustments to current measures for these clubs will be part of Step 3 of the recovery strategy (from 4 July). We will be providing guidance for the sector on how to implement the protective measures necessary to open safely as soon as possible, this will cover group sizes and social distancing measures.

■ Education: Coronavirus

Marco Longhi:

[\[63515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to implement a summer school programme to help the education of pupils who have not received any teaching during covid-19 lockdown.

Nick Gibb:

As plans continue for a full return to education from September, we have announced a £1 billion COVID "catch-up" package to directly tackle the impact of lost teaching time.

This includes £650 million that will be shared across state schools over the 2020-21 academic year. This one-off grant to support pupils recognises that all young people have lost time in education as a result of the outbreak, regardless of their income or background.

The grant has been designed so that school leaders have flexibility and autonomy when choosing how best to support their pupils. The guide published by the Education Endowment Foundation to help schools make effective choices includes advice on summer schools and a link to a Teach First toolkit for schools that choose to offer this.

Separately, a National Tutoring Programme, worth £350 million, will increase access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged young people. This will help accelerate their academic progress and tackle the attainment gap between them and their peers.

■ Education: Sports

Jane Hunt:

[\[63545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the (a) Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and (b) Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on the maintenance of the PE and Sport Premium for the 2020-21 academic year.

Nick Gibb:

The Department is considering arrangements for the Primary PE and Sport Premium in 2020/21 academic year.

As part of this consideration, Department for Education officials have held discussions with their counterparts at the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport regarding the primary PE and Sport Premium and wider PE and sport policy.

■ Foreign Students: Coronavirus

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[63219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the covid-19 outbreak on international students arriving to study at UK universities in the 2020-21 academic year; and if he will make a statement.

Michelle Donelan:

The government recognises that the COVID-19 outbreak will have an unparalleled impact on all elements of the global and UK economy. The higher education sector, including student recruitment, is no exception. We have been working closely with the sector to monitor the likely impacts of COVID-19 on international student numbers, including restrictions on travel.

The UK's world-leading universities remain open to international students and we are working as a priority to make processes as flexible and easy as possible to allow students to study at UK institutions in the 2020-21 academic year.

On 22 June, with my counterparts in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, I wrote to prospective international students to outline the support and guidance that is available to students who are considering studying in the UK from the autumn. In the

letter, I reiterated the temporary and targeted flexibilities that the government has announced for international students. These flexibilities include the visa guidance updated on 16 June, which provides greater certainty for international higher education students. The visa guidance includes the latest information for those who might have questions around visa expiry, switching visa category within the UK and distance learning. The government has also provided reassurances regarding distance learning, confirming that students will be permitted to study partially online for the 2020/21 academic year, provided that they transition to face-to-face learning as soon as circumstances allow. The government has also confirmed that those studying by distance learning or blended learning will be eligible to apply for the graduate route provided that they are in the UK by 6 April 2021 (and that they meet other requirements of the route). The government is applying discretion under the current circumstances to ensure international students are not negatively impacted if they find themselves in a position where they cannot comply with certain visa rules.

We are also in discussions with Universities UK and other sector representatives on a regular basis to ensure that we are united in welcoming international students to the UK. We expect international students - particularly those who will be subject to the 14-day self-isolation period - to be appropriately supported upon arrival by their chosen university during these unprecedented times. International students who are considering studying at a UK higher education provider from September 2020 should contact their chosen university to find out how they are adapting to the COVID-19 outbreak.

On Friday 5 June, the government also announced that Sir Steve Smith would be the UK's new International Education Champion as part of the government's International Education Strategy. Sir Steve will assist with opening up export growth opportunities for the whole UK education sector, which will include attracting international students to UK Universities. The International Education Strategy, published in March 2019 by the Department for Education and the Department for International Trade, set out a commitment to review progress following its publication. The review, which we intend to publish this autumn, will ensure that the International Education Strategy responds to the challenges that are posed by COVID-19.

■ Free School Meals: Ethnic Groups

Caroline Nokes:

[63320]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish the data that his Department holds on eligibility for free school meals by ethnicity.

Vicky Ford:

The department publishes the number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals in the 'Schools, pupils and their characteristics' publications, which are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-and-pupil-numbers>.

The breakdown of eligibility for free school meals by ethnicity is not available in the publication, however this is available on request. There were 346,055 (18.0%) BAME pupils eligible for free school meals in January 2019.

Afzal Khan:

[63494]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many BAME children are in receipt of school meals support in (a) England, (b) the North West and (c) Manchester Gorton constituency.

Vicky Ford:

The most recent figures for number of pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals is based on the school census for January 2020. The number of children eligible for and claiming free school meals in January 2020, by major ethnic group and for the requested geographies, are provided in the table below.

Number of pupils eligible for free school meals by major ethnic group, 2020

	ENGLAND	NORTH WEST REGION	MANCHESTER, GORTON PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY
Asian	139,720	19,470	1,800
Black	127,260	12,070	1,210
Chinese	2,850	480	20
Mixed	121,190	13,770	650
White	982,950	171,650	1,740
Any other ethnic group	44,250	6,940	810
Unclassified	22,390	2,570	100

Figures rounded to the nearest 10, source Spring 2020 School Census

Further information can be found in the annual 'School, pupils and their characteristics' statistical release: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>.

■ **GCE A-level and GCSE: Coronavirus**

Daniel Kawczynski:

[63271]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the adequacy of assessments for (a) GCSEs and (b) A levels as a result of the long educational break as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Nick Gibb:

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

■ Graduates: Employment**Douglas Chapman:**[\[65134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to support graduates looking for employment (a) during and (b) after the covid-19 outbreak.

Michelle Donelan:

Our economic priority is to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on our economy as far as possible. This is an incredibly difficult period for everyone, and we understand that graduates are likely to feel concerned as they enter a far tougher job market than those before them.

Some universities are going above and beyond to support those graduating this summer, providing extensive online careers advice, including webinars offering interview and CV-writing tips and skills and follow-up one-to-one calls. However, we need all universities to step up and play a key role to help graduates take the next step, whether into work or further study.

The recently announced National Tutoring Programme creates an opportunity for graduates to apply for tutoring roles providing support for pupils and schools in the most disadvantaged areas. More details of the programme will be available shortly.

We know that post-graduates often secure employment in higher skilled and higher paid employment than graduates and non-graduates. The government can support with the financial burden of accessing a master's degree with a loan of up to £11,222. Where graduates are considering a career in teaching, tax-free postgraduate bursaries of up to £26,000 are available for trainee teachers starting initial teacher training in 2020/21, depending on the subject in which they train to teach.

■ Health Professions: Training**Sarah Owen:**[\[64360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he had made of the affordability of student-funded tuition fees for all nursing, midwifery, and allied healthcare students from the academic year 2020-21.

Michelle Donelan:

The student finance system removes financial barriers for those hoping to study. It is backed by the taxpayer, with outstanding debt written off after 30 years, which is an investment in the future skills of this country.

Maximum tuition fees for undergraduate courses (including nursing, midwifery and allied health professions), and the subsidised fee loans available from the government to pay them, will remain at £9,250 for a standard full-time undergraduate

course in the 2020/21 academic year, which is the third year in succession maximum fees have been frozen. Monthly repayments are linked to income and not to interest rates or the amount borrowed. Repayments are calculated (at 9%) only on amounts earned over the repayment threshold, which is currently annually £26,575. Additionally, borrowers are protected, as their repayments decrease if their income decreases.

The government has announced a 2.9% increase in maximum loans for living costs for the 2020/21 academic year to £9,203 for eligible full-time undergraduate students living away from home and studying outside London. Higher rates of loan are available for students living away from home and studying in London. In addition, new and continuing nursing, midwifery and allied health professional students will be eligible to receive a new non-repayable grant of up to £8,000 from September 2020 to contribute to their living costs.

■ Higher Education: Coronavirus

Drew Hendry:

[60816]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of extending home student status to the 2021-22 academic year for EU nationals who have been required to defer entry to higher education institutions as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Michelle Donelan:

EU, other EEA and Swiss nationals not in scope of the citizens' rights protections will not be eligible for home fee status, undergraduate, postgraduate and advanced learner financial support from Student Finance England for courses starting in the academic year 2021/22 or beyond. This change will also apply to further education funding for those aged 19 and over and to funding for apprenticeships. It will not affect students starting courses in the academic year 2020/21. This will not apply to students from Ireland whose right to study and to access benefits and services will be preserved on a reciprocal basis under the Common Travel Area arrangement.

EU nationals and any of their family members who start a course in England in the 2020/21 academic year or before (on or before 31 July 2021) will continue to be eligible for home fee status and undergraduate and postgraduate student financial support from Student Finance England for the duration of their course, provided that they meet the residency requirement.

If a student secures a place in the 2020/21 academic year, but subsequently defers the start of their course until the following academic year, then the rules governing student support for courses starting in the 2021/22 academic year will apply to them.

■ Literacy: Ethnic Groups

Afzal Khan:

[63497]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent estimate he has made of (a) child and (b) adult literacy levels by ethnic group.

Nick Gibb:

The most relevant measure that we have for children is based on Key Stage 2 reading results. These are broken down by ethnicity and are available here:

<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/7-to-11-years-old/reading-attainments-for-children-aged-7-to-11-key-stage-2/latest>.

For adults, there is a breakdown of literacy skills by ethnicity in Table 2.25 of our England national report of the Survey of Adult Skills 2012 Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) – full report available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-survey-of-adult-skills-2012>.

■ Music: Education**Dame Diana Johnson:****[63251]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 1 May 2020 to Question 40805, if he will provide a detailed update on the future of the National Plan for Music Education; and what steps he is taking to provide long-term financial support for music education hubs and peripatetic teachers who are dependent on funding via that plan which ends in 2020.

Dame Diana Johnson:**[63252]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for what reason music and creative learning was not included in the online educational resources for schools and parents to help children to learn at home during the covid-19 outbreak; and what steps he is taking to promote online educational resources created by third sector organisations to support music learning during that outbreak.

Nick Gibb:

The Government believes all pupils should have access to an excellent, well-rounded education and the arts and music are central to this. The findings from the Call for Evidence on the National Plan for Music Education, which closed on 13 March 2020, will inform the development of proposals for the refreshed Plan. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the refresh of the Plan is on hold, but this position remains under review. Until the Plan is formally refreshed, Music Education Hubs will continue to fulfil their roles as set out in the existing Plan, taking into account current Government guidance on the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Department is committed to the continuation of high-quality education for all pupils during this difficult time and it is supporting schools and parents through a number of initiatives. The Department's published list of online resources is one such initiative and is intended to support parents and teachers to navigate through the wide range of online educational resources available so that they can identify the right tools and resources to meet their specific needs. For this reason, we have chosen to limit our list to include free online resources to the following: English, Mathematics, science, PE, mental wellbeing and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). These resources are available here

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

The online resources list forms part of a wider range of support available to support education at home including a package of support by the Oak National Academy and enhanced educational provision from the BBC, which both include content for music. Subject associations and professional bodies are also able to signpost to resources for a wider span of subjects. For music, Music Mark and the Incorporated Society of Musicians have done so already, and the Department has signposted to these organisations through social media.

Dame Diana Johnson:

[63254]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that music teachers who work in state-funded schools and colleges but are paid through (a) parents' fees and (b) other private income are being furloughed through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme; and if the Government will reconfirm to education providers that atypical workers who meet those conditions are eligible for such furlough payments.

Nick Gibb:

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

State funded 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, as we move through these extraordinary times.

We do not, in general, expect schools to furlough staff. However, we understand that, in some instances, schools may have a separate private income such as music teachers paid through parent fees. Where this income has either stopped or been reduced and there are staff that are typically paid from those private income streams, it may be appropriate to furlough staff.

Schools should first seek to make the necessary savings from their existing budget or consider options to redeploy these staff before furloughing them. Only after all other potential options have been fully considered should schools furlough those members of staff and seek support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Further information on school's accessing support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme can be found in the publication:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care#state-funded-schools>.

■ Nurseries: Coronavirus

Dr James Davies:

[63436]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with teaching representatives on extending the £1 billion Covid-19 catch up fund to include nurseries.

Vicky Ford:

We know that young children have missed out on early education at a crucial period of cognitive and behavioural development. This is especially significant for vulnerable and disadvantaged children, which may widen the early development gap.

The most effective intervention government can take to address this is to get children back into early education. Children in early years were the first priority for the reopening of education settings.

Since 1 June, early years settings have been able to welcome back children of all ages. We want to ensure councils and early years providers can get children back into settings as quickly as possible, where they can be fully supported during this crucial period for their development.

Fifteen hours of high quality free early education is provided for all three- and four-year olds and disadvantaged two-year olds. An additional fifteen hours (30 hours) is provided for eligible working parents for three- and four-year olds.

We will work with the sector to explore how best to continue to support children's early development, including through the department's Hungry Little Minds campaign which we will use to continue to provide support for parents to develop their children's early language and literacy.

Information on the Hungry Little Minds campaign can be found at:

<https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk>.

■ Overseas Students: Coronavirus

Douglas Chapman:

[65136]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that overseas students can continue to study in the UK during the covid-19 outbreak in the 2020-21 academic year; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure that funding for universities is maintained.

Michelle Donelan:

The UK's world-leading universities remain open to international students and we are working as a priority to make processes as flexible and easy as possible to allow students to study at UK institutions in the 2020-21 academic year.

On 22 June, with my counterparts in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, I wrote to prospective international students to outline the support and guidance that is available to students who are considering studying in the UK from the autumn. In the letter, I reiterate the temporary and targeted flexibilities that the government has announced for international students including, amongst other mitigations,

confirmation that distance learning or blended learning will be permitted for the 2020/21 academic year provided that international students' sponsors intend to transition to face-to-face learning as soon as circumstances allow.

We are also in discussions with Universities UK and other sector representatives on a regular basis to ensure that we are united in welcoming international students to the UK. We expect international students - particularly those who will be subject to the 14-day self-isolation period - to be appropriately supported upon arrival by their chosen university during these unprecedented times. International students who are considering studying at a UK higher education (HE) provider from September 2020 should contact their chosen university to find out how they are adapting to the COVID-19 outbreak.

On Monday 4 May, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, announced the package of measures to stabilise university admissions this autumn and ensure sustainability in HE at a time of unprecedented uncertainty. Full details of the package have been published on GOV.UK:

www.gov.uk/government/news/government-support-package-for-universities-and-students.

The government has also confirmed that HE providers in England are eligible to apply for its support packages, including business loan support schemes. The Office for Students (OfS), the regulator in England, estimates that these schemes could be worth at least £700 million to the sector.

We will only intervene further where we believe there is a case to do so and where we believe intervention is possible and appropriate and as a last resort. In such instances, we will work with providers to review their circumstances and assess the need for restructuring and any attached conditions. The department will be working with HM Treasury and other government departments, as well as with the devolved administrations, to develop this restructuring regime.

■ Schools: Energy

Helen Hayes:

[65176]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to (a) assess the effect of energy efficiency retrofitting of schools on (i) local jobs and (ii) carbon emissions and (b) and encourage schools to retrofit.

Nick Gibb:

The Department supports sustainability through its capital funding and programmes, both to reduce carbon and save schools money on energy. The Department has allocated over £7.4 billion in condition funding since 2015, the majority of which enables local authorities, multi-academy trusts and schools to determine how it is invested in maintaining and improving their school buildings, including energy efficiency measures. More broadly, we are working with colleagues across Government, including the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy,

on carbon reduction and energy efficiency and developing thinking on how future capital programmes can contribute further.

In addition to this, we announced on 29 June a commitment to a multi-wave, 10 year school rebuilding programme. Full details of these projects will be confirmed in the autumn and further funding will be set out as part of the Spending Review.

This will replace poor condition and ageing school buildings with modern, energy efficient designs, transforming education for thousands of pupils and helping to meet the Government's net-zero target and to tackle climate change.

■ Schools: Sports

Sir Mike Penning:

[R] [\[65100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he plans to announce his next allocation of sports premium funding; and if he will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

The Government will confirm arrangements for the Primary PE and Sport Premium in the 2020/21 academic year as soon as possible. The funding for PE and school sport in the 2021/22 academic year and beyond will be considered at the forthcoming Spending Review.

■ Sex and Relationship Education

Caroline Lucas:

[\[63300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish a breakdown of how the £6 million allocated for financial year 2019-20 in support for compulsory Relationship, Sex and Health Education has been spent.

Caroline Lucas:

[\[63301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding has been allocated to implementation support for compulsory Relationship, Sex and Health Education in the 2020-21 financial year.

Caroline Lucas:

[\[63302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools are receiving training tendered by his Department on the roll out of the face-to-face Relationship, Sex and Health Education; and when does that training start.

Nick Gibb:

The Department is committed to supporting schools to deliver high quality teaching of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.

In light of the circumstances caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, and following engagement with the sector, the Department is reassuring schools that although the subjects will still be compulsory from 1 September 2020, schools have flexibility over how they discharge their duty within the first year of compulsory teaching. For further

information, I refer the hon. Member for Brighton, Pavilion to the answer I gave on 5 June to Question [55660](#).

The Department invested up to £2 million in the financial year 2019-20 and is investing up to £4 million in the current financial year to fund a support programme of work to help schools in their preparations to implement the new curriculum. The support programme will include online training modules to enable subjects leads to train non-specialist teachers in their schools, an implementation guide, and case studies from early adopter schools. This support will cover all of the teaching requirements in the statutory guidance and will be inclusive to all pupils. The first training module for teachers, covering mental wellbeing, is now available on GOV.UK, and additional content will be added in the coming months.

As part of the support programme, the Department has agreed grant funding with 21 Teaching Schools covering all 8 regions to deliver a train the trainer and peer support programme to schools in their regions.

In managing the immediate and long-term impact of COVID-19 on education delivery, Teaching Schools are able to deliver online training between June and August. All Teaching Schools have plans in place to deliver training between September 2020 and March 2021. The number of schools that access this training will be available after each term.

■ Sex and Relationship Education: Coronavirus

Sarah Champion: [\[65126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to publish guidance for schools on how they can continue to prepare for the implementation of Relationships and Sex Education during the covid-19 outbreak.

Sarah Champion: [\[65127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will provide a revised timetable for the implementation of Relationships and Sex Education in England's schools.

Nick Gibb:

The Department is committed to supporting schools to deliver high quality teaching of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.

In light of the circumstances caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, and following engagement with the sector, the Department is reassuring schools that although the subjects will still be compulsory from 1 September 2020, schools have flexibility over how they discharge their duty within the first year of compulsory teaching. For further information, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 5 June to Question 55660:

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-05/55660/>

The answer sets out that schools that are ready to teach these subjects and have met the requirements set out in the statutory guidance, including those relating to engagement with parents and carers, are encouraged to begin delivering teaching from 1 September 2020, or whenever is practicable to do so within the first few weeks of the new school year.

Schools that are not ready to teach these subjects or unable to adequately meet the requirements because of the challenging circumstances presented by COVID-19 should aim to start preparations to deliver the new curriculum and commence teaching the new content by at least the start of the summer term 2021.

To ensure teaching begins as soon as possible, schools are encouraged to take a phased approach, if needed, when introducing these subjects. Schools should consider prioritising curriculum content on mental health and wellbeing, as knowledge on supporting your own and others' wellbeing will be important as pupils return to schools.

The Department is also developing a new online service which will feature innovative training materials, an implementation guide and case studies. This support will cover all of the teaching requirements in the statutory guidance and will be inclusive of all pupils. The first training material on mental wellbeing is now available on GOV.UK, and additional content will be added in the coming months. Training will also be available for schools that need additional support. This will complement the online training materials and will be available through existing teaching schools' regional networks.

■ **Students: Coronavirus**

Afzal Khan:

[63492]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of reimbursing the tuition fees of healthcare students to recognise their contribution during the covid-19 outbreak.

Michelle Donelan:

The government is extremely grateful to all students who chose to opt in to a paid clinical placement in the NHS during this extremely difficult time. We have ensured that all students who do so are rewarded fairly for their hard work. Nursing, midwifery and allied health students who volunteered as part of the COVID-19 response have been receiving a salary and automatic NHS pension entitlement at the appropriate band. Time spent on paid placements as part of the COVID-19 response counts towards the requirement for students to complete a specified number of training hours in order to successfully complete their degrees.

Nursing students will continue to be required to pay tuition fees, and there are no plans for a specific debt write-off scheme for these students. Student loan borrowers are only required to make repayments from the April after they have finished their course and until they are earning over the relevant repayment threshold. The amount that borrowers are required to repay each week or month is linked to their income,

not the interest rate or the amount borrowed. Repayments are calculated as a fixed percentage of earnings above the repayment threshold and any outstanding debt is written off at the end of the loan term with no detriment to the borrower.

■ Teachers: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Dame Diana Johnson:

[63255]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether visiting music teachers who receive income through public funds via the pupil premium can claim that part of their income through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Nick Gibb:

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

State funded 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, as we move through these extraordinary times.

The Coronavirus (COVID-19): financial support for education, early years and children's social care guidance (

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care#state-funded-schools>)

states that if you have staff costs that are publicly funded, schools should use that money to continue paying staff, and not furlough them.

Where schools receive a mixture of private and public funds, schools can, subject to conditions set out in the guidance above, use the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to claim grants for the proportion of its pay bill which could be considered to have been funded by the school's private income.

■ Teachers: Ethnic Groups

Sir Edward Davey:

[63220]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) primary and (b) secondary school teachers by ethnicity in each of the last five years.

Nick Gibb:

The numbers of teachers in state-funded nursery and primary schools and state-funded secondary schools from different ethnic groups for the last 5 years is attached.

Attachments:

1. [Number of Teachers by Ethnic Group](#) [63220_Number_of_Teachers.xls]

■ Universities: Coronavirus

Emma Hardy:

[63472]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of university staff are furloughed as of 23 June 2020.

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.

Statistics on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) are published on GOV.UK. The latest publication provides analysis of claims made up until 31 May 2020 and is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme-statistics-june-2020>.

This shows that, across all education sectors, 20,800 employers have furloughed 213,400 staff and made claims to the value of £363 million. However, it is not possible to disaggregate higher education staff from these figures.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) are continuing to develop statistics on the CJRS and plan to publish monthly updates.

The Department of Education is also working with HMRC and HM Treasury to develop appropriate monitoring arrangements for the CJRS.

■ Universities: Scotland

Peter Grant:

[65160]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what economic assessment he undertook of the potential effect on Scottish universities of capping numbers of students from England attending Scottish universities before making that decision.

Michelle Donelan:

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, and I have regular meetings with Scottish ministers, and with ministers from all the devolved administrations, about higher education issues. These discussions have included the development of student number controls policy. Departmental officials also have regular meetings and discussions with their counterparts.

Student number controls are a direct response to the COVID-19 outbreak. They are designed to minimise the impact to the financial threat posed by the outbreak and they form a key part of the package of measures to stabilise the admissions system. We want to make sure that university places are available to all who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them and who wish to do so.

These controls are a temporary measure and will be in place for one academic year only. Student number controls for institutions in the devolved administrations only apply to the number of English-domiciled entrants who will be supported with their

tuition fees through the Student Loans Company. They are set at a level which will allow every institution to take more first year English students than they took last year. The funding of English-domiciled students is not a devolved matter, and it is right and fair that this policy should apply as consistently as possible wherever they are studying in the UK.

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

■ Young People: LGBT People

Sarah Champion:

[65128]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the (a) education and (b) health and wellbeing of LGBT young people; and what support he will provide to tackle any gaps identified in the provision of services to those people.

Vicky Ford:

All children and young people in the country have experienced unprecedented disruption to their education as a result of COVID-19. There have also been concerns around LGBT young people who are isolated in homes with families who are not supportive of their sexual orientation or gender identity. In September, we plan to welcome all children and young people, in all year groups, back to school. We are working towards this because school is the best place for children to learn, and because we know how important it is for their mental wellbeing to be around their peers, carers and teachers, and have access to the pastoral support schools offer.

Education recovery lies at the heart of our ongoing response to the COVID-19 outbreak. This is why the government has announced a £1 billion package of support to ensure that schools have the support they need to help all pupils make up for lost teaching time, with extra support in the form of a tutoring programme for those who need it most. We have also encouraged schools to focus on pastoral support as pupils return and have given schools the flexibility to have a face-to-face 'check-up' with all pupils during the summer term. This is in addition to guidance on how to support children's mental wellbeing while they are not at school. Leading mental health charities are also being supported to deliver additional services through the £5 million Coronavirus Mental Health Response Fund and a further £4.2 million that be awarded to charities, including Samaritans and Young Minds.

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. These are available for children and young people as well as adults. 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>.

In addition, 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/>.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Cattle: Exports

Luke Pollard:

[64323]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has joined with the Scottish Government to defend judicial review proceedings against the Scottish Government's policy on allowing live calf exports without the required journey breaks.

Victoria Prentis:

Compassion in World Farming has brought judicial review proceedings against the Scottish Government, challenging its policy in relation to the transportation of unweaned calves. The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), an executive agency of Defra, has been named as a Respondent, as APHA acts on behalf of, and on instruction from, the Scottish Government in approving journeys from Scotland. Defra is involved only on account of APHA's role in the process.

■ Elephants: Conservation

Henry Smith:

[63307]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what funding his Department has allocated to programmes to help protect Asian elephants living in the wild.

Rebecca Pow:

Defra has provided over £4.2 million in funding for Asian elephants living in the wild since 2015 through the Darwin Initiative and the Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund. These are competitive Defra grant schemes funded entirely through Official Development Assistance (ODA).

The IWT Challenge Fund and the Darwin Initiative have committed £2.9 million and £1.3 million respectively for Asian elephants since 2015 through 14 separate projects. These include a project seeking to reduce the illegal ivory trade in Cambodia, and a project supporting Nepal's world-leading community anti-poaching efforts.

■ Environment Bill

Marco Longhi:

[\[63516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will hold discussions with the Leader of the House on ensuring that there is parliamentary time to enable the Environment Bill to receive Royal Assent before the end of the transition period.

Rebecca Pow:

I would like to thank my honourable friend for his work on the Committee scrutinising the Environment Bill so far and I share his anticipation for the Bill's return. I would like to assure him that the Government is working to resume the Bill's consideration as soon as the parliamentary timetable allows us to do so. I and my department are in close contact with counterparts in the Leader's and Whips' Offices as to the resumption of scrutiny of the Bill.

■ Food Supply

Rachael Maskell:

[\[63415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the level of risk to food security during the next 12 months.

Victoria Prentis:

The UK's high degree of food security is built on access to a range of sources including robust supply chains across a number of countries, in addition to strong domestic production. In 2018, 55% of food we ate was produced in the UK, 26% was imported from the EU and the remainder from the rest of the world. This diversity helps food supply chains to remain resilient to disruptions.

The response to Coronavirus has reinforced the resilience of the UK food supply chain and our well-established ways of working with the food industry. Industry has responded quickly and effectively to the significant changes in demand to ensure people have the food they need. Government and industry have also worked together to monitor potential economic and business impacts in preparation for the end of the Transition Period. We remain committed to working in partnership to respond to such challenges through considering the further measures needed to support public services, people and businesses.

At present, we expect good domestic production this year and all short-term risks to international food supply chains have stabilised, and we have a free flow of goods into the country. Government will continue to maintain close ties internationally and monitor any risks that arise. The UK is a member of the Agricultural Markets Information System (AMIS) which monitors international food markets on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the UN. The latest updates show that global stocks of grains and cereals remain high following a number of good harvests.

We are including a new requirement in the Agriculture Bill for the UK Government to report on food security to Parliament at least once every five years, demonstrating

the importance we place on this subject. The report will contain information on food supply including the role of strong domestic production alongside diverse sources of supply.

■ **Livestock: Transport**

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[63207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department plans to participate in the European Parliament's inquiry into the transportation of live animals; and if he will make a statement.

Victoria Prentis:

We welcome the European Parliament's inquiry and we have previously made the European Commission aware of our concerns that the current regulations on protecting animal welfare in transport need to be amended to afford animals better protection. It would be inappropriate for the Government to participate in this inquiry as we are no longer a member of the European Union.

We have a manifesto commitment to end excessively long journeys for live animals going for slaughter and fattening, which is an opportunity we have gained through leaving the EU. We intend to issue a consultation on how we deliver on that commitment in due course.

■ **Nature Conservation**

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[63206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make it his policy to establish a national nature service; and if he will make a statement.

Rebecca Pow:

Environmental organisations make a valuable contribution to the Government's environmental agenda, through conservation of the natural environment; engaging people in the natural world; and providing access to our beautiful landscapes and coastlines.

As we rebuild our economy in response to the coronavirus pandemic, we must continue to shape an economy and society that are cleaner, greener and more resilient. This Government remains committed to the UK being a world leader on tackling the environmental crises we face.

We welcome the range of proposals that have been shared by groups including environmental organisations to deliver a green recovery. We are reviewing these based upon the best use of public funds. Government is also carefully considering the Glover proposals and will respond in due course.

■ Supermarkets: Coronavirus**Jane Hunt:****[63539]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with representatives from supermarkets on accessibility for (a) blind and (b) partially sighted people (i) under current covid-19 social distancing restrictions and (ii) as those restrictions are eased.

Victoria Prentis:

We are working closely with local authorities, retailers, food businesses and charities to enable blind and partially sighted people to access food through a variety of ways including: volunteers shopping for them, food deliveries from local retailers, wholesalers and food businesses, many of whom will take orders over the phone, as well increasing access to supermarkets for a priority delivery or click and collect slots. We have been able to secure a limited number of online delivery slots for the dedicated use of vulnerable people having difficulties getting food. The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), alongside local authorities and other charities, can now help vulnerable individuals access these delivery slots.

The NHS Volunteer Responders programme can be used by people who need to access food and essential supplies - they can be reached by calling 0808 196 3646 or visiting nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk. In addition, various sight loss charities are working directly with some of the major supermarkets to take forward some practical initiatives to help people with sight loss to access supermarkets.

We are conscious that vulnerable people, including those who are blind or partially sighted, need further information on support services as social distancing restrictions ease. We are working closely with local authorities, charities and retailers to understand how changes in Government advice may affect accessibility and will update the community in due course.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ Armed Conflict: Children****Margaret Ferrier:****[63362]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will support an independent review of the process for listing parties to armed conflict for grave violations against children to safeguard against potential political interference.

James Cleverly:

The UK takes allegations of abuses against children in armed conflict extremely seriously. We strongly support the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and continue to fund her office and work. At the UN Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict on 23 June, the UK reaffirmed our commitment to tackling violations against children in armed conflict and highlighted the need for a transparent and credible framework for accountability.

based on a standardised and evidence-backed approach to de-listing and listing of state and non-state actors for violations. We have called upon the UN to review its approach and we will continue to engage constructively with the UN and member states to ensure the effectiveness of the listing mechanism.

■ Bahrain: Human Rights

Wera Hobhouse:

[\[63453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of the imprisonment and planned execution of people in Bahrain on that country's compliance with international human rights obligations.

James Cleverly:

The Government of Bahrain is fully aware that the UK is firmly opposed to the death penalty, in all circumstances. The right to a fair trial is enshrined in the constitution of Bahrain; we continue to encourage the Government of Bahrain to follow due process in all cases and meet its international and domestic human rights commitments.

■ Bangladesh: Politics and Government

Ruth Jones:

[\[64343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the political situation in Bangladesh.

Nigel Adams:

Bangladesh is an important partner for the UK on a wide range of issues and is a fellow member of the Commonwealth. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) makes regular assessments of the political situation in Bangladesh, including through the British High Commission in Dhaka.

Like the UK, Bangladesh has made some tough decisions to protect its people during the COVID-19 pandemic. Bangladesh is also generously hosting over 900,000 of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar. The UK remains a leading partner in the international response to the Rohingya crisis.

Bangladesh remains a human rights priority country for the FCO. Ministers, and our High Commission in Dhaka, frequently raise our human rights concerns with the Government of Bangladesh, including on freedom of expression.

The UK will continue to engage with the Government of Bangladesh on a broad range of issues and will support efforts towards a stable, prosperous and democratic Bangladesh.

■ Department for International Development: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Sarah Champion:

[\[64204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will publish the Government's cost analysis of the merger of his Department and the Department for International Development.

James Cleverly:

We will implement this change in the most cost effective way possible. The full details of the merger, including the structure of the new department, will be set out in due course.

Preet Kaur Gill:[\[64278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 24 June 2020 to Question 61563, on what dates he discussed the merger of the Department for International Development and his Department with the Prime Minister.

James Cleverly:

[Holding answer 29 June 2020]: The Foreign Secretary and the International Development Secretary meet with the Prime Minister on a regular basis and with each other, bilaterally, to discuss how the UK allocates and spends Official Development Assistance. Decisions on Machinery of Government changes are made by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister discussed the merger with both the Foreign Secretary and International Development Secretary ahead of his announcement in the House.

■ Egypt: Politics and Government**Ruth Jones:**[\[64338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the political situation in Egypt.

James Cleverly:

Egyptians have repeatedly demonstrated their desire for a secure, prosperous, and democratic country. In that context, we look forward to better protection of Egyptians' constitutional rights, freedom of expression and more space for Non-Governmental Organisations and civil society. We believe that these rights and freedoms are essential for Egypt's long-term stability. Egypt is a Foreign and Commonwealth Office Human Rights Priority Country and the UK continues to urge the Egyptian Government to ensure the full implementation of the rights and freedoms set out in Egypt's constitution.

■ Eritrea: Coronavirus**Harriett Baldwin:**[\[63334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the (a) food security and (b) human rights situation in the Southern Red Sea Denkalya Region of Eritrea during the covid-19 pandemic.

James Duddridge:

We are concerned that the people of Eritrea are facing food insecurity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 and the desert locust outbreak have impacted existing humanitarian need as a result of lasting effects of war and climate change. Humanitarian and development programmes in Eritrea are being adapted to address

current food security challenges. UK Aid funds life-saving activity in Eritrea, including providing £4m to UNICEF in 2019-20 to help treat malnutrition in under-fives and provide access to safe hygiene and sanitation services.

We are also aware of reports that the Government of Eritrea is targeting the Red Sea Afar people in the Denkalya region during the COVID-19 pandemic. We raise our concerns about human rights in Eritrea with the Government at every opportunity, and we will continue to make clear that measures taken by them to tackle COVID-19 must be necessary, proportionate, time-bound, transparent and regularly reviewed. Eritrea remains a priority country for the FCO under our annual human rights reporting, and we will continue to monitor the situation there.

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Overseas Aid

Preet Kaur Gill:

[64281]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how much Official Development Assistance (a) his Department has spent in each of the last five years and (b) the new Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will spend in each of the next four years.

James Cleverly:

[Holding answer 29 June 2020]: All information on Foreign and Commonwealth Office Official Development Assistance spending is available at GOV.UK link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-international-development>.

■ Gulf States: Overseas Aid

Preet Kaur Gill:

[65184]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether any spending by the Integrated Activity Fund in (a) 2018-19 and (b) 2019-20 was counted as Official Development Assistance (ODA).

James Cleverly:

All spending by the Integrated Activity Fund in 2018-19 and 2019-20 was counted as non-Official Development Assistance (NON-ODA).

■ India: Politics and Government

Ruth Jones:

[64342]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the political situation in India.

Nigel Adams:

India is the world's largest democracy, influential global leader and key partner on a full range of issues. Together we are a force for good in the world. Like the UK, India has made some tough decisions to protect its people during the pandemic. The UK and India are stronger when we work together as partners, building back better to

sustainable economic growth, delivering resilience, prosperity and security for both our peoples.

■ Nigeria: Violence

Ruth Jones:

[\[61800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Nigerian counterpart on the violence involving farmers and herders in the Nigerian Middle-Belt region.

James Duddridge:

Intercommunal violence in Nigeria has had a devastating impact on communities across multiple states. The UK Government has engaged closely with the Nigerian Federal Government, state governments, international partners and the National Economic Council to help address the drivers of intercommunal violence and push for solutions. The UK Deputy National Security Adviser, David Quarrey, and other senior HMG officials discussed the issue with the former Chief of Staff in January.

The FCO and Wilton Park hosted a joint conference on 'Fostering Social Cohesion in Nigeria' in February. Attendees included representatives from the Nigerian Government. The discussion focused on the complex causes of conflict and explored solutions: a full report from the conference has now been published.

The British High Commissioner and her team are increasing their engagement with state governments in affected states. For example, a team visited Plateau State in December to discuss the situation with the Governor, Christian and Muslim faith leaders, organisations working on reconciliation, and communities displaced by the violence.

■ Overseas Aid

Caroline Lucas:

[\[64126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will confirm that the new Secretary of State of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will continue to report annually on (a) aid levels across Government and (b) the effect of policies pursued by government departments on sustainable development and poverty reduction.

James Cleverly:

The Government will continue to be guided by its responsibilities under the International Development Act and will undertake the necessary parliamentary process to transfer responsibilities under the International Development Act to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. This merger is not about changing our high standards for overseas spending. We will continue to look at how our aid budget can be spent most effectively in our national interest, including through the Integrated Review - which will inform the priorities of the new department.

■ Overseas Aid: Females

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[65002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he plans to maintain the current percentage of ODA expenditure on Gender Equality Marker 1 and 2 projects and programmes in when the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is created.

James Cleverly:

[Holding answer 30 June 2020]: Promoting gender equality and women's rights are a core part of this Government's mission, and vital to fulfilling every girl's right to 12 years of quality education. The UK Government remains committed to a foreign and development policy which consciously and consistently delivers for women and girls. The UK International Development (Gender Equality) Act makes consideration of gender equality in all UK Official Development Assistance a legal requirement.

■ Sri Lanka: Politics and Government

Ruth Jones:

[\[64341\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the political situation in Sri Lanka.

Nigel Adams:

Sri Lanka is an important partner for the UK on a wide range of issues and is a fellow member of the Commonwealth. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office makes regular assessments of the political situation in Sri Lanka, including through the British High Commission in Colombo. We are monitoring political developments in Sri Lanka very closely. Parliamentary elections, delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, are due to take place on 5 August. We have noted with concern the rise in anti-Muslim sentiment in Sri Lanka following the outbreak of COVID-19, and some concerning developments in the human rights situation.

The Minister of State for South Asia, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, recently raised these concerns with the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister on 24 June. We continue to engage with the Government of Sri Lanka on a broad range of issues. The UK is also a member of the Core Group on Sri Lanka at the UN Human Rights Council.

■ USA: International Criminal Court

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:

[\[64959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential implications for his policies of US sanctions on the International Criminal Court.

Nigel Adams:

[Holding answer 30 June 2020]: The UK has always been, and remains, a strong supporter of an effective International Criminal Court (ICC). While we believe that positive reform is required for the ICC to fulfil its mandate as intended under the

Rome Statute - and we are working with the Court and other States Parties to achieve this, we also believe that Court officials must be able to carry out their work independently and impartially, without fear of sanction.

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:

[\[64960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with counterparts in (a) the US Administration and (b) the International Criminal Court on the US sanctions on the International Criminal Court.

Nigel Adams:

[Holding answer 30 June 2020]: The UK has always been, and remains, a strong supporter of an effective International Criminal Court (ICC). While we believe that positive reform is required for the ICC to fulfil its mandate as intended under the Rome Statute - and we are working with the Court and other States Parties to achieve this, we also believe that Court officials must be able to carry out their work independently and impartially, without fear of sanction. We continue to speak to our international partners on these issues.

■ Yemen: Overseas Aid

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[65181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the merger of the Department for International Development with his Department on UK (a) humanitarian and (b) development assistance to Yemen.

James Cleverly:

There is already very close co-ordination between the Department for International Development's provision of life-saving humanitarian aid to Yemen and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's work to enable the humanitarian response politically and support the peace process, and we expect this to continue and improve in the new structure. The UK has shown extensive leadership in responding to the humanitarian crisis, committing almost £1 billion in support to Yemen since the conflict began in 2015. Our £160 million commitment this year aims to provide support to at least 300,000 vulnerable people each month to help them buy food and household essentials, treat 40,000 children for malnutrition and provide one million people with improved water supply and basic sanitation. Regarding development, we are working with the Yemeni Government and international partners on planning for Yemen's post-conflict recovery. This includes emphasising the importance of providing security, stabilising the economy, and delivering basic services. In the 2019/20 financial year, we provided £21 million to the Yemeni Social Fund for Development, helping to support labour-intensive public works and enabling 290,000 of the poorest households across Yemen to procure food from local markets to support their basic needs.

The Integrated Review of foreign policy will define the Government's ambition for the UK's role in the world and its outcomes will shape the objectives of the new

department. The UK remains committed to our key priorities in Yemen: to support the peace process led by the UN Special Envoy, achieve a sustainable and inclusive political settlement and alleviate the humanitarian crisis.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Abscesses: Health Services

Emma Hardy:

[52386]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department plans to take to ensure people with venous leg ulcers and other chronic wounds are able to access community and acute care services promptly; and if he will make a statement.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 4 June 2020]: As set out in the Community Health Services Prioritisation guidance on 19 March, a priority for providers of community services during the pandemic is to ensure that patients cared for at home receive urgent care as and when they need it including wound care if deemed urgent or essential. Services for non-urgent cases are stepping up with full attention to infection prevention and control as the guiding principle.

The National Wound Care Strategy Programme, commissioned by NHS England and Improvement to improve the prevention and care of Pressure Ulcers, Lower Limb Ulcers and Surgical Wounds, is also developing a set of recommendations that they believe will improve wound care and associated outcomes moving forward.

More information on the National Wound Care Strategy Programme is accessible at the following link:

<https://www.ahsnnetwork.com/about-academic-health-science-networks/national-programmes-priorities/national-wound-care-strategy-programme>

■ Baby Care Units: Coronavirus

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[64106]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the level of access to neonatal units by parents of new-born babies.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[64107]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will introduce a subsistence fund to provide funding for parents from low-income families in England to spend time with their new-born babies in neonatal units.

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[64108]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he has taken to ensure that parents in England are (a) encouraged and (b) financially supported to spend time with their newborn children in neonatal units during the covid-19 outbreak.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

The Government recognises that these are challenging times for everyone, but that it is an especially stressful time for parents with babies in neonatal intensive care units.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, services have been working hard to support parents to care for their babies as much as possible while still ensuring that services are safe.

The Department has no plans to introduce a bespoke fund to cover subsistence costs for parents with a baby receiving neonatal care during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Government is providing funding for the charity Bliss to support families with babies that require neonatal care during the COVID-19 pandemic, as part of the Government's United Kingdom-wide £750 million package of support for the voluntary sector announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in April 2020.

Breast Cancer: Medical Treatments**Craig Tracey:****[R] [57300]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that people with incurable secondary breast cancer may receive timely treatment in covid-19 free hubs and sites.

Jo Churchill:

NHS England and NHS Improvement have put in place arrangements to ensure that essential and urgent treatment for cancers has continued throughout the response to the pandemic, including issuing clear guidance to the system and supporting the development of cancer 'hubs' for surgery. This is dependent on the advice of clinicians, who will consider the possible risks and with patient safety at core of the decision making process.

The National Health Service is now working to restore and recover all cancer services, including for people with secondary breast cancer, in ways that keep patients as safe as possible.

Cancer: Coronavirus**Dame Diana Johnson:****[58653]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department plans to publish the final NHS People Plan; and whether his Department has plans to make an assessment of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the cancer workforce as part of that plan.

Jo Churchill:

The publication of the NHS People Plan was deferred, so that the National Health Service can devote maximum operational effort to COVID-19 readiness and response. NHS England and NHS Improvement, together with Health Education England, are progressing action to grow and transform the workforce and build lasting culture change, in line with the objectives of the People Plan.

Any future publication of the People Plan will reflect the impact of COVID-19 on priorities for the National Health Service workforce, including the cancer workforce. As well as introducing safety restrictions on the cancer workforce, the COVID-19 pandemic has also accelerated innovations and opportunities which will contribute to achieving the NHS Long Term Plan cancer commitments.

■ Care Homes: Ventilators

Andrew Rosindell:

[48296]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many continuous positive airway pressure ventilators have been distributed to care homes since the outbreak of covid-19.

Andrew Rosindell:

[48297]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of supporting people in care homes with covid-19 using continuous positive airway pressure ventilators.

Edward Argar:

Although Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) devices can be used in the home setting to treat some long-term conditions, it is not suitable for use at home or in care homes to treat patients who are acutely unwell with COVID-19. This is because their installation and use requires a high level of technical and clinical support which can only be safely provided in a hospital setting. In normal circumstances, CPAP for COVID-19 would only be provided on specialist wards, such as respiratory wards or critical care units, where there is a high level of nursing and medical support, and where immediate medical support is available in the event that a patient deteriorates. Guidance on the use of CPAP devices can be found at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/specialty-guide-NIV-respiratory-support-and-coronavirus-v3.pdf>

Between mid-March and mid-May 2020 around 3,000 more mechanical ventilators and over 8,000 non-invasive ventilators capable of delivering CPAP are now available to the National Health Service across the United Kingdom.

■ Coronavirus: Disease Control

Hilary Benn:

[57095]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will place in the Library a copy of the representations received by (a) his Department and (b) Public Health England in respect of that organisation's report entitled Covid-19: review of disparities in risks and outcomes published on 2 June 2020.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 15 June 2020]: No representations were sought or received by Public Health England for its epidemiological report entitled 'Covid-19: review of disparities in risks and outcomes', published on 2 June 2020.

Alongside the epidemiological review, Professor Fenton undertook a rapid evidence review and external stakeholder engagement with a significant number of individuals and organisations within the black, Asian and minority ethnic community, to hear their views, concerns and ideas about the impact of COVID-19 on their communities. The results of that work have now been published and will inform the Government's next steps being taken forward by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP).

Kate Osamor:[\[59533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the review published by Public Health England on 2 June 2020 entitled Disparities in the risk and outcomes of covid-19, if he will place in the Library the (a) annexe to that report and (b) responses received from the stakeholder and community engagement process.

Kate Osamor:[\[59534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reasons responses from the stakeholders and community engagement consultation process were removed from Public Health England's report entitled Disparities in the risk and outcomes of covid-1' before publication.

Jo Churchill:

No stakeholder views were removed from Public Health England's epidemiological report entitled 'COVID-19: review of disparities in risks and outcomes', published on 2 June 2020.

Alongside the epidemiological review, Professor Fenton undertook a rapid evidence review and external stakeholder engagement with a significant number of individuals and organisations within the black, Asian and minority ethnic community, to hear their views, concerns and ideas about the impact of COVID-19 on their communities. The results of that work have now been published and will inform the Government's next steps being taken forward by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP).

■ Coronavirus: Health Services**James Murray:**[\[64367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much of the £6.6 billion of support for health services identified within the Government's Coronavirus emergency response fund has been (a) accessed by NHS trusts and (b) used to fund supplier relief sick pay.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 29 June 2020]: Of the £6.6 billion COVID-19 response funding for health services announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 13 th April, approximately £4.2 billion will fund direct costs incurred by the National Health Service. The remaining will fund centrally-led initiatives such as personal protective equipment, testing and the ventilator programme that will also directly support the NHS's COVID-19 response.

Spending data is collected on a monthly basis by NHS England and NHS Improvement. Initial data indicates that NHS providers (NHS trusts and foundation trusts) have collectively spent approximately £0.8 billion on COVID-19 related spending in April 2020, with similar levels expected in May 2020, all of which has been fully funded.

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination**Daniel Zeichner:**[\[59497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what preparations have been made at a community level for a mass vaccination programme should a covid-19 vaccine become available.

Jo Churchill:

The Department is working with the Government's Vaccines Taskforce, Public Health England, NHS England and NHS Improvement, and colleagues from across the health and care system, including local partners, to put in place plans for successful distribution and delivery of a COVID-19 vaccination programme, alongside routine immunisation services, should a COVID-19 vaccine become available.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: EU External Relations**Sir Edward Davey:**[\[59669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many meetings (a) he and (b) Ministers in his Department have had with EU counterparts in 2020.

Sir Edward Davey:[\[59670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many meetings (a) he and (b) Ministers in his Department have had with German counterparts in 2020.

Jo Churchill:

The Secretary of State and Ministers have met with their European Union counterparts including German counterparts on several occasions in 2020.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Public Inquiries**Lee Anderson:**[\[62612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the (a) statutory and (b) non-statutory public inquiries being undertaken by his Department.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

The Department is sponsoring the following current inquiries - The Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review and the Linden Centre (North Essex Partnership Trust).

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Public Opinion**Judith Cummins:**[\[62464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much his Department spent on (a) opinion polling and (b) focus groups in each month since January 2019.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 25 June 2020]: The information requested is not held centrally and therefore can only be provided at disproportionate costs.

■ General Practitioners: Postnatal Care**Munira Wilson:**[\[60869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the six-week post-natal health checks for new mothers at GPs surgeries.

Munira Wilson:[\[60871\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will issue guidance to GPs on resuming face-to-face six week post-natal health checks for new mothers.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 22 June 2020]: As set out in the 'Update to the GP contract agreement 2020/21–2023/24' jointly published in February 2020 by NHS England and NHS Improvement and the British Medical Association, since 1 April 2020 it has been a contractual requirement for general practitioners to offer a maternal postnatal consultation at 6-8 weeks after birth (for live and stillbirths), as an additional appointment to that for the 6-8 week baby check. The maternal postnatal consultation should focus on a review of the mother's physical and mental health and general wellbeing, using open questioning. NHS England and NHS Improvement expect that during the pandemic practices should continue to offer the consultation to new mothers in an appropriate format, most likely by telephone or video consultation. Guidance on the maternal postnatal consultation will be produced later in 2020 following consultation with relevant stakeholders.

■ Health**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**[\[64084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent progress his Department has made on achieving parity of esteem for mental and physical health.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

We have committed at least a further £2.3 billion a year to mental health services by 2023/24, which will see spending for mental health services growing faster than the overall National Health Service budget.

For the first time, in 2018/19, all clinical commissioning groups increased the amount spent on mental health by at least as much as their overall budget increases.

■ Influenza: Vaccination**Sir Edward Davey:****[59667]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of expanding the flu vaccination programme to help prepare for a potential second wave of covid-19; and if he will make a statement.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 22 June 2020]: The flu vaccination programme will be a critical part of preparing the United Kingdom for winter and as part of our planning should we see co-circulation of flu and COVID-19.

On 14 May we published the Annual Flu letter 2020/21, available at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/885281/The_national_flu_immunisation_programme_2020_to_2021.pdf

This indicated the main groups who are eligible for free flu vaccination.

We are planning for the flu season well in advance and further details will be published soon.

■ Local Government: Coronavirus**Mr Stephen Morgan:****[59586]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government taking to support local authorities in supporting families with a child who is abusing (a) drugs and (b) alcohol during the covid-19 outbreak.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 18 June 2020]: Health, care and other professionals continue to have vital safeguarding functions to identify and support children and young people at risk. It is important that drug and alcohol support services are also maintained. Public Health England and the Department have published 'COVID-19: Guidance for commissioners and providers of services to people who use drugs and alcohol' available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-commissioners-and-providers-of-services-for-people-who-use-drugs-or-alcohol>

The FRANK website and helpline also continue to provide a service for people concerned about their own or others' drug and alcohol consumption. Further information is available at the following link:

<https://www.talktofrank.com>

■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People

Munira Wilson:

[63509]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what fiscal steps his Department is taking to ensure that young people are able to access support for their mental health.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 29 June 2020]: We are committed through the NHS Long Term Plan to investing at least £2.3 billion of extra funding a year into mental health services by 2023-24. This will see an additional 345,000 children and young people able to access support through National Health Service-funded services or school- and college-based mental health support teams.

To support adult and children whose mental health has been affected by the pandemic, we have provided £5 million of additional funding for mental health charities and, on 22 May, we announced a further £4.2 million to be awarded to mental health charities including those supporting children and young people such as Young Minds, as part of the Government's United Kingdom-wide £750 million package of support for the voluntary sector.

■ NHS Trusts: Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell:

[61734]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will allocate additional resources to NHS Trusts to help tackle the backlog of outpatient appointments, day care treatments and surgery that has resulted from the covid-19 outbreak; and what plans he has to tackle that backlog.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 24 June 2020]: Whilst routine treatments were suspended to provide capacity to treat COVID-19 patients, we are now working closely with the National Health Service and other partners to restart these in a safe way. Guidance has already been issued on this, and approaches are being tailored at local level according to local capacity and local demand, with the most urgent services being restarted first. Guidance also outlines that contracted independent sector hospital and diagnostic capacity should also be used in the restarting of routine electives.

We are committed to ensuring the NHS has the funding and support it needs to respond to the crisis.

Holly Mumby-Croft:

[62709]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to support NHS Trusts tackle the backlog of routine hospital and GP appointments resulting from the covid-19 outbreak.

Edward Argar:

Access to urgent and routine care in general practice should be maintained for all patients, and practices should assess where care has been delayed over recent weeks and now needs to be restarted. As capacity allows, general practice teams should proactively address health needs that may have increased, developed or gone unmet during the pandemic, and accommodate changes in how patients want to seek healthcare, including supporting patients with self-care and self-management. Referrals should continue to be made as usual.

Whilst routine hospital treatments were suspended to provide capacity to treat COVID-19 patients, we are now working closely with the National Health Service and other partners to restart these in a safe way. Guidance has already been issued on this, and approaches are being tailored at local level according to local capacity and local demand, with the most urgent services being restarted first. Guidance also outlines that contracted independent sector hospital and diagnostic capacity should also be used in the restarting of routine elective procedures.

■ NHS Trusts: Land**Jonathan Ashworth:****[64195]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS Trusts reported surplus land in 2019-20; and what estimate the NHS has made of the (a) size and (b) value of that land.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 29 June 2020]: Data is not held in the requested format.

■ NHS Trusts: Meetings**Sir Mike Penning:****[54041]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance his Department issues to NHS trusts on public access to NHS trust board meetings; and if he will make a statement.

Edward Argar:

National Health Service trusts are responsible for establishing their own corporate governance arrangements, including arrangements for public access to Board meetings. The NHS Leadership Academy, now part of NHS England and NHS Improvement, published 'The Healthy NHS Board' in 2013 which sets out principles for good governance. These include the principle that Board meetings should be held in public except where there is a compelling reason for confidentiality and is available at the following link:

<https://www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/NHSLeadership-HealthyNHSBoard-2013.pdf>

■ NHS: Buildings

Jonathan Gullis:

[62676]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of imposing an annual capital spending limit for the NHS on the (a) delivery and (b) maintenance of (i) new and (ii) re-developed buildings on the NHS estate.

Edward Argar:

Each year the Department is allocated a fixed capital budget from HM Treasury, and from that, the capital budget is set for the National Health Service. The NHS budget is divided between operational capital for ongoing service delivery, and capital for national programmes of investment.

To improve the management of operational capital from 2020-21, NHS England and NHS Improvement has set operational capital limits at Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) / Integrated Care System (ICS) level. This is part of the new capital regime published on 2 April 2020, to provide greater clarity on the level of capital resource available and to support system working to agree local capital priorities. This builds on the existing control framework for NHS trusts where Capital Resource Limits are set annually by NHS Improvement, who will monitor the new arrangements.

Maintenance of buildings is one category within operational capital. So, local NHS organisations are expected to work together to better prioritise key maintenance investment within the STP/ICS envelope, along with other projects required to maintain vital services.

Investment for new and redeveloped buildings is primarily through the national programmes of Health Infrastructure Plan and STP transformational schemes, that are allocated to the organisations delivering the investments with ring-fenced budgets separate from the operational capital limits. The Department is providing more support centrally, earlier access to funding, and streamlining the approvals process, to accelerate delivery of these schemes.

■ NHS: Standards

Sammy Wilson:

[41944]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on performance against NHS targets.

Edward Argar:

National Health Service performance statistics are published one month in arrears for urgent and emergency care and two months in arrears for elective care. The latest published statistics for urgent and emergency care are for March 2020 and the latest published statistics for elective care are for February 2020. These periods do allow an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 at this time.

The latest NHS performance statistics can be found at the following link:

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

■ NHS: Ventilators

Rachel Reeves:

[\[61474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many mechanical ventilators are available to the NHS; how many have been made available as a result of the Ventilator Challenge; and how many ventilators are in use as at 18 June 2020.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 23 June 2020]: As of 18 June, there were 20,356 mechanical ventilators available to patients across the United Kingdom. This compares to around 9,000 at the start of the pandemic in March. Of the additional stock, 7,778 have been bought from new suppliers via the Prime Minister's ventilator challenge, 2,283 were bought from established suppliers and 1,156 comprises stock in the private sector which is available in future should it be needed.

As of 18 June, of the 10,061 mechanical ventilators bought and delivered since March, 1,286 have been distributed to hospitals across the UK and 8,775 remain in storage ready to be distributed if needed.

Rachel Reeves:

[\[61476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the statement by the Medical and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency on the 28 April 2020 that the UK has fulfilled the clinical need for ventilators through a combination of existing CE marked ventilators and existing applications to the Ventilator challenge, how many ventilators were required to meet that clinical need; and how many of those ventilators were (a) existing CE marker ventilators and (b) secured through the Ventilator Challenge.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 23 June 2020]: As of 18 June, there were 20,356 mechanical ventilators available to patients across the United Kingdom. This compares to around 9,000 at the start of the pandemic in March. Of the additional stock, 7,778 have been bought from new suppliers via the Prime Minister's ventilator challenge, 2,283 were bought from established suppliers and 1,156 comprises stock in the private sector which is available in future should it be needed.

■ Smoking

Bob Blackman:

[\[59435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government's response to the Prevention Green Paper consultation will include a commitment to placing a charge on tobacco companies to fund evidence-based tobacco control measures by (a) supporting smokers to quit and (b) reducing the uptake of smoking among young people.

Bob Blackman:

[\[59436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress his Department is making on the Government's target to achieve a smoke-free generation by 2030.

Jo Churchill:

The Government is committed to achieving a smokefree England by 2030. Plans to achieve this will be set out at a later date, and a response to the Prevention Green Paper will be published in due course.

■ **Tongue-tie: Clinics****Olivia Blake:**[\[59266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the timeframe is for the reopening of tongue-tie clinics.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 17 June 2020]: The Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer of NHS England wrote on 29 April 2020 to confirm arrangements for phasing back health services where local capacity is available. The letter is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/second-phase-of-nhs-response-to-covid-19-letter-from-simon-stevens-and-amanda-pritchard/>

For babies with tongue-tie, advice for parents also remains available from a midwife or health visitor.

HOME OFFICE■ **Airports: Travel Requirements****Nick Thomas-Symonds:**[\[38959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the evidential basis was for the decision for Border Force officials not to ask people arriving at UK airports from other countries to quarantine themselves.

Kevin Foster:

Our approach to tackling coronavirus is and has always been driven by the latest scientific and medical advice, and procedures at the border have been strictly following the latest PHE guidance throughout.

During the contain phase we had enhanced monitoring at the borders to identify symptomatic travellers from high risk areas early and safely triage them into the health system.

Since 8 June, all passengers arriving in the UK have been required to complete a locator form as well as self-isolate for 14 days. This applies to all nationalities. Full details of these new measures, including the very limited exemptions to the new rules, can be found at www.gov.uk/uk-border-control.

Border Force continues to work collaboratively with devolved administrations, including Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and Public Health England, to support the COVID 19 response

■ Alcoholic Drinks: Misuse

Fiona Bruce:

[\[9648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the Government's alcohol strategy.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government is working to reduce alcohol-related harms with the NHS long-term plan, the prevention Green Paper, support for children of alcohol-dependent parents and action to tackle alcohol-related violent crime. Together, this work constitutes an effective package to address alcohol abuse. We are not planning a stand-alone strategy.

■ Antisocial Behaviour: Luton

Rachel Hopkins:

[\[25217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle anti-social behaviour in Luton.

Kit Malthouse:

We recognise the impact that anti-social behaviour can have on victims, which is why we reformed the powers available to tackle it through the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The Act provides police and local agencies with a range of flexible tools and powers that they can use to respond quickly and effectively to anti-social behaviour.

The powers are deliberately local in nature, and it is for local agencies to determine whether their use is appropriate in the circumstances. We keep anti-social behaviour policy under review through the Anti-social Behaviour Strategic Board which brings together key partners.

It is for Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners, as operational leaders and elected local representatives, to decide how best to respond to individual crimes and local crime priorities but to help ensure that the police have the resources they need to do so, we are recruiting 20,000 officers over the next three years.

■ Asylum

Alex Sobel:

[\[14014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many inadmissibility decisions based on the concept of safe third country were made by the UK in 2019; and which designated safe third country those decisions related to.

Alex Sobel:

[\[14015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many inadmissibility decisions based on the concept of first country of asylum were made for each such country in 2019.

Alex Sobel:

[14016]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she holds information on the average duration of the Dublin III Regulation procedure from the issuing of an outgoing request to the UK until the transfer to the member state responsible; and if she will make a statement.

Alex Sobel:

[14017]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average length of time for a transfer under the Dublin III regulation procedure is from when a Member State accepts responsibility to the transfer from the UK to that Member State.

Chris Philp:

The Dublin III Regulation is a long-standing mechanism between EU Member States to determine responsibility for examining asylum claims. It is not an application route for transfer to the UK. At present we do not publish data on cases covered by the Dublin Regulation. Eurostat, the EU's statistics agency, regularly publishes Member State figures, which can be found at:

http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_dubto&lang=en

Under the Dublin III Regulation, member states have two months from receiving a request from another participating Member State to accept or reject responsibility for processing the asylum claim. Once a Dublin request has been accepted, the Regulation provides that the sending Member State has six months to enact the transfer. The Home Office works closely with EU Member State partners to enact transfers as soon as possible and ahead of the six-month timeframe.

The latest guidance on the Dublin III Regulation was published in April 2020 and can be found via the link below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/797216/Dublin-III-regulation-v2.0ext.pdf

The UK is committed to providing protection to those who need it, in accordance with its international obligations. It is an established principle that those in need of protection should seek asylum in the first safe country that they enter and not put their lives at risk by making unnecessary and dangerous onwards journeys to the UK. Illegal migration from safe countries undermines our efforts to help those most in need.

Controlled resettlement via safe and legal routes is the best way to protect refugees and disrupt the organised crime groups that exploit migrants and refugees. We support these principles by:

- treating asylum claims made in the UK as inadmissible if the claimants have suitable protection in another safe country from where they would not face refoulement (that is, the country would not force the claimant to return to another country where they would be at risk of harm or persecution)

- treating asylum claims made in the UK as inadmissible if the claimant has travelled through or has a connection to another safe country which is not their own, on the basis that the claimant has, or could have lodged their asylum claim there
- progressing to removal stage those who undertake illegal journeys and subvert immigration control, to demonstrate that such action will not lead to entry to, or settlement in the UK.

Information regarding how many inadmissible decisions based on the concept of safe third country, first country of asylum and which designated safe third country those decisions relate to is not recorded or held in a reportable format.

Full guidance on which asylum claims must be treated as inadmissible was published in October 2019 and can be found via the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inadmissibility-third-country-cases>

■ Asylum: LGBT People

Sir Edward Davey:

[62267]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been granted asylum in the UK as a result of persecution for being LGBTQ+ in their home state in each of the last 15 years.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office is unable to state how many people have been granted asylum in the UK as a result of persecution for being LGBTQ+ in their home states in each of the last 15 years.

The Home Office remains committed to publishing information on the number of people claiming asylum on the basis of sexual orientation.

While the Department does not hold pre-July 2015 data in a reportable format and does not currently break down the data into the separate lesbian, gay or bisexual category, experimental data on asylum claims lodged on the basis of sexual orientation, including the number of claimants who were granted asylum, between July 2015 and August 2019 is available at SOC_00 and SOC_04 of the published immigrations statistics year ending March 2020 and is broken down by nationality:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2020/list-of-tables#asylum-on-the-basis-of-sexual-orientation.

The data does not represent the number of asylum claimants who define themselves as LGB. Having an identifier that an asylum case is based on sexual orientation does not indicate that a claimant has any particular sexuality or that sexual orientation is the reason for any grant or refusal of asylum. It also does not signify whether that aspect of the claim has been accepted. Sexual orientation as a basis of claim could be due to imputed assertions or association rather than a defining characteristic of the claimant.

■ British Nationality: Children**Neil Coyle:** [\[6711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she will respond to the High Court decision of 19 December 2019 that found that her Department has charged unlawful fees for child citizenship applications.

Neil Coyle: [\[6712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people her Department has unlawfully charged child citizenship application fees.

Kevin Foster:

Although the judge ruled there had not been proper consideration of the Government's section 55 duties, the fees regulations were not in themselves quashed.

The Secretary of State for the Home Department has been granted permission to appeal against the High Court Ruling of 19 December 2019. While the case remains ongoing we continue to charge Child Registration fees as set out in the Fees Regulations.

The Home Office notes the Court's judgment from the High Court and is considering its implications carefully, while awaiting the appeal hearing.

■ Cocaine: Ethics**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:** [\[29249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has received representations on the effect of the sale and supply of so-called ethically sourced cocaine on trends in the level of cocaine use in the last ten years.

Kit Malthouse:

The Home Office has not received representations on this matter. However, the Government is clear that cocaine is a harmful drug and we remain absolutely committed to reducing its supply and use. The first part of Professor Dame Carol Black's independent review of drugs, published on 27 February, sets out the evidence on trends around the supply and use of cocaine.

■ Criminal Records: EU nationals**Louise Haigh:** [\[5473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which Minister in her Department made the decision not to inform the EU of the failure to pass on the details of 75,000 convictions of EU nationals to EU member states; and when that decision was taken.

Kit Malthouse:

The Home Office informed the Commission and EU Member States of this issue in July 2019.

Louise Haigh: [5478]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she became aware of the UK's failure to share the details of 75,000 criminal convictions with EU member states; and when she informed EU member states of the mistake.

Kit Malthouse:

Home Office Ministers were notified of the technical issue which led to some criminal conviction data not being passed on to EU Member States, in July 2019. Later that month the Home Office informed the EU of the problem.

■ Criminal Records: EU Nationals

Louise Haigh: [5472]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of foreign offenders who went on to re-offend as a result of the failure by the UK to pass on the details of 75,000 convictions to EU member states.

Kit Malthouse:

It is not possible to provide details of offending which has or has not occurred in other Member States.

Louise Haigh: [5474]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether all EU member states have now been notified of the details of the 75,000 convictions which her Department had previously failed to send.

Kit Malthouse:

ACRO is working with the Home Office to identify a technical fix and implement it as soon as possible the relevant countries will then be notified.

■ Deportation

Alexander Stafford: [63559]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many deportation notices have been served in each year since 2005.

Alexander Stafford: [63560]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been deported in each year since 2005.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office publishes data on returns from the UK in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>). Data on the number of returns, by year, from 2010 are published in table Ret_D01 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/returns-and-detention-datasets>) within the returns detailed dataset. Data prior to 2010 are published in table rt_01 in the Returns data tables volume 1 of Immigration Statistics, year ending June 2019 second edition (attached).

The term 'deportations' refers to a legally-defined subset of returns which are enforced either following a criminal conviction or when it is judged that a person's removal from the UK is conducive to the public good. Information on those deported is not separately available and therefore the published statistics refer to all enforced returns.

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 returns. The latest data relates from 2010 to the year ending March 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).

Information on the number of individuals served with a Deportation Order would require a manual check of individual records which could only be done at disproportionate cost.

Attachments:

1. Returns data tables [63559 1-jun-2019-tables.xlsx]
2. Summary Tables [63559 Copy of returns-summary-mar-2020-tables.xlsx]

■ **Deportation: Zimbabwe**

Christine Jardine:

[14778]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the treatment of refused asylum seekers after their return to Zimbabwe.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office does not routinely monitor the treatment of people once they are removed from the UK. Returns are only undertaken when the Home Office and courts deem it is safe to do so.

The UK is under no obligation to monitor the treatment of unsuccessful asylum seekers who have returned to their country of origin. They are, by definition, foreign nationals who have been found as a matter of law not to need the UK's protection, and who have no legal basis of stay in the UK. It would be inappropriate for the UK to assume any ongoing responsibility for them when they return to their own country.

Should the Home Office receive any specific allegations that a returnee has experienced ill-treatment on return to their country of origin, these would be investigated in partnership with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

Christine Jardine:

[14779]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers have been returned to Zimbabwe in each of the last four calendar years.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office publishes data on returns from the UK in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>

Data on the number of returns, by year, type of return and asylum and non-asylum are published in table Ret_05 of the returns summary dataset. In addition, the top 10 nationalities being returned by whether an asylum or non-asylum related case, for the most recent period available are published in table Ret_04 .

Asylum-related returns relate to cases where there has been an asylum claim at some stage prior to the return. This will include asylum seekers whose asylum claims have been refused, and who have exhausted any rights of appeal, those returned under third country provisions, as well as those granted asylum/protection, but removed for other reasons (such as criminality).

The latest data relates to the year ending March 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

Domestic Abuse**Jess Phillips:****[25676]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what funding the Government has provided to support the prevention of adolescent to parent violence in the last five years.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government is committed to tackling all forms of domestic abuse. On 3 March 2020 we re-introduced the landmark draft [Domestic Abuse](#) Bill to protect and support victims. The Bill has just finished Committee stage. Our statutory definition of domestic abuse recognises that abuse can also involve wider family members, including parental abuse by an adolescent or grown child or between older siblings.

In 2018/19 we provided just under £11,000 to support the prevention of adolescent to parent violence. In addition, we provided £220,000 funding for the development of training for social workers on domestic abuse.

In 2015 the Government published an information guide on adolescent to parent violence and abuse, which provides materials and advice to support professionals in their response, including social workers.

Fire and Rescue Services: Mergers**Mark Garnier:****[63325]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of not proceeding with the proposed merger of West Mercia

Police Authority with Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

Mark Garnier:

[\[63326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that the parties involved in the merger of the West Mercia Police Authority with Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Authority publish the (a) advice and (b) resources they provided to determine the potential merits of the merger.

Kit Malthouse:

In July 2019, the High Court upheld the then Home Secretary's (Amber Rudd MP) decision of March 2018 to transfer governance of Hereford and Worcester and Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Service to the PCC for West Mercia. The Court of appeal has refused permission for the FRAs to appeal the judgement

However, given the time that has passed and developments since the business case was originally submitted in October 2017, it is right that we reconsider whether the case still meets the statutory tests. The Minister for Crime and Policing has written to PCC John Campion to explain that we will require an updated business case.

It is for the PCC and Fire and Rescue Authorities to consider whether to publish information they hold relating to the proposal, although I am aware that some of this is currently available through their websites.

■ Home Office: LGBT People

Dawn Butler:

[\[12917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she plans to take to improve LGBT+ representation in senior positions in her Department.

James Brokenshire:

The Home Office Diversity & Inclusion Strategy sets a target of 6% representation for Lesbian, Gay and Bi staff in senior positions by 2025. We will assess a target for Trans staff when we are able to capture this data soon.

We have a comprehensive programme of activity underway led by a senior LGBTI+ Champion including an inclusive language pack to improve understanding of the importance of appropriate language in the workplace, a new recruitment model for LGBTI+ apprentices and Career Watch pilots for LGBTI+ staff, focused on active sponsorship of staff to build the talent pipeline to senior levels.

■ Home Office: Taxis

Layla Moran:

[\[65007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many private hire cars her Department has used since 2015; how long each journey was; and what the cost was of those journeys to the public purse.

James Brokenshire:

Determining the amount spent on private hire cars, how long each journey was, and how many journeys were made since 2015 is not readily available from our management systems.

This is because the cost information is neither held centrally by the Home Office, nor where held, is it in an easily identifiable format. It could therefore be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The length and number of journeys is not specifically recorded.

Many taxi journeys are reimbursed via a manual expenses process. The information required to identify employee taxi claims is not easily distinguishable within the central financial system and a manual review of all these records, over a five-year period, would be required.

Human Trafficking: Children**Mr Barry Sheerman:**[\[64072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to publish its most recent evaluation of the Independent Child Trafficking Guardian (ICTG) service; and by what date the Government plans to have rolled out ICTG to all local authorities.

Victoria Atkins:

Last year, the Government successfully rolled out Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTGs) to one third of local authorities in England and Wales.

The next ICTG evaluation, which will have a particular focus on the role and impact of the Regional Practice Co-ordinator, is due to be published later in the year.

The continued national roll-out of ICTGs will be progressed as part of the recently established NRM Transformation Programme, which is designed to make sure we have a system that effectively identifies and delivers needs-based support for child and adult victims of modern slavery, is legally robust, sustainable and resilient to misuse. We will continue to review how the needs of individual children are best met at local level through the programme.

Immigrants: Domestic Abuse**Stella Creasy:**[\[65116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of not including statutory protection for all migrant women in the Domestic Abuse Bill.

Victoria Atkins:

Following the recommendations of the Joint Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill in June 2019, the Government committed to review our overall response on migrant victims.

We are aiming to publish the conclusions of our review on the definition of domestic abuse ahead of Commons Report stage of the Domestic Abuse Bill on 6 July.

Draft statutory guidance was published today, 1 July, and covers the impact of domestic abuse on migrant victims and highlights the barriers they face in seeking support.

We have also announced that we will be pledging a further £1.5 million towards a pilot later this year to cover the cost of support in a refuge or other safe accommodation for migrant victims who are unable to access public funds. We will use the pilot to assess the level of need for migrant victims of domestic abuse and the pilot will be specifically used to inform future decisions on immediate support provision for migrant victims.

■ Immigration Controls: Health

Mr Laurence Robertson: [37430]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what health checks are carried out at borders on people coming to the UK from abroad; and if she will make a statement.

Dr Dan Poulter: [37572]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to test people entering the UK from overseas for covid-19.

Kevin Foster:

The security of the UK border, the safety of the staff who protect it and the public are our key concerns.

Our approach to tackling coronavirus is and has always been driven by the latest scientific and medical advice, and procedures at the border have been strictly following the latest PHE guidance throughout. To bolster public health measures already in place, passengers at airports are provided with information on symptoms and the social distancing processes.

Since 8 June, all passengers arriving in the UK have been required to complete a locator form as well as self-isolate for 14 days. This applies to all nationalities. Full details of these new measures, including the very limited exemptions to the new rules, can be found at www.gov.uk/uk-border-control.

Border Force continues to work collaboratively with devolved administrations, including Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and Public Health England, to support the COVID 19 response.

■ Immigration Controls: Quarantine

Stephen Doughty: [43657]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the scientific assessment that informed the decision to (a) introduce formal quarantine measures for the flights from (i) Wuhan, China on (A) 31 January, (B) 2 February and (C) 9 February 2020 and (b) Tokyo, Japan on 22 February, and (b) not to introduce formal quarantine measures for other UK arrivals from 1 January 2020.

Kevin Foster:

Scientific evidence from SAGE will continue to be published by Government Office for Science in due course.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals**Alex Norris:**[\[10444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans the Government has to bring forward legislative proposals to allow (a) digital and (b) physical documents to be accepted under the terms of the Licensing Act 2003, in line with proof of settled status.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government recognises that there needs to be an agreement on what constitutes an acceptable form of digital ID for age verification purposes. We will continue to engage across Government and with companies working to develop digital age-verification so that an appropriate framework can be developed and tested.

Deidre Brock:[\[4359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of applications by non UK national EU citizens for settled status were submitted through her Department's app.

Kevin Foster:

We are not able to provide a precise figure because our app statistics include transactions for applications which have been started, but not yet submitted. However, we estimate over 3.2 million applicants have used the EU Exit: ID Document check app to scan their Passport as part of their application to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Deidre Brock:[\[6155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 16 January 2020 to Question 900237 on Immigration: EU Nationals, what her timescale is for the publication of the guidance on what will constitute reasonable grounds for missing the deadline for the EU Settlement Scheme.

Kevin Foster:

The Government has made clear, where a person eligible for leave under the EU Settlement Scheme has reasonable grounds for missing the application deadline of 30 June 2021, they will be given a further opportunity to apply.

We have not published a list of reasonable grounds for missing the deadline as it is a year away and the focus should be on encouraging people to apply. We will however publish clear guidance for caseworkers in due course to ensure consistency of approach.

■ Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner**Peter Kyle:** [\[64972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to improve scrutiny of the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner; and what steps her Department takes to monitor the performance of immigration advisers.

Chris Philp:

The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Home Office.

Under the provisions of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, immigration advisors (other than those who are members of the legal profession and regulated by their professional body) are regulated by the Immigration Services Commissioner to ensure they are fit and competent and act in the best interest of their clients.

The OISC works in line with a Framework Agreement between the Commissioner and the Home Office, which, along with its annual reports and accounts, are published on the website of the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner.

The OISC's overall performance, including on prosecutions, is reviewed on a regular basis by the Home Office.

■ Police National Computer: Disclosure of Information**Stephen Doughty:** [\[4347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many conviction alerts on foreign nationals have not been sent to police in their home countries in each of the last three years, by country.

Kit Malthouse:

ACRO and the Home Office are working to identify a technical fix and implement it as soon as possible.

■ Police: Apprentices**Jessica Morden:** [\[9620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much funding each police authority in Wales will receive under the apprenticeship levy and when that funding will be received by each of those authorities.

Kit Malthouse:

We are supporting police apprenticeships in Wales. Funding was provided through the Special Grant mechanism in 2018/19, 2019/20 and will be provided again in 2020/21.

■ Police: Dismissal

Sir Edward Davey:

[63205]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many police officers have been dismissed for sexual harassment in each of the last five years.

Kit Malthouse:

The Home Office collects and publishes information annually on the outcome of misconduct proceedings and criminal investigations involving officers, including the number of officers that have been dismissed following proceedings. However, information on the circumstances that led to a case being brought is not collected centrally by the Home Office

The latest data on the outcomes following misconduct proceedings, which covers cases in the year ending March 2019, are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-30-september-2019>.

The College of Policing publish data annually relating to those who have been dismissed from policing and placed on the Police Barred List. The most recent data shows that, in the period ending 31 March 2019, 14 officers were dismissed under the category 'sexual conduct towards a colleague'. This data is available here: https://www.college.police.uk/News/College-news/Documents/Barred_List_2019.pdf.

■ Police: Misconduct

Steve McCabe:

[31434]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans the Government has to assess the length of time it takes to proceed with and conclude allegations of misconduct against serving police officers.

Steve McCabe:

[31435]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many serving police officers are suspended over allegations of misconduct; and how many of those police officers have been suspended for over 12 months.

Kit Malthouse:

It is important, for the public and officers, that allegations of police misconduct are dealt in a timely manner.

The Home Office introduced new legislation on 1 February 2020 to impose a requirement on the police and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) to provide a written explanation if any misconduct investigation is not completed in 12 months - setting out what progress it has made, why it hasn't completed the investigation and the steps it will take to conclude the investigation.

The IOPC publishes data on police complaints, including the timeliness of complaints handling and investigations by police forces, and the time taken to complete its own investigations into complaints or other matters. The Home Office is currently

reviewing its own collection of data in relation to the police disciplinary system, including data on timeliness.

The Home Office does not collect data on suspensions. Suspension of police officers or police staff is a matter for local forces.

■ Police: Public Order

Marco Longhi: [\[63520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if the Government will seek to overrule devolved responsibilities over policing to maintain public order during protests.

Kit Malthouse:

Peaceful protest is a vital part of a democratic society. It is a long-standing tradition in this country that people are free to gather together and to demonstrate their views provided that they do so within the law.

The right to protest does not extend to violent or threatening behaviour and the police have powers to deal with any such acts. The use of these powers and the management of demonstrations are an operational matter for the police. Policing is devolved in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and Her Majesty's Government respects the devolution settlements.

■ Police: Recruitment

Stephen McPartland: [\[21251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many of the additional 20,000 Police Officers will be allocated to (a) Hertfordshire Police and (b) British Transport Police.

Kit Malthouse:

Hertfordshire Police has been allocated 91 officers in year one of the uplift. These officers are to be recruited by the end of March 2021. This is supported by an increase of £15.9m in 2020/21. Decisions on the allocation of officers for years two and three are yet to be taken.

The British Transport Police are not included within the allocation of officers for the 20,000 uplift. They are funded directly by train operators and are a separate entity from the 43 territorial forces.

■ Police: Schools

Afzal Khan: [\[62592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what training is provided to schools-based police officers for that specific role.

Afzal Khan: [\[62593\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what (a) qualifications and (b) training are required for a police officer to become a school-based police officer.

Kit Malthouse:

Policing in schools is an aspect of neighbourhood policing and, as such, is mentioned as a policing function in the College of Policing's national curriculum for all police officers. This means that it is covered as part of the education of all new recruits and the same qualifications and standards would apply as for any other neighbourhood policing officer.

The new entry routes for police constables introduced by the College of Policing from 2018 (an undergraduate degree in policing, a degree holder entry programme and a degree apprenticeship) are an important step in ensuring that we provide our police with the skills they need.

Refugees: Syria**Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[13428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to (a) recruit additional staff and (b) ensure there are adequate resources to process applications for indefinite leave to remain from refugees that have been resettled in the UK under the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme.

Chris Philp:

Upon being eligible for Indefinite Leave to Remain, refugees resettled under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme will be able apply using the existing settlement protection route. The Home Office has forecast anticipated intake levels to ensure we have the appropriate resource in place.

Retail Trade: Crimes of Violence**Margaret Ferrier:**[\[18640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish a response to her Department's call for evidence on abuse and violence towards shopworkers.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government recognises the damaging impact that violence and abuse can have on victims, businesses, and the wider community; and we are committed to tackling this issue.

We launched a call for evidence on violence and abuse toward shop staff to help strengthen our understanding of the scale and extent of the issue. During the Westminster Hall debate on 'Protection of retail workers', which took place on 11 February, I committed to publishing the Government's response by the end of March 2020. Unfortunately, given the current circumstances, the Government must focus its communications on tackling COVID-19. Therefore, the publication of the Government's response is delayed. I am, however, keen to publish it as soon as I am able.

■ Security: Protective Clothing

Philip Davies: [62353]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential risk to security from the compulsory wearing of face coverings on public transport.

Kit Malthouse:

On the 15 June, the Government introduced Regulations to mandate the wearing of face coverings on all forms of public transport as a condition of travel. We continue to work closely with transport operators and the police on the implementation of these measures and any associated issues.

■ Stop and Search: Protective Clothing

Thangam Debbonaire: [63368]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether police officers are required to wear personal protective equipment during stop-and-search enquires during the covid-19 outbreak.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government recognises the importance of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for all of those on the frontline and has published guidance on appropriate PPE for emergency workers, including the police.

The NPCC and the College of Policing have issued operational guidance to all forces on the use of PPE tailored to their unique role to ensure officers and staff are protected sufficiently. The guidance covers how, when and what type of PPE to wear across a range of scenarios, including close contact with the public such as when using stop and search, and where social distancing is not available.

The guidance is available online here: <https://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/COVID-19/Documents/Personal-Protective-Equipment-Operational-Guidance-1.pdf>

■ Suicide: Bereavement Counselling

Mr Richard Holden: [14743]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of police forces having an automatic opt-in for support services for the Next of Kin/Significant other of people who have, or are suspected to have, taken their own life.

Kit Malthouse:

You met with the Home Secretary on 25 February, during which this matter was discussed, specifically in relation to Durham Constabulary. She subsequently wrote to you on 8 April reaffirming her support and explained that Durham Constabulary were working with Public Health England and other partners on ways to improve support, including a change to the local procedure to enable automatic opt-in for

support services after a suspected suicide. I am therefore reassured that actions are being taken by Durham Constabulary and the relevant partners to address the important issue you raise.

■ UK Visas and Immigration: Zimbabwe

Christine Jardine:

[14777]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of UK Visas and Immigration's country policy and information notes on Zimbabwe.

Chris Philp:

Our country policy and information notes are published on the gov.uk website. They are kept under constant review and updated periodically. They are based on evidence taken from a wide range of reliable sources, including reputable media outlets; local, national and international organisations, including human rights organisations; and information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The Zimbabwe country policy and information notes on "sexual orientation and gender identity and expression" and "opposition to the government" were updated in January and February 2019 respectively, incorporating recommendations from a review commissioned by the Independent Advisory Group on Country Information in December 2018.

Asylum and human rights applications from Zimbabwean nationals are subject to review in every appeal and cases are decided on their individual facts and merits.

■ Visas: Hong Kong

Steve Double:

[28648]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's guidance, Coronavirus (COVID-19): immigration guidance, updated on 27 February 2020, whether (a) Hong Kong nationals and (b) British National (Overseas) passport holders are eligible to have their visas automatically extended.

Kevin Foster:

Hong Kong Nationals, British National (Overseas) Passport holders and foreign nationals in the UK legally and whose visa expired after 24 January are able to extend their visa using this form

https://gov.smartwebportal.co.uk/homeoffice/public/ho_form.html if they cannot leave the UK because of restrictions related to coronavirus.

The extension will last until 31 July and will apply to anyone whose leave expired after the 24 January and cannot leave the country because of travel restrictions or self-isolation. To help those who want to apply for visas to stay in the UK long-term, the Home Office is also temporarily expanding the in-country switching provisions until 31 July. Those who already had their visa extended to 31 May 2020, will have their visa extended automatically to 31 July 2020.

A dedicated help centre has been established for those who need assistance. The best way to contact the helpline is via email on CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk or on **0800 678 1767**. It is open 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. Those who contact the Home Office for these visa extensions will be expected to return to their home countries as soon as possible once flight and border restrictions are lifted. No immigration enforcement action will be undertaken during this time for those who email the Home Office as outlined above.

More details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-visa-extensions-for-those-unable-to-return-home-due-to-coronavirus>

■ Visas: Overseas Visitors

Paul Girvan: **[32221]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to increase the advice provided on gov.uk for non-Chinese nationals that cannot travel as a result of the covid-19 outbreak but have visitor visas which are due to expire.

Kevin Foster:

Overseas nationals in the UK legally and whose visa expired after 24 January are able to extend their visa if they cannot leave the UK because of restrictions related to coronavirus.

The extension will last until 31 July and will apply to anyone whose leave expired after the 24 January and cannot leave the country because of travel restrictions or self-isolation. To help those who want to apply for visas to stay in the UK long-term, the Home Office is also temporarily expanding the in-country switching provisions until 31 July. Those who have already had their visa extended to 31 May 2020, will have their visa extended automatically to 31 July 2020.

A dedicated help centre has been established for those who need assistance. The best way to contact the helpline is via email on CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk or on **0800 678 1767**. It is open 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. Those who contact the Home Office for these visa extensions will be expected to return to their home countries as soon as possible once flight and border restrictions are lifted. More details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-visa-extensions-for-those-unable-to-return-home-due-to-coronavirus>.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Business Premises: Landlords

Caroline Lucas: **[64131]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the 19 June 2020 voluntary code of practice for commercial property relationships, if he will take steps to create a mandatory framework in line with the principles in the code to protect businesses with landlords who do not engage voluntarily.

Mr Simon Clarke:

Our commercial property sector is respected across the world and has attracted record international investment in recent years. It acts as a foundation of our economy, providing our businesses with space to operate even as their needs change. Likewise, commercial landlords rely on a vibrant and growing business community to occupy their properties.

The code of practice will help all parties to work together to protect viable businesses and ensure a swift recovery. It will encourage fair and transparent discussions between landlords and tenants over rental payments during the coronavirus pandemic and provides guidance on rent arrear payments. This will enable collaboration and cooperation within the sector and help ensure they come to a mutually beneficial agreement; ensuring that best practice becomes common practice.

The code will apply across the UK and is intended to provide guidance to the sector as it adjusts to the impacts of the coronavirus. It encourages landlords to provide support to businesses if they are able to do so, and urges tenants to continue to pay their rent in full if they are in a position to do so and advises that others should pay what they can. This will help ensure no one part of the chain shoulders the full burden of payment and will give businesses and landlords certainty on what to expect during this time.

The code is voluntary for businesses and is relevant to all commercial leases held by businesses in any sector which have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. However, government retains the right to make further mandatory provisions if necessary.

Government will continue to keep its package of interventions under review to ensure we are supporting our economy through the current period.

■ Help to Buy Scheme: Coronavirus**Paul Maynard:**[\[63294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will extend the closure date for Help to Buy equity loans beyond 31 December for housing developments that have had their completion date delayed by the covid-19 outbreak.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government recognises the disruption COVID-19 has caused to housebuilding; that is why we took decisive steps to re-open the housing market and ensure housebuilding could safely recommence. The Government published a "[Plan to Rebuild](#)" on Monday 11 May, setting out the UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy. This makes clear that construction work can be undertaken across England providing sites are able to operate safely in line with the new COVID-19 secure guidelines.

As announced at Budget 2018, there is a new two year Help to Buy scheme commencing from 1 April 2021, specifically for first time buyers, so supporting people

onto the housing ladder. Where new build properties are not completed within the current Help to Buy scheme deadlines, they may be eligible for sale through the new scheme. More information on the new Help to Buy scheme can be found at <https://www.helptobuy.gov.uk/equity-loan/eligibility/>. We continue to monitor the sector.

■ Hospitality Industry: Coronavirus

Stephen Morgan:

[65195]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent discussions has he had with the Local Government Association on the potential merits of allowing the hospitality sector to increase provision of tables and chairs on road sides as the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

Mr Simon Clarke:

On 26 June 2020, the Government introduced the Business and Planning Bill. This includes measures to streamline the pavement licence procedure, which includes a capped fee, and shorter determination period. This also includes deemed planning consent when licences are granted. On Monday 29 June this successfully passed through the Commons and will now progress to the House of Lords. MHCLG engaged with the LGA in developing this new, fast-track process. As set out in their press release of 25 June, the LGA have welcomed this process as helping to 'ensure a consistent approach can be taken so businesses can reopen as soon as they can and people can get back to enjoying their high streets safely'.

■ Marriage: Coronavirus

Stephen Hammond:

[65107]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to publish guidance on (a) indoor and (b) outdoor wedding receptions from August 2020.

Luke Hall:

Any receptions that typically follow or accompany marriages or civil partnerships are strongly advised not to take place at this time.

We recently published guidance preparing for small marriage ceremonies and civil partnership formations to take place from 4 July, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships>. The Government is working with the wedding and civil partnership celebration industry on how receptions that typically follow or accompany marriages and civil partnerships could take place safely in the future.

■ Private Rented Housing: Students

Afzal Khan:

[\[63499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what plans the Government has to provide (a) financial and (b) other support to students who have lost income and are struggling to pay rent in the private sector during the covid-19 outbreak.

Christopher Pincher:

We understand that some students are facing financial difficulties as a result of the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Students will have received scheduled payments of loans towards their living costs for the remainder of the 2019/20 academic year and the process for issuing loans for the next academic year, 2020/2021, will proceed as normal. In addition, students on a PAYE contract, for example those who have a part time job, may have access to support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Many higher education (HE) providers maintain hardship funds, which can be used where necessary. As part of the HE stabilisation package, the government has worked closely with the Office for Students to help clarify that providers can draw upon existing funding to provide hardship funds and support disadvantaged students impacted by COVID-19.

If a student thinks they will have difficulty meeting a rental payment, they should speak to their landlord at the earliest opportunity to allow both parties to agree a workable way forward. We encourage landlords to be sympathetic to tenants who may be struggling during this time and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

■ Richard Desmond

Rachel Hopkins:

[\[65208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, on how many occasions since the 18 November 2019 he has met with Richard Desmond in (a) a formal, and (b) an informal capacity.

Christopher Pincher:

Details of Ministerial meetings with external organisations are published on Gov.uk.

■ Sleeping Rough: East Sussex

Sally-Ann Hart:

[\[63550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what support has been given to (a) Hastings Borough Council, (b) Rother District Council and (c) East Sussex County Council to help rough sleepers (i) during and (ii) after the covid-19 outbreak.

Luke Hall:

Thanks to the hard work of local authorities, agencies and the homelessness sector, nearly 15,000 vulnerable people have been housed in emergency

accommodation, including hotels, since the start of the COVID-19 lockdown period, according to returns from local authorities to MHCLG. This includes people coming in directly from the streets, people previously housed in shared night shelters and people who have become vulnerable to rough sleeping during the pandemic. This is a truly remarkable achievement, and one which all organisations involved should be proud.

To support this, we provided a targeted £3.2 million in emergency funding for local authorities to support vulnerable rough sleepers. As the pandemic progressed, we provided councils across England with £3.2 billion to manage the impacts of COVID-19, including supporting homeless people. Hastings Borough Council and Rother District Council were both directly allocated funds from these streams, as were the other local authorities under East Sussex County Council.

Building on the considerable success so far, Dame Louise Casey is spearheading a Taskforce to lead the next phase of the Government's support for rough sleepers during this pandemic. Working hand in hand with local authorities and agencies from across the homelessness sector, the Taskforce will develop and lead on the next steps of the Government's response to rough sleeping during the COVID-19 pandemic – ensuring as many people as possible who have been brought in off the streets in this pandemic do not return to the streets.

In total we have put in place £606 million to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over 2020/21. This marks a £238 million, or 65 per cent increase in funding from the previous year.

■ **Swimming Pools: Coronavirus**

Jane Hunt:

[\[63542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what discussions officials in his Department have had with representatives from (a) local authorities and (b) swimming pool operators on the challenges faced by swimming pool operators as a result of covid-19.

Jane Hunt:

[\[63543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the level of risk of closures to swimming facilities as a result of the covid-19 lockdown.

Mr Simon Clarke:

MHCLG continues to work closely with local authorities to manage the impacts of COVID-19 on our society. My officials, together with officials from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport are engaging with the sector to understand the impact which coronavirus has had across a range of areas, including leisure.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Department for International Development: Foreign and Commonwealth Office****Dr Lisa Cameron:**[\[64228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if the Government will delay the implementation of the decision to create the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office until the publication of the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The Prime Minister is determined that the Integrated Review later this year will set an ambitious vision for the future of the UK as an active, internationalist, problem-solving and burden-sharing nation. The new Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office will be central to the delivery of that vision, so it needs to prepare now to be ready by the Autumn.

This reform will create a department that for the first time for many years has the combination of size, reach and expertise to project us effectively internationally and make sure that we spend our development money in the best possible way.

Dr Lisa Cameron:[\[64229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether the (a) Independent Commission for Aid Impact, International Development Committee and (b) National Audit Office will maintain its existing role in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The National Audit Office, the UK's independent public spending watchdog, supports Parliament in holding government to account and helping to improve public services through independent audits. The Comptroller and Auditor General certifies the accounts of all government departments and has statutory authority to examine whether departments have used their resources efficiently, effectively and with economy. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) will be accountable to parliament for how it spends UK aid. The form this takes is a matter for Parliament. We remain committed to full transparency in our aid spending and there will continue to be parliamentary and independent scrutiny of the aid budget.

■ Department for International Development: Reorganisation**Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[64283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 24 June 2020 on to Question 61564 on Department for International Development: Reorganisation, whether she held discussions with any civil society and development partners on the potential merger of her Department with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office before the decision to merge those Departments was made.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Civil society organisations and our development partners play invaluable role in our fight against poverty. We continue to engage extensively with them as we shape the new Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office.

■ Palestinians: Curriculum**Steve McCabe:**[\[64065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the 2019-20 Memorandum of Understanding between her Department and the Palestinian Authority, what assessment she has made of the Palestinian Authority's progress on curriculum reform.

James Cleverly:

Our partnership with the Palestinian Authority (PA) is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding and our 'partnership principles'. We continue to judge that the PA is demonstrating a credible commitment to this Memorandum and the 'partnership principles'.

We are pleased the PA is currently revising its textbooks and hopes to update them before the start of the new school year in September. I most recently discussed progress of the PA's review with the Minister for Education on 4 June.

■ Palestinians: Overseas Aid**Steve McCabe:**[\[64066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the 2019-20 Memorandum of Understanding between her Department and the Palestinian Authority, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the steps taken by the Authority to ensure that funding allocated by her Department was not used to cover payments made to prisoners or their families.

Steve McCabe:[\[64067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the 2018-19 Memorandum of Understanding between her Department and the Palestinian Authority what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Palestinian Authority's efforts to ensure that funding from her Department was not used to cover payments made to prisoners or their families as administered by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation.

James Cleverly:

No UK Aid is used for payments to prisoners or their families, or the so called Martyrs' Fund. Our financial support to the Palestinian Authority health and education sectors goes into a dedicated bank account and is only paid to individual workers who have been carefully vetted through the PEGASE mechanism (Palestinian-European Socio-Economic Management Assistance Mechanism). Each payment is independently audited to ensure it has been received by the intended recipient. This rigorous process means we are confident no UK aid is being diverted.

Our partnership with the PA is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding and our 'partnership principles'. We continue to judge that the PA is demonstrating a credible commitment to DFID's partnership principles. Our partnership works to improve the lives of Palestinians and support the UK's commitment to maintain the viability of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

■ **Palestinians: Textbooks**

Steve McCabe:

[\[64068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 11 May 2020 to Question 42246, on what date she expects the George Eckert Institute to deliver its interim report.

James Cleverly:

Following UK calls for action, our European partners commissioned the Georg Eckert Institute to conduct an independent review of Palestinian textbooks, which is currently underway.

We understand the report has been delayed due to COVID-19. We have regular discussions with our European Partners on the review and we continue to encourage the EU to finalise the interim report as soon as possible.

Steve McCabe:

[\[64069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 11 May 2020 to Question 42246 on Palestinians: Textbooks, by what date she expects the internal panel of researchers to complete their analysis.

James Cleverly:

Our three-year People to People programme aimed to bring together Israelis and Palestinians to cooperate on issues which can have a positive impact on both communities, helping to build understanding between people on both sides of the conflict in support of a peaceful, negotiated resolution.

The research component for this programme seeks to look more broadly at the impact of People to People work on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to build the evidence base in this area – something that is presently limited. To ensure a thorough analysis of this programme, an internal panel is reviewing the report. Work on this is currently underway and the panel hopes to complete its review by Autumn this year.

■ **Yemen: Humanitarian Aid**

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[65182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking to help ensure that funding package to help fight coronavirus and address the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Yemen announced on 2 June 2020 by the Foreign Secretary, is additional to planned humanitarian assistance to Yemen.

James Cleverly:

The UK's £160 million commitment to Yemen for this financial year (2020/21) will help tackle the spread of COVID-19 by providing over 700,000 medical consultations, training 12,000 healthcare workers to work in a safe environment and providing a much-needed boost to nearly 4,000 health centres, to continue providing existing health services.

This funding will also respond to existing humanitarian needs in Yemen by providing support to at least 300,000 vulnerable people each month to help them buy food and household essentials, treat 40,000 children for malnutrition and provide 1 million people with improved water supply and basic sanitation.

We have already disbursed 32% of our £160 million funding to Yemen this year and expect to have disbursed over 50% by the end of July.

JUSTICE**Bail****Karl Turner:****[R] [62408]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions his Department has had with the Home Office on their consultation on proposals for reviewing pre-charge bail legislation; and what assessment he has made of the effect of the 2017 pre-charge bail reforms on criminal defence solicitors.

Alex Chalk:

MoJ officials including representatives from the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) and Home Office officials have been in contact on a regular basis since the review into "Release under investigation" (RUI) was announced in November 2019.

Following COVID-19, the consultation deadline was extended to end of May 2020. The consultation has now closed, with over 1000 responses received.

The 2017 Bail Act changes introduced a presumption against bail, with police forces increasingly using 'Release Under Investigation' (RUI) powers. In those cases where bail is considered appropriate, police forces must apply to a Magistrate to extend pre-charge bail beyond 3 months.

In response to these changes, the LAA made amendments to the 2017 Standard Crime Contract to ensure that legal aid funding is available for defendants in these new Magistrates' Court proceedings. The LAA also amended legal aid contracts to allow providers to submit a claim for payment within one month of being notified of an 'RUI'. That claim can be reopened at a later date if the police investigation continues and further work is done.

This amendment was in response to concern from defence practitioner bodies that any delays in investigations could delay the point at which they can apply for payment for work done on legal aid cases.

All amendments to the legal aid contract were undertaken in consultation with the Law Society and other representative bodies.

■ **Employment Tribunals Service: Fees and Charges**

Justin Madders:

[64946]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans he has to reintroduce Employment Tribunal fees.

Chris Philp:

There have been no decisions regarding the re-introduction of fees in the Employment Tribunal. The Government is committed to the effective enforcement of employment rights. Should we bring forward any formal proposals relating to the re-introduction of fees in the Employment Tribunal, they would be subject to a full public consultation.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Incentives**

Kate Osamor:

[64980]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many reward and recognition nominations have been (a) made and (b) approved by his Department for people in each category of (i) ethnicity and (ii) gender in each year since 2015.

Chris Philp:

Under the department's recognition and reward policies, nominations for awards are proposed and administered at a local level, therefore we do not have a central record of nominations.

Approved awards made in the form of special bonuses and vouchers are available in the Ministry of Justice Workforce Monitoring Reports, which are published annually:

2015/16: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/moj-workforce-monitoring-report-2015-to-2016>

2016/17: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/moj-annual-diversity-report-2016-to-2017>

2017/18: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministry-of-justice-workforce-monitoring-report-2017-to-2018>

2018/19: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministry-of-justice-workforce-monitoring-report-2018-to-2019>

The published data covers awards issued in the form of special bonus for each year up to March 2019. The published data in 2018/19 also includes award issued in the form of vouchers.

Awards data covering April 2019 to March 2020 will be published in the Ministry of Justice Workforce Monitoring Report for 2019/20 in due course.

■ Non-molestation Orders: Coronavirus

Mark Tami: **[64085]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that court hearings for breaches of non-molestation orders take place promptly during the covid-19 outbreak.

Chris Philp:

HMCTS is working closely with the Judiciary and criminal justice agencies to ensure cases that need to be prioritised can be.

Domestic Violence Protection Orders and Non-Molestation orders have been placed in the highest category of work in the magistrates' and family courts for urgent hearings .

The prioritisation of cases and trials is a judicial decision and the senior judiciary has issued the following guidance:

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Note-on-Listing-Magistrates-SPJ-DSPJ-14.04.20-FINAL.pdf>

■ Prisoners' Release: Reoffenders

Layla Moran: **[64308]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of prisoners on short-term sentences re-offended after being released from prison in each year since 2015.

Lucy Frazer:

Please see the link below that details how many and what proportion of prisoners re-offended after being released from prison, ordered by sentence length. The figures for adult offenders can be found in table C2a and the figures for juvenile offenders can be found in table C2b. The latest data available goes up to March 2018.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/872392/proven-reoffending-jan18-mar18-annual.ods

Reforms we have recently announced to probation will tackle reoffending by delivering more investment in skilled probation staff and ensuring stronger, service user informed support and supervision for offenders.

■ Solicitors Regulation Authority

Peter Kyle: **[65175]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the Solicitor's Regulation Authority on ensuring good practice among immigration solicitors.

Alex Chalk:

The legal profession in England and Wales is independent of Government and solicitors are regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). Solicitors must

comply with detailed Code of Conduct, which ensures that high standards of conduct are met.

The SRA has undertaken a range of work including carrying out research and a thematic review into the quality of service delivery, and consulting on changes to their Standards and Regulations to confirm regulatory arrangements for immigration solicitors.

Guidance was published for the profession to accompany the thematic review, which highlighted common risks that solicitors and firms face when they provide immigration services.

The SRA Risk Outlook also regularly reminds the profession of managing risks involved with working with vulnerable clients, which includes those seeking immigration work.

The SRA is already working with charities, consumer representatives, provider representatives, other regulators and the Legal Ombudsman to consider whether there is more they can do to help ensure immigrants and asylum seekers understand their rights and can access quality advice.

■ **Suicide: Armed Forces**

Dr Julian Lewis:

[65085]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will take steps to instruct the Coroner's Service to ascertain and record, in all cases of suicide, whether the deceased was a (a) present or (b) former member of the (i) Regular Armed Forces or (ii) Reserves.

Alex Chalk:

Every suicide is a tragedy and we take the welfare of our service men and women, whether veterans or current members of the Armed Forces or Reserves, very seriously.

The Government recognises that personal information about victims of suicide can be used to improve understanding of "at risk" groups and, from that, to support better targeted interventions. But for data on suicides amongst veterans and serving members of the Armed Forces or Reserves to be of value, the information collected must be reliable, consistent and comprehensive. For a number of practical and administrative reasons, including the parameters of the coroner's role, this isn't possible in the context of coroner suicide conclusions and there are no plans, therefore, to require coroners to record whether the deceased had served in the Armed Forces or Reserves.

The Chief Coroner has given coroners clearer guidance so that deaths, including suicide, are recorded more consistently.

■ Trials

Kate Green: [\[63337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the effect on (a) victims, (b) witnesses and (c) defendants of replacing jury trials with trials by a judge and two magistrates.

Chris Philp:

We are pursuing a number of measures to help our Criminal Courts' recovery, including searching for new court capacity. It is right that we think ambitiously and consider a full range of options. The Ministry would carry out a detailed assessment of any measure before introducing legislation.

SCOTLAND

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Andrew Griffith: [\[903978\]](#)

What discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the economic support available for Scottish businesses during the covid-19 outbreak.

Iain Stewart:

My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland is in regular contact with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and all members of the Cabinet to discuss how best the UK Government can support Scottish businesses during the Covid-19 crisis.

As well as an additional £3.8 billion in funding for the Scottish Government through the Barnett Formula, the furlough and self-employed support schemes have saved more than three quarters of a million jobs in Scotland.

Marco Longhi: [\[903985\]](#)

What assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of the level of additional fiscal support allocated to the Scottish Government in response to the covid-19 outbreak.

Iain Stewart:

We are working closely with the Scottish Government to ensure it has the necessary funds to help secure jobs and protect the economy through the pandemic.

The Scottish Government has been allocated a total of nearly £3.8 billion of Barnett consequential to support public services and businesses, with over £2.3 billion for business support alone.

This is on top of the unprecedented UK-wide measures the Chancellor announced since the start of the pandemic, including help for the self-employed, three-month mortgage holidays, funding for research, and extending Statutory Sick Pay.

■ Economic Situation: Scotland

Ruth Jones:

[\[64328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent assessment the Government has made of the economy of Scotland.

Mr Alister Jack:

Recent GDP figures show that, in line with many other economies around the world, coronavirus is having a severe impact on the UK and Scottish economy.

The latest official figures show that Scotland's GDP is provisionally estimated to have fallen by 18.9% in real terms during April, after a fall of 5.0% in March. These results are very similar to the pattern seen across the UK as a whole, and reflect the direct economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic in Scotland. Between March 2020 and April 2020, UK GDP has fallen by 20.4%, after a fall of 5.8% in March.

We have taken unprecedented actions to protect jobs and incomes, and support businesses, in order to prevent the severe but temporary economic disruption from leaving permanent scars on the economy.

■ Ethnic Groups: Coronavirus

Catherine West:

[\[903999\]](#)

If he will make a comparative assessment of the effect of covid-19 on the BAME community in Scotland and England.

Iain Stewart:

Both Public Health England and Public Health Scotland have published early analysis looking at the impact of COVID-19 on BAME Communities.

There is much more work to do to understand what is driving these disparities and how the different risk factors interact, and we are absolutely determined to get to the bottom of this and find ways of closing that gap.

The UK Government has committed to commission further research and Scottish Government have established a group on this issue.

■ Industry: Scotland

Jeff Smith:

[\[903995\]](#)

What assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing additional packages of support for industries by sector in Scotland as the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

Iain Stewart:

The UK Government package, as well as an additional £3.8 billion in funding for the Scottish Government through the Barnett Formula, has been significant.

The furlough and self-employed support schemes have saved more than three quarters of a million jobs in Scotland.

It is right that the furlough scheme has been extended until October, and now made available on a part-time basis. This will provide much-needed reassurance to businesses across Scotland. Scottish businesses have been very clear that what they really want is to get back to work.

■ UK Relations With EU: Scotland

Ruth Jones: [\[903986\]](#)

What discussions he has had with the Prime Minister on the UK's future relationship with the EU in relation to Scotland.

Geraint Davies: [\[903997\]](#)

What discussions he has had with the Prime Minister on the UK's future relationship with the EU in relation to Scotland.

Iain Stewart:

My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland speaks to the Prime Minister regularly on a variety of areas of interest to Scotland, including the future relationship with the EU.

TRANSPORT

■ Channel Tunnel Railway Line: Eastbourne and Hastings

Sally-Ann Hart: [\[63551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made on proposals for the extension of the High-Speed 1 rail line from Ashford International Station to Hastings and Eastbourne via Rye.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

We have approved the entry of the Kent and East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Scheme to formally enter the Government's rail enhancements pipeline. The Department and East Sussex County Council are funding the production of a Strategic Outline Business Case, due by the end of 2020. As well as exploring options to create a new link to High Speed 1, this programme is considering options for a range of upgrades to the Marshlink line between Ashford and Hastings.

■ Cycling: Accidents

Layla Moran: [\[63479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of cyclists killed as a result of poor quality roads in each of the last 10 years.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Contributory factors assigned by police officers do not assign blame for the accident to any specific road user, however they do provide some insight into why and how road accidents occur. They give an indication of which factors the attending officer thought contributed to the accident. Officers do not need to carry out a full

investigation of the incident before allocating contributory factors; they usually use professional judgement about what they can see at the scene. Not all accidents are included in the contributory factor data; only accidents where the police attended the scene and reported at least one contributory factor are included.

The number of pedal cyclists killed in road accidents where a contributory factor of 'Poor or defective road surface' was reported, in Great Britain, between the years 2009 and 2018 can be found in the below table:

PEDAL CYCLIST KILLED IN ACCIDENTS WHERE CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR ¹ OF 'POOR OR DEFECTIVE ROAD SURFACE' WAS REPORTED, GREAT BRITAIN, 2009-2018	
Year	Number of cyclists killed
2009	1
2010	6
2011	3
2012	3
2013	1
2014	1
2015	1
2016	4
2017	1
2018	3

Source: DfT, STATS19

1 Includes only those killed in accidents where a police officer attended the scene and in which a contributory factor was reported.

Poor or defective road surface

Includes any obvious road surface defect such as potholes and cracks. Also includes roads where a worn surface or poor skid resistance is thought to have contributed to the accident.

■ Driving Tests: Coronavirus

Karin Smyth:

[\[63379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many emergency driving tests were undertaken by essential workers during the suspension of regular tests as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Rachel Maclean:

Between the period 23 March 2020 and 19 June 2020, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency conducted 5,967 emergency tests for critical workers:

TEST CATEGORY	TESTS CONDUCTED
Motorcycle tests	124
Vocational tests	584
Car tests	5259
	5967

■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Coronavirus

Alexander Stafford:

[\[63561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that roadside bathroom and changing facilities remain open to lorry drivers during the covid-19 outbreak.

Rachel Maclean:

We recognise the important contribution that delivery drivers make to the nation, the economy, and business. We are reviewing urgently how motorway service areas operate during the COVID-19 related disruption. They are likely to be operating differently and we want to ensure that they continue to offer support to industry and drivers.

Motorway Service Areas (MSAs) are required by law to offer two hours free parking, which is essential to allow drivers to have breaks, and use the facilities. All MSAs in England are currently still open and we have asked MSA operators to redouble their efforts to ensure that users will be safe at facilities.

We have also recently published guidance for Transport workers on gov.uk, which is updated as new advice becomes available.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-staff-in-the-transport-sector>

More widely, we are working with industry on the development of a charter that outlines businesses commitment to offering hygiene and toilet facilities to delivery drivers. This includes all delivery drivers, e.g. HGV drivers, couriers, and everything in between, but crucially only focuses on business properties, not private or

residential property. The charter will be for businesses to sign up to. Signing up signifies that as an employer they meet Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance and offer these facilities to their delivery drivers. This charter follows changes to HSE guidance in November 2017 to say, "Drivers must have access to welfare facilities for visiting delivery drivers" and was introduced in response to a campaign by Truckers' Toilets.

In addition to the Charter, we have recently published a joint letter with the Health and Safety Executive on gov.uk, reminding businesses of their legal obligation to provide toilet and handwashing facilities to drivers visiting their premises as part of their work. This is available to download and print, via the following link.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/887867/dft-hse-letter-drivers-facilities.pdf

■ **Motorcycles: Coronavirus**

Mr Richard Holden:

[64372]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of motorcycle use as a socially-distanced form of transport in response to the covid-19 outbreak.

Rachel Maclean:

The Department's guidance issued on 12 May refers to "Private cars and other vehicles" as an alternative to using public transport, and encourages the public to "consider all other forms of transport before using public transport". This would include private vehicles such as motorcycles and mopeds where the journey to be made is appropriate.

■ **Passenger Ships: Coronavirus**

Mr John Baron:

[65087]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that cruise ship companies pass refunds on to their customers in line with timeframes set in regulations.

Kelly Tolhurst:

The Government recognises the challenges consumers and many businesses are facing regarding refunds for cancelled cruise ship holidays, which are governed by the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018.

The Department for Transport has held regular discussions with cruise ship companies and is continuing to work closely with the sector and consumer groups to help ensure cruise ship companies deliver on their commitments. The Government's position is clear – if a customer asks for a refund, that refund needs to be paid.

■ Public Transport: Coronavirus**Sally-Ann Hart:****[63547]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to support people who are deaf and rely on lipreading to communicate when travelling on public transport during the period where face coverings are mandatory on such transport during the covid-19 outbreak.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Government is committed to ensuring deaf people can fully participate in society. We understand that mandatory use of face coverings will be difficult to adhere to for some. That is why there are exemptions to the rules for some disabled people and those with certain health conditions on public transport. You also do not need to wear a face covering if you are speaking with someone who relies on lip reading and facial expressions to communicate.

We are working closely with transport operators to make sure that their staff and passengers are aware that not everyone is required to wear a face covering. Our Safer Transport guidance includes a clear reminder to transport operators of the need to provide staff with disability equality and awareness training. In addition to this, the guidance also specifically provides warnings that conventional coverings can prevent many disabled people from accessing oral information and instructions. Our guidance for operators and more information on face coverings can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators#face-coverings>

Gill Furniss:**[65180]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that disabled people who are exempt from the public transport face-covering requirement do not encounter (a) harassment or (b) difficulties when travelling.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

We recognise that some people are not able to wear a face covering for a variety of reasons, including people with certain health conditions. We are working with transport operators and the police to understand how this is working on the ground, and reminding them of need to be sensitive.

Our Safer Transport Guidance and DFT-produced communications are clear that face coverings don't need to be worn if disabilities make that difficult, and that people relying on this exemption should not routinely be required to produce any written evidence in support of their reliance. The guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

It is important that anyone who should not be wearing a face covering is able to travel without fear of harassment. We are working closely with transport operators to make

sure that their staff and passengers are aware that not everyone is required to wear a face covering.

We do not want members of the public to challenge anyone not wearing a face covering – they may have a perfectly good reason. It is a matter for operators and police

The Government remains committed to delivering inclusive transport for all passengers. As part of the work to implement the changes, we have undertaken an Equalities Impact Assessment and have taken advice from the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee, as well as other disability stakeholder groups.

■ **Railway Stations: Coronavirus**

Helen Hayes:

[\[65177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the ability for passengers to maintain safe social distance at older railway stations that have not have platform extensions.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Rail operators are working hard to facilitate social distancing between passengers wherever possible, in line with Public Health England advice. Measures include making regular station speaker announcements, the installation of clear floor markings and the provision of extra staff to manage passenger flows and provide guidance to passengers. Operational plans are in place to facilitate this and continue to be reviewed.

■ **Railways: Electrification**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[65192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps has he taken to ensure that all diesel-only trains will no longer be in service by 2040.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Rail decarbonisation will be an important element in the UK's first Transport Decarbonisation Plan. The Department is working with Network Rail and the rail industry to determine which parts of the network are best suited to use of hydrogen and battery trains and electrification. This rail Traction Decarbonisation Network Strategy will be completed this year.

■ **Railways: Retail Trade**

Navendu Mishra:

[\[63531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether rail operators outside London are required to (a) apply and (b) collect full rent from retail tenants.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

In accordance with Franchise Agreements, as varied by the Emergency Measures Agreements, franchisees have responsibility to be Good and Efficient Operators.

This involves collecting rental income from tenants under pre-existing contracts wherever feasible.

■ Roads: Accidents

Bill Wiggin: [\[63237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many road accidents involving tractors there were in Herefordshire in 2019.

Bill Wiggin: [\[63238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many road accidents involving scooters there were in Herefordshire in 2019.

Rachel Maclean:

Detailed final statistics on reported personal injury road accidents in Great Britain for 2019 will be published in September 2020. The latest annual published statistics are for 2018.

The number of reported personal injury road accidents involving scooters and tractors in Herefordshire, in 2018 can be found in the below table:

REPORTED PERSONAL INJURY ROAD ACCIDENTS, BY ROAD USER TYPE INVOLVED, HEREFORDSHIRE, 2018

Road user type involved	Number of accidents
Scooter ¹	1
Tractor ²	6

Source: DfT, STATS19

1. Scooters are not one of the designated vehicle types collected in a STATS19 reportable accidents. As such they can only be identified by using a free text field or where the vehicle type includes the word scooter. The only scooter type recorded in Herefordshire in 2018 is mobility scooter.

2. Tractors are not one of the designated vehicle types collected in a STATS19 reportable accidents. As such they can only be identified by linking to other data sources. Vehicles that have a valid registration mark are matched to the DVLA database, which allows additional information to be linked to the records kept by DfT. For this analysis DVLA body types included are agricultural tractor, station tractor and tractor excavator, and the only type excluded was tractor units used for articulated lorries. The only results in body type analysis recorded in Herefordshire in 2018 was for agricultural tractors.

Bill Wiggin:

[63239]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many road accidents involving electric vehicles there were in Herefordshire in 2019.

Rachel Maclean:

Electric vehicles are not one of the designated vehicle types collected in a STATS19 reportable accidents. The only vehicle type that could be used in its entirety from STATS19 was 'electric motorcycles'. Vehicles that had a valid registration mark were matched to the DVLA database, which allowed vehicles with 'electric' propulsion to be identified. All 'mobility scooters' were included in the analysis, as they are predominantly electric powered when they are without a registration marks. The remaining records were searched in a free text field for the word 'electric'.

Detailed final statistics on reported personal injury road accidents in Great Britain for 2019 will be published in September 2020. The latest annual published statistics are for 2018.

There were 3 reported personal injury road accidents involving electric vehicles, in Herefordshire, in 2018 (of these one included a mobility scooter, one included an electric motorcycle and one included an electric car).

■ Roads: Noise

Damian Hinds:

[63308]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the results were from his Department's trials of roadside noise cameras in Hampshire and elsewhere; and what plans he has for the further deployment of such cameras.

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. As a result, further development and testing will be required before it could be recommended for wider scale roll out, especially if the camera is to be deployed in urban environments where complex traffic and environmental scenarios are common.

■ Roads: Rural Areas

Bill Wiggin:

[63236]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans his Department has to improve road safety in (a) Herefordshire and (b) other rural areas.

Rachel Maclean:

Whilst the Department has no current plan to improve road safety specifically in Herefordshire, the Department's Safer Roads Fund will benefit the wider area. In 2017 £2.16 million was awarded to improve the A4173 in Gloucestershire and in

2018 £3.89 million was awarded to improve the A529 in Shropshire. These improvements will also benefit the constituents of Hereford as they travel further afield.

In July 2019, the Government published the Road Safety Statement 2019: 'A Lifetime of Road Safety'. This includes a two-year action plan to address a range of road safety issues which will improve safety for all road users, including establishing a working group to address rural road safety issues.

■ Transport for London: Concessions

Helen Hayes:

[65178]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what equalities impact assessment his Department made ahead of its decision to make it a requirement of providing emergency funding to TfL to end the Freedom Pass and impose peak time restriction on the Oyster 60+ card in London on people (a) on low incomes and (b) with disabilities.

Rachel Maclean:

The £1.6 billion Extraordinary Funding and Financing Agreement to enable Transport for London to continue to run services contained a series of conditions, which were agreed by the Mayor of London and Deputy Mayor for Transport, to facilitate safe travel on public transport in London.

While the temporary changes to the validity of the Older Person's Freedom Pass, 60+ Oyster photocard and English National Concessionary Scheme in London have removed free travel for users of these passes from 04:30 to 09:00 Monday to Friday, the provision for over 60s travel in London is still greater than that elsewhere in England, where the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme allows cardholders to travel on buses across the UK for free after 09:30.

An Equality Impact Assessment of the temporary changes to over 60s travel in London was completed by Transport for London and is published here:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/md2642_appendix_2_-_eqia.pdf

The temporary changes do not affect passengers with a Disabled Freedom Pass who are still able to travel at all times using their Pass if they have to use public transport for their journey.

Helen Hayes:

[65179]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what equalities impact assessment of low income families his Department made ahead of its decision to make it a requirement of providing emergency funding to TfL to change fares in London for children and young people under 18.

Rachel Maclean:

The £1.6 billion Extraordinary Funding and Financing Agreement to enable Transport for London (TfL) to continue operating services contained a series of conditions, which were agreed by the Mayor of London and Deputy Mayor for Transport, to

facilitate safe travel on public transport in London, including the temporary suspension of free travel for under 18s.

The Department is working closely with TfL on how the temporary suspension can be operationalised, whilst ensuring that any child eligible for free home to school travel under the Education Act 1996 will still receive this. The Department is also completing an Equality Impact Assessment, which will consider whether there are further categories of vulnerable children that should receive free transport.

TREASURY

■ **Beer: Excise Duties**

Owen Thompson:

[63439]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what representatives of the independent small breweries sector he has had discussions with on the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on that sector.

Kemi Badenoch:

Due to the exceptional circumstances of the covid-19 outbreak, it has not been possible for Ministers to meet directly with representatives of every business sector during this pressured time. However, Treasury officials have been in regular contact with the Society of Independent Brewers and other organisations representing small brewers throughout this period.

Full details of all Ministerial meetings are published regularly on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>

■ **Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme: Insurance Companies**

Thangam Debbonaire:

[63367]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with representatives of the insurance industry on the payment of business interruption insurance for business operations in relation to the covid-19 restrictions.

Thangam Debbonaire:

[63370]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with representatives of the insurance industry on the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on small training colleges that provide industry-specific qualifications.

John Glen:

The Government is in continual dialogue with the insurance sector to understand and influence its response to this unprecedented situation. The Government is also working closely with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to ensure that the rules are being upheld during this crisis.

For those businesses which have an appropriate policy that covers government ordered closure and unspecified notifiable diseases, the Government's social distancing instructions are sufficient to allow businesses to make a claim against their insurance, provided the other terms and conditions in their policy are met.

Furthermore, to resolve uncertainty for customers making business interruption claims, on 1 May the FCA outlined its intention to seek a court declaration, on an agreed and urgent basis, for a selected number of key issues. Subsequently on 1 June, the FCA announced the policy wordings that would be tested in the court action and insurers it had invited to participate directly, along with an initial list of policy wordings and insurers that will potentially be impacted by the Court's decision on the representative sample. The FCA expects to publish a final list of all the relevant insurers and policies that may have impacted wordings shortly, and expects a court hearing to take place in late July.

However, most businesses have not purchased insurance that covers losses from COVID-19. Insurance policies differ significantly, so businesses are encouraged to check the terms and conditions of their specific policy and contact their providers.

The Government recognises that businesses who do not have appropriate insurance cover will require support from elsewhere. As such, businesses should explore the full package of support set out by the Chancellor, which includes measures such as business rates holidays, the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, and wage support.

■ Coronavirus: Quarantine

Robert Halfon:

[65112]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to cover in full the potential loss of earnings for people notified via the NHS Test and Trace service as needing to self-isolate due to the covid-19 outbreak.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has announced an unprecedented package to support individuals through this difficult time. This includes the introduction of the Coronavirus Job Retention and Self-Employment Income Support Schemes, as well as injecting an additional £8bn into the welfare system.

DWP has laid new regulations to ensure that people asked to isolate by the Test and Trace service will be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if they are unable to work from home. This is in addition to changes already made, which make SSP payable from day one rather than day four of absence from work. Employees will still be entitled to claim SSP from their employers even if they are asked to self-isolate several times. The SSP Rebate Scheme was announced at Budget to support SMEs which may face a financial strain due to staff absences caused by Covid-19.

Self-employed people are eligible for "new style" Contributory Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) if they are incapable of work due to Covid-19, including all those who are required to self-isolate according to Government guidance. The

Government has made it easier for people to claim by removing the seven-day waiting period which means people can get support from day one.

The Government is committed to helping the lowest paid through the coronavirus outbreak, and the welfare system is best placed to provide this support.

■ **Economic Situation: Coronavirus**

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[63229\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that economic recovery after the covid-19 outbreak focuses on (a) tackling climate change and (b) skills creation in low carbon industries.

Kemi Badenoch:

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

We are committed to meeting our climate change targets, including net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The UK is a world leader in clean growth. Spring Budget 2020 reinforced the UK's strong track record in this area with at least £800m for carbon capture and storage, over £1bn of further support for ultra-low emission vehicles, at least doubling funding for energy innovation, and tax measures to encourage greater energy efficiency and tackle plastic waste.

We have created Skills Advisory Panels to help local areas understand their current and future skills needs, including in low carbon industries, and to tailor provision accordingly. We will assess the impacts of potential interventions against their contribution to our environmental goals, including our climate change and air quality targets.

■ **Energy: Housing**

Alan Brown:

[\[63403\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much money his Department has allocated to funding home energy efficiency measures as part of the National Energy Efficiency Programme; and if he will make a statement.

Kemi Badenoch:

Improving energy efficiency in homes has an important role to play in reducing fuel poverty and tackling climate change.

The Government will continue to support home energy efficiency to 2028, at least at the level of funding of the current Energy Company Obligation scheme. This will drive more than £6 billion of investment in energy efficiency upgrades in homes.

The Government uses a range of levers to meet its environmental objectives. For instance, a Future Homes Standard, introduced by 2025, will require new build

homes to be future proofed with low carbon heating and world leading levels of energy efficiency.

BEIS will publish a Heat and Buildings Strategy in due course which will set out further actions to decarbonise buildings.

■ Food: Wholesale Trade

David Mundell:

[63248]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans the Government has to provide long-term support to the food and drink wholesale sector.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government's priority is to support the economy through the crisis; keep as many people as possible in their existing jobs, support viable businesses and protect the incomes of the most vulnerable. That is why 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.

Food and drink wholesale distributors continue to have access to the Government's unprecedented package of support for business, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) and the four government-backed loan schemes for firms of all sizes. 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>.

On 11 May the Government published its COVID-19 recovery strategy which sets out our plan for moving to the next phase of our response. Going forward, as the economy opens up, our energies will focus on supporting the recovery. The Government will continue to closely monitor the impacts of the support packages and continue to engage with businesses and representative groups in the wholesale sector. Any announcements on the next stage of our economic response will be made at the appropriate time.

■ Leisure: Coronavirus

Ben Everitt:

[63538]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing further financial support to gyms and leisure facilities that remain unable to reopen to the public as a result of the covid-19 lockdown.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government has announced unprecedented support for business and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency. Gyms and leisure facilities continue to have access to a range of support measures including, but not limited to:

- A 12-month business rates holiday for all eligible retail, leisure and hospitality businesses in England

- The retail, hospitality and leisure grant fund (RHLGF)
- A Discretionary Grant Fund for Local Authorities in England
- The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)
- The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)
- The Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBL) for small and micro enterprises
- VAT deferral for up to 12 months
- The Time To Pay scheme, through which businesses in financial distress, and with outstanding tax liabilities, can receive support with their tax affairs
- Protection for commercial leaseholders against automatic forfeiture for non-payment until June 30, 2020 – with an option for the Government to extend if needed.

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>.

On 11 May the Government published its COVID-19 recovery strategy which sets out our plan for moving to the next phase of our response. The strategy sets out a cautious roadmap for easing existing measures in a safe and measured way. On 23 June, the Prime Minister announced that several currently closed sectors will be allowed to reopen from 4 July, with appropriate mitigants in place, as set out in the COVID-secure guidance that departments have been working on. This includes:

- Leisure and tourist attractions, such as outdoor gyms and playgrounds, cinemas, museums, galleries, theme parks and arcades, libraries, social clubs and community centres.
- Recreation and sport will be allowed, but indoor facilities, including changing rooms and courts, will remain closed.

■ State Retirement Pensions: Females

Jack Dromey:

[65108]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the tax liability is for women who receive back payments of underpaid state pension in a single financial year; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

Income tax is calculated on arrears of state pension for the tax year in which the pensioner was entitled to receive it, and not in the year in which a lump sum is paid.

Where arrears of state pension are paid, income tax will only be due on any income that exceeds the personal allowance for the respective tax year.

In addition, HM Revenue and Customs can only collect income tax for the current tax year and the four preceding tax years. Any arrears of state pension relating to earlier years will not be subject to income tax.

Treasury: Overseas Aid**Yasmin Qureshi:**[\[63289\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which Official Development Assistance programmes that his Department funds are targeted at supporting women and girls.

Steve Barclay:

HM Treasury allocates Official Development Assistance budgets to other government departments. The UK's Gender Equality Act 2014 (an amendment to 2002 International Development Act, IDA), legally requires all overseas development funding to meaningfully consider the impact of how it will contribute to reducing gender inequality.

WORK AND PENSIONS**Department for Work and Pensions: Carbon Emissions****Stephen Timms:**[\[65086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans she has to implement the recommendations of the Committee on Climate Change report, Reducing UK emissions Progress Report to Parliament, published in June 2020 by making all her (a) Department's buildings and (b) vehicle fleets zero-carbon in the long-term; and if she will make a statement.

Mims Davies:

DWP has performed well in reducing its carbon emissions to date. DWP recently submitted its annual Greening Government Commitments (GGC) return for 2019/20. Whilst we await final confirmation from DEFRA, our analysis shows that we have exceeded our carbon targets for 2019/20.

COVID-19 has delayed confirmation by DEFRA of the 2025 GGC targets. When these targets are received our view forward will be clearer, however in the meantime we are developing the Estates Carbon Management Plan, which makes reference to the Government's Clean Growth Strategy, as well as the UK's commitment to Net Zero Carbon by 2050 and the UKGBC's Net Zero Carbon Framework. The plan includes recommendations to:

- Improve the operational performance of our estate;
- Invest in our estate to improve energy efficiency;
- Ensure we lease highly energy efficient buildings;
- Ensure that energy efficiency standards are adhered to when we refurbish or fit out buildings.

The Department is committed to supporting the Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) targets of 25% of its fleet to be electric vehicles (EV) by 2022 and 100% by 2030. Prior to COVID-19, plans were in place to start implementation this year. We are now reviewing the impact of COVID-19 on our plans.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Overseas Aid

Yasmin Qureshi:

[\[63290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department allocates Official Development Assistance to any programmes that are targeted at supporting women and girls.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information is not available. DWP's ODA spend has no initiatives targeted specifically at women and girls.

■ Employment Schemes: Young People

Seema Malhotra:

[\[64922\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what changes she has made to the Youth Obligation Support Programme in response to the covid-19 outbreak; and what employment support her Department is providing to job seekers aged 21 and under.

Mims Davies:

[Holding answer 30 June 2020]: We acknowledge that it is important that Jobcentres continue to support young people through the economic recovery post-COVID-19. They have already started to re-engage with new and existing claimants and are signposting them to appropriate support.

We are exploring any potential changes to our existing youth offer to address the needs of young people, ensuring we work with them through this period of economic uncertainty.

DWP is also engaging with a number of external stakeholders including the Youth Employment Group (set up by the Prince's Trust, Youth Employment UK, the Institute for Employment Studies, the Youth Futures Foundation and Impetus).

The department is continuing to work across Whitehall to develop a range of support aimed at all young people, including those from more complex backgrounds.

■ Employment: Mental Health

Ruth Jones:

[\[64330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment her Department has made of trends in the level of incidences of (a) stress, (b) anxiety and (c) depression for those in work.

Justin Tomlinson:

The information requested is not available.

The Government recognises the need to monitor trends in mental health and work as the UK responds to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Department is actively reviewing available information on mental health and work, which will enable examination of trends in due course, and intends to examine changes in mental health for people in work as data becomes available.

■ Industrial Health and Safety

Ian Lavery:

[48435]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many reports on the safety of workplaces were received by the Health and Safety Executive on each day since 23 March 2020.

Mims Davies:

[Holding answer 2 June 2020]: The attached table provides numbers of all reports of safety in the workplace, received by HSE, for each day since 23 March until the latest data available on 18 May.

This table includes reports of incidents that are reported under the RIDDORs (Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) by employers, and reports of safety workplace concerns raised by the public.

Attachments:

1. [48435 HSE attachment](#) [48435 HSE attachment.docx]

Andy McDonald:

[49012]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many visits staff from (a) the Health and Safety Executive and (b) local authorities have made to (i) investigate evidence that health and safety performance was poor, (ii) to carry out a prior assessment of a hazardous industrial workplace, (iii) investigate a specific incident, (iv) make an assessment of risk in new businesses or premises, (v) undertake a random spot checks on compliance and (vi) undertake a training exercise in each year since 2008-2009.

Andy McDonald:

[49013]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many visits staff from (a) the Health and Safety Executive and (b) local authorities have made to (i) investigate evidence that health and safety performance was poor, (ii) to carry out a prior assessment of a hazardous industrial workplace, (ii) investigate a specific incident, (iv) make an assessment of risk in new businesses or premises, (v) undertake a random spot checks on compliance and (vi) undertake a training exercise in each month in 2020-21.

Mims Davies:

[Holding answer 2 June 2020]: Health and Safety Executive (HSE) carries out a range of regulatory activities including proactive inspections and reactive work. This involves investigating any workplace related concerns, major injuries as well as possible work related fatalities.

The attached document provides tables, which give more detailed breakdown of inspections asked. HSE works to ensure employers and those in control of workplaces are complying with their legal duties to manage health and safety risks.

Attachments:

1. [Table 49012 and 13](#) [Table 49012 and 13.docx]

■ Members: Correspondence

Ian Lavery:

[\[55979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans to respond to Question 48435, asked by the hon. Member for Wansbeck on 18 May 2020.

Mims Davies:

I apologise for the delay and refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave for question [48435](#) on 1 July 2020.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disqualification

Kirsten Oswald:

[\[62487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans she has to extend suspension of benefits deductions for the recovery of (a) Universal Credit and legacy benefit overpayments, (b) Social Fund loans and (c) Tax Credit debts beyond 2 July 2020.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 25 June 2020]: We are currently in the process of reviewing this measure, and will confirm next steps as soon as possible.

■ Social Security Benefits: Fraud

Kate Osamor:

[\[62539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to ensure that claimants of legacy benefits who have fraudulent universal credit claims made in their name will not be transferred onto universal credit as a result of that fraudulent claim.

Will Quince:

Where a claim to Universal Credit was prompted by fraudulent activity, and a claimant is a victim whose details have been used to make a claim, the Department will consider the reinstatement of legacy benefits if there is clear evidence that the claimant had no involvement in the fraud, and where the claimant wishes us to do so.

■ Universal Credit

Jonathan Reynolds:

[\[62431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether universal credit claimants will be required to start actively looking for work once the suspension of conditionality ends on 30 June 2020; and whether Jobcentre Plus appointments will be resumed on that date.

Mims Davies:

DWP are supporting those who have lost jobs or have reduced hours in this pandemic, promptly processing new claims and getting money into the accounts of those in urgent need within days.

Now our focus is rightly switching to getting Britain back into work. From July, people will be able to make an appointment with their Work Coach if they can't get the help they want online or over the phone. Work Coaches, as part of the individualised approach, will be calling all claimants to engage with them.

From 1 July, we will reintroduce the requirement for claimants of UC, NS and Legacy JSA to accept a claimant commitment as part of any new claim. For existing claimants, we will review and update their claimant commitment as capacity allows. This is so we can provide tailored support to help them find work or increase hours.

Claimant commitments must be reasonable for the 'new normal', acknowledging the reality of a person's local jobs market and personal circumstances to prepare them for getting back into work.

Seema Malhotra:

[64920]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of (a) the number of additional full-time equivalent (i) staff and (ii) work coaches her Department would require to re-introduce the conditionality regime for universal credit on 1 July 20230 and(b) the average claimant caseload her Department allocates to each full time work coach.

Mims Davies:

[Holding answer 30 June 2020]: The Department is continually assessing the service being offered to customers and we continue to keep staff numbers under review as part of our response to the impact of Covid-19 on the labour market and our support for jobseekers during this difficult time.

We don't currently have figures on average customer caseload for Work Coaches as the COVID-19 pandemic meant many of DWP staff were redeployed to ensure customers receive their payments on time and in full.

We have already committed to increasing the number of Work Coaches and Case Managers, and recruitment is already underway.

Seema Malhotra:

[64921]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what consultation her Department is undertaking with (a) unions, (b) job centres and (c) staff on re-introducing the universal credit conditionality regime on 1 July 2020.

Mims Davies:

[Holding answer 30 June 2020]: The department has widely discussed the reintroduction of conditionality requirements with trade unions, and Jobcentre staff, including Work Coaches.

We are managing this in a phased approach to ensure we have the capacity to deliver an effective service for our customers. During the pandemic we have remained open for our most vulnerable customers, and from 1st July, our Jobcentres are further opening up, with appropriate safety measures in place for covid-19, to enable them to safely see more and more claimants. Work Coaches will be working

with claimants to start to help them in their work search and creating and agreeing their Claimant Commitment.

Claimant Commitments must be reasonable for the 'new normal', acknowledging the reality of a person's local jobs market and personal circumstances to prepare them for getting back into work.

■ **Universal Credit: Coronavirus**

Drew Hendry:

[\[65162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will extend the universal credit overpayment debt recovery pause for as long as covid-19 outbreak continues.

Will Quince:

We are currently in the process of reviewing this measure, and will confirm next steps as soon as possible.

■ **Windrush Generation: Compensation**

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[62461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether payments under the Windrush Compensation Scheme count towards the savings limit of universal credit and other means-tested benefits.

Will Quince:

Any payment of capital from the Windrush Compensation Scheme or the Windrush Exceptional Payments Scheme will be disregarded indefinitely for the calculation of capital in Universal Credit and other means-tested benefits.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Research and development policy update

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Alok Sharma):
[\[HCWS326\]](#)

Today the Government is publishing the UK Research and Development Roadmap.

The roadmap sets out the Government's vision and ambition to bolster the UK's world-class credentials in research and development.

The Government's long-term objectives for R&D are clear: to be a science superpower and invest in the science and research that will deliver economic growth and societal benefits across the UK for decades to come, and to build the foundations for the new industries of tomorrow.

This was supported by the unprecedented commitment at the March 2020 Budget to increase public investment in R&D to £22 billion by 2024/25. This followed the Queen's Speech, where the Government committed to "making the UK a global science superpower that attracts brilliant people and businesses from across the world".

Research and development will be critical to a swift economic and social recovery from the impacts of COVID-19, for a greener, healthier and more resilient UK. Our goal is to further strengthen science, research and innovation across the UK, making them central to tackling the major challenges we face, including achieving net zero carbon emissions, building resilience to the impacts of climate change, closing the productivity gap and embracing the transformative potential of new technologies to improve the quality of life.

We can only make the most of the UK's science superpower strengths by working with partners in government, academia, industry and charities across the UK. The roadmap marks the start of a conversation on what actions need to be taken and how to ensure our R&D system is fit for purpose now and for the future.

We are engaging with the devolved administrations and other Government departments to ensure this is a cross Government and UK-wide discussion and will be undertaking a broader programme of engagement in the run up to the spending review this autumn.

The UK Research and Development Roadmap document will be placed in the Libraries of House.

EDUCATION

■ Early Years Foundation Stage update

The Minister of State for School Standards (Nick Gibb):

[\[HCWS327\]](#)

I can confirm that the Department for Education has today published on Gov.uk the Government's response to the consultation on reforms to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The EYFS statutory framework sets the standards that all schools and early years providers must meet to ensure that children from birth to age five learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

Last October, the Government published a consultation on reforms to the EYFS, following a year long pilot of the proposed reforms. The objectives of our reforms are twofold. First, we want to raise education standards in the early years through improving early years outcomes for all children, particularly disadvantaged children. Second, we want to reduce teacher workload so that teachers can spend more time interacting and supporting children through rich curriculum activities.

The consultation received 2,452 responses prior to the deadline on 31 January 2020. The areas consulted on and the government's response to this are as follows:

- Revisions to the educational programmes and Early Learning Goals: the EYFS specifies seven areas of learning, under which sit 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all children should demonstrate by the end of the academic year in which the child reaches age five. The framework also sets out high level educational programmes for each area of learning, summarising curriculum activities for all children from birth to five years old. The consultation indicated broad agreement that the proposed educational programmes support children's overall learning and development with some suggested changes which were considered as part of the final proposals. The consultation also indicated broad agreement with the Early Learning Goals with some suggested areas for clarification which have been reflected in the final proposals.
- Changes to the teacher assessment and moderation process at the end of the EYFS: we consulted on the proposal to remove the statutory requirement for local authorities to externally moderate EYFS Profile (EYFSP) judgements in 25% of schools each year. Although there was mixed support for this, with the common view from respondents being in favour of retaining moderation, we know from the EYFSP pilot evaluation findings that in the absence of external moderation and associated evidence gathering and paperwork, teachers found that their workload had reduced, allowing them to focus on teaching. Government will therefore proceed with the proposal to remove statutory local authority moderation.
- Removing the 'exceeding' criteria from the EYFSP: the consultation indicated broad support for this proposal and our response confirms our intention to proceed with this proposal.

- Changes to the safeguarding and welfare requirements as set out in the EYFS framework: we consulted on one minor change, namely to explicitly include 'oral health' in the current requirement to 'promote the good health of children' in the EYFS framework. The consultation indicated strong support for this proposal and the response confirms the Government's intention to proceed.

We recognise the impact the COVID-19 outbreak has had on the early years sector and schools, particularly in terms of the impact on children's learning and development as a result of closures.

The EYFS reforms outlined in this response provide a strong basis to support children who may have missed critical months of early education.

Therefore, we will proceed with offering schools the opportunity to adopt the final reforms from September 2020 (the early adopter year), followed by statutory national implementation as planned from September 2021.

A copy of the Government's response will be placed in the House libraries.

JUSTICE

■ Courts and tribunals recovery update

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Robert Buckland):
[\[HCWS329\]](#)

I am today setting out progress being made to recover the operations of our courts and tribunals in response to the pandemic. Responsibility for the courts and tribunals is shared with the Lord Chief Justice and Senior President of Tribunals, to whom I am very grateful for continued close collaboration in this endeavour.

Since March, the priority of the Government, working closely with the judiciary and others, has been to ensure the justice system continues to perform its vital role while keeping court and tribunal users safe in line with public health guidelines. To achieve this, HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) has rapidly expanded the use of technology to allow hearings to be conducted by phone and video and temporarily closed around half of its building to focus effort and resources more effectively. The most urgent cases have been prioritised by the judiciary to ensure public safety, protect the vulnerable and safeguard children.

As a result, our courts and tribunals in England and Wales have been able to sustain more activity than many other comparable jurisdictions internationally. Huge credit must go to the judges, magistrates, HMCTS staff, legal professionals and all those involved in proceedings for their work in the face of the extraordinary challenges posed by the pandemic.

Having responded effectively to the immediate crisis, HMCTS is now fully focused on recovering its operation to increase courts and tribunal capacity to deal both with normal workloads across jurisdictions and outstanding cases. The challenges of doing so are no less great, not least because of the constraints imposed by social distancing. But doing

so is essential if we are to ensure that our justice system delivers for the those it is there to serve.

As part of the Prime Minister's plan for economic recovery, he announced yesterday (30 June) that HMCTS will be receiving £142m of additional capital funding this year to speed up technological improvements and modernise courtrooms, building on the rapid progress made to keep the system running during the coronavirus pandemic. Of this £142m, £105m is allocated to improving the court and tribunal estate. This investment – along with £48m already in the HMCTS budget – will see £153m invested in improvements to court and tribunal buildings over the coming year, which is the biggest single investment in maintenance of the court estate for over 20 years.

Today, HMCTS has also published a progress update on its recovery plans for the short and medium terms. It is available at www.gov.uk/hmcts and includes the following work.

First, HMCTS is working to increase physical capacity to enable more cases to be heard. All courts and tribunal buildings are being reopened in line with wider advice on social distancing and public safety. Throughout April, over 150 of the 341 sites used for physical hearings were open to the public in response to the pandemic outbreak. As of the beginning of this week (29 June 2020), 284 were open following detailed risk assessments and essential modifications to ensure they are safe. Nearly all locations will become operational throughout July, and a range of physical modifications are being made, such as the installation of screens where appropriate.

New criminal jury trials, which had been suspended since late March, were restarted in four Crown Courts in the week beginning 18 May, following the implementation of particular measures to ensure the safety of all participants. As of this week, a total of 25 courts are holding trials again.

In addition, HMCTS is exploring options to stagger and extend the operating hours of courts and tribunals, including starting hearings at different times of day and weekend sittings, to manage the flow of people through our buildings and enable more cases to be heard safely. It is working closely with stakeholder groups in different jurisdictions to identify the areas that have the most impact in terms of increasing capacity. HMCTS is also actively locating other buildings from across England and Wales to use as court and tribunal locations or to support the expansion of existing sites. HMCTS is also actively locating other buildings, including new venues and former court buildings, to use as court and tribunal locations on a temporary basis. Ten sites have been identified across England and Wales and these will be confirmed and announced locally in due course.

Second, HMCTS is working to expand access to audio and video technology to support more and new types of hearings. There has been a significant increase in the use of such equipment over the last three months and, with the right IT solutions, many more hearings could take place. HMCTS has been rolling out the Cloud Video Platform (CVP) to all criminal courts, and there are plans to provide this across other jurisdictions too. Throughout July, CVP will start to be made available to an increasing number of County courts. We will be rolling out further hardware to improve the quality of video hearings, and we will be finding new, increasingly efficient ways of organising video lists.

Third, HMCTS is introducing a range of measures to make best use of judicial time, support court and tribunal staff and users and ensure the justice system is there for those that need it. It is supporting judges to list in ways that make full use of the space we can safely use and will support Alternative Dispute Resolution for cases where it is appropriate. It is deploying laptops to staff to enhance flexible working to support case activity. In addition, HMCTS will review and implement measures to ensure all vulnerable users are supported effectively to ensure they can access services and participate fully in hearings.

These are all important measures to support the recovery of our courts and tribunals. But returning to pre-Covid-19 activity will require sustained and long-term focus. Alongside these operational measures being introduced by HMCTS, the Government continues to keep under review options that will enable more hearings to take place while social distancing restrictions remain in place.

We will also make sure that we learn lessons from what has happened in our response to Covid-19. The unprecedented nature of this public health emergency has required all parts of the justice system to adopt new ways of working without the preparation that would normally take place, and under conditions that have not previously been tested. While some changes will be time-limited and will stop with the end of the pandemic, others may be valuable in the longer term. We will therefore listen to feedback from judges, staff, practitioners and users to improve the way we work in the short term, and gather data and other evidence to support continuous improvement. We will also evaluate and review the measures put in place to respond to Covid-19, so that we can learn lessons and make well-informed decisions about which should be adopted and/or adapted in the longer-term.

Implementation of the courts and tribunals reform programme has continued throughout the pandemic response and new digital services to the public have worked normally. The lessons learned will help inform the next phases of modernisation, building on the existing principles and plans.

I will place a copy of *COVID-19: Overview of HMCTS response* in the library of both Houses.

PARLIAMENTARY WORKS SPONSOR BODY

■ Strategic Review of the Restoration and Renewal Programme: invitation to make submissions

The Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body Spokesperson (Damian Hinds):
[\[HCWS328\]](#)

Following the announcement of its intention to conduct a strategic review of the Restoration and Renewal Programme, today the Sponsor Body invites Members of the House and their staff to submit their views to inform our review.

Members and Members' staff are invited to give their views on the following questions:

1. How should developments since the previous conclusions were drawn by the Joint Committee on the Palace of Westminster in 2016 - political, economic, commercial, social, technological, environmental or other - affect how the Houses of Parliament are restored and renewed?
2. In the interests of affordability and value for money, what compromises could be acceptable during the works, for example in relation to accommodation, location, disturbance, ways of working, facilities and general working environment?
3. What balance should be struck between spending the minimum required to prevent a catastrophic failure from flood and fire and taking the opportunity to renew Parliament for the future, for example by improving accessibility or making any other improvements or enhancements to the Palace?
4. Are there any other matters which you think the review should take into account?

Submissions can be emailed to strategicreview@r-r.org.uk. The deadline for submissions is Friday 7 August. Further information is available on the intranet.

In line with the Sponsor Body's statutory obligations, views are also being sought from parliamentary staff and members of the public. The review is expected to conclude in the autumn and its findings will be considered by the Sponsor Body Board and the Commissions of both Houses in the first instance.