



## Daily Report

Thursday, 2 July 2020

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 2 July 2020 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:29 P.M., 02 July 2020). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

## CONTENTS

<b>ANSWERS</b>	<b>6</b>	■ Radioactive Waste: Russia	19
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	6	■ Remote Working: Coronavirus	19
■ Consumer Goods: Counterfeit Manufacturing	6	■ Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund	19
■ Consumer Goods: Electrical Safety	6	■ Satellites	20
■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Coronavirus	7	■ Trade Marks: Legal Profession	21
■ Electric Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries	7	■ Warm Home Discount Scheme	21
■ Employment: Diabetes	7	<b>CABINET OFFICE</b>	22
■ Employment: Industrial Health and Safety	8	■ Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility	22
■ Energy: Conservation	8	■ Climate Change Cabinet Committee	22
■ Foreign Investment in UK: Coronavirus	9	■ Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission	23
■ Future Circular Collider	10	■ Department for International Development: Foreign and Commonwealth Office	23
■ Global Navigation Satellite Systems	10	■ European Union: Committees	23
■ Hydrogen	11	■ Government Departments: Contracts	23
■ NHS: Holiday Leave	12	■ Influenza and Pneumonia: Ethnic Groups	24
■ Offshore Fixed Structures: Decommissioning	13	■ Intelligence Services: Detainees	24
■ Personal Care Services: Coronavirus	14	<b>DEFENCE</b>	25
■ Post Offices: Coronavirus	18	■ Afghanistan: Russia	25

■ Aircraft Carriers: Amphibious Vehicles	25	■ Free School Meals: Coronavirus	37
■ Ammunition and Radioactive Waste: Beaufort Dyke	26	■ Free School Meals: Voucher Schemes	38
■ Army: Vehicles	26	■ Holiday Play Schemes: Coronavirus	38
■ Body Armour: Females	26	■ Home Education and Teaching Aids: Ealing	39
■ Defence: Procurement	27	■ Pupils: Disadvantaged	39
■ RAF Valley: Noise	27	■ Schools: Coronavirus	40
■ Syria: Military Intervention	27	■ Schools: Food	42
■ Voyager Aircraft	28	■ Schools: Social Distancing	43
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	28	■ Students: Coronavirus	43
■ Arts: Finance	28	■ Universities: Coronavirus	45
■ Arts: Government Assistance	29	■ Universities: Scotland	46
■ Broadband: Ceredigion	29	■ Vocational Education	46
■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Coronavirus	30	ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	47
■ Film and Television: Government Assistance	30	■ Fishing Catches: Computer Software	47
■ Ice Skating: Coronavirus	31	■ Food: Microplastics	48
■ Music: Coronavirus	31	■ Furs: Sales	49
■ Temporary Accommodation: Coronavirus	32	■ United Utilities: Japanese Knotweed	49
EDUCATION	33	FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE	49
■ Academic Year: Coronavirus	33	■ Afghanistan: Russia	49
■ Adult Education: Coronavirus	33	■ British Nationals Abroad: Coronavirus	49
■ Apprentices: Degrees	34	■ Department for International Development: Foreign and Commonwealth Office	50
■ Department for Education: Public Opinion	35	■ Diplomatic Service: Training	50
■ Department for Education: Renewable Energy	35	■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Public Inquiries	51
■ Education: Children	35	■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Taxis	51
■ Education: Standards	36		
■ Free School Meals	37		

■ Gulf States: Overseas Aid	51	■ HIV Infection: Screening	65
■ Israel: Cemeteries	52	■ Influenza: Coronavirus	65
■ Israel: Palestinians	52	■ Influenza: Pharmacy	66
■ Malawi: Politics and Government	52	■ Influenza: Vaccination	66
■ Overseas Aid: Gender	53	■ Joint Biosecurity Centre	66
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	54	■ Learning Disability: Coronavirus	67
■ Alzheimer's Disease: Tea	54	■ Members: Correspondence	67
■ Antibiotics: Prescriptions	54	■ Midwives: EU Nationals	68
■ Apprentices and Education: Coronavirus	55	■ NHS: Apprentices	71
■ Blood Cancer: Medical Treatments	55	■ NHS: Coronavirus	71
■ Breast Cancer: Radiotherapy	56	■ NHS: Mental Health	72
■ Cancer: Health Services	56	■ NHS: Overseas Workers	72
■ Cancer: Hospitals	56	■ Nurses: Apprentices	72
■ Cancer: Mental Health Services	57	■ Social Distancing: Supported Housing	73
■ Cancer: Mental Illness	57	■ Social Distancing: Visual Impairment	73
■ Cleft Palate: Health Services	57	■ Social Services	74
■ Contraceptives	58	■ Social Services: Housing	74
■ Coronavirus: Asians	58	■ Social Services: Minimum Wage	75
■ Coronavirus: Demonstrations	59	■ Social Services: Reform	75
■ Coronavirus: Disease Control	59	■ Tobacco: Sales	75
■ Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups	60	■ Vaccination	76
■ Dementia: Coronavirus	62	■ Vaccination: Children	76
■ Health Professions: Students	62	■ Vaccination: Procurement	77
■ Health Professions: Training	63	■ Visual Impairment: Social Distancing	77
■ Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020	63	HOME OFFICE	78
■ Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (England) 2020	64	■ Agriculture: Seasonal Workers	78
■ Health Services: Stress	64	■ Asylum: LGBT People	78
		■ China and India: Coronavirus	79
		■ Domestic Abuse: Coronavirus	79
		■ Health Services: Immigrants	80

■ Home Office: Public Inquiries	81
■ Home Office: Revenue and Customs	81
■ Immigrants: Health Services	81
■ Immigrants: Health Services and Social Services:	82
■ Immigration	82
■ Immigration: Applications	82
■ Immigration: Coronavirus	84
■ Immigration: EU Nationals	84
■ Marriage: Coronavirus	85
■ Police: Schools	85
■ Prostitution: Coronavirus	86
■ Road Traffic Control: Police	87
■ Sexual Offences: Victim Support Schemes	88
■ Travel: Coronavirus	88
■ Travellers: Caravan Sites	89
■ Uk Border Force	90
■ Youth Mobility Scheme	90
HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	90
■ 5G	90
■ Help to Buy Scheme: Coronavirus	91
■ Housing: Construction	91
■ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Coronavirus	92
■ Mortgages	92
■ Planning Permission	92
■ Planning: Reform	93
■ Property Development	93

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	94
■ Coronavirus: Children	94
■ Coronavirus: Vaccination	95
■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Humanitarian Aid	96
■ Department for International Development: Foreign and Commonwealth Office	96
■ Forced Marriage: Children	97
■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office	97
■ Humanitarian Aid: Children	98
■ Nigeria: Oil	98
■ Overseas Aid: Standards	99
■ Rohingya: Refugees	99
■ Yemen: Humanitarian Aid	100
JUSTICE	101
■ Magistrates' Courts	101
■ Prisoners' Release: Coronavirus	101
■ Trials: Coronavirus	104
SCOTLAND	104
■ Coronavirus: Scotland	104
TRANSPORT	105
■ Bicycles: Repairs and Maintenance	105
■ Cycling and Walking: Bosworth	106
■ Motorcycles: Driving Tests	106
■ Public Transport: Fares	107
■ Shared Spaces: Coronavirus	107
■ Transport: Schools	108
■ Travel: Coronavirus	108

TREASURY	109	■ Jobcentres: Coronavirus	119
■ Concert Halls and Theatres: VAT	109	■ Poverty: Children	119
■ Consumers: Protection	109	■ Social Security Benefits: Coronavirus	120
■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	109	■ Social Security Benefits: Terminal Illnesses	121
■ Customs: Brexit	110	■ State Retirement Pensions: Females	121
■ Customs: Electronic Government	110	■ Unemployment: Training	121
■ Developing Countries: Debts	110	■ Universal Credit	122
■ Government Departments: Development Aid	111	■ Universal Credit: Dunfermline and West Fife	122
■ PAYE	112	■ Universal Credit: Wales	123
■ Schools: Wales	113	<b>MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS</b>	<b>124</b>
■ Small Business Grants Fund: Insurance Companies	113	HOME OFFICE	124
WOMEN AND EQUALITIES	114	■ Health Services: Immigrants	124
■ Females: Coronavirus	114	<b>WRITTEN STATEMENTS</b>	<b>125</b>
WORK AND PENSIONS	115	BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	125
■ Access to Work Programme: Sign Language	115	■ Business Update	125
■ Child Maintenance Service: Coronavirus	116	DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	126
■ Employment Schemes: Young People	117	■ DCMS Contingencies Fund Advance	126
■ Food Banks	117	HOME OFFICE	126
■ Health and Safety Executive: Finance	118	■ Annual Report of the Biometrics Commissioner	126
■ Industrial Health and Safety: Coronavirus	118	HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	127
		■ Local Government Update	127

**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

#### ■ Consumer Goods: Counterfeit Manufacturing

**Carolyn Harris:**

**[64969]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with online platforms on preventing sales of counterfeit and substandard electrical goods on their websites.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The Government takes the issue of IP infringement seriously, including counterfeit electrical goods, and is working with industry and law enforcement agencies on several initiatives to tackle this issue.

Department officials have been holding roundtable meetings with representatives from online platforms and rights holders to discuss the availability of counterfeits on their platforms and to help co-ordinate law enforcement action against sellers.

#### ■ Consumer Goods: Electrical Safety

**Carolyn Harris:**

**[64967]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on (a) new online harms legislation and (b) the inclusion of the sale of unsafe electrical goods in that legislation.

**Paul Scully:**

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) is engaging closely with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on the issues of unsafe goods sold online.

DCMS is continuing to scope the Online Harms regulation and is working to finalise the details of the regulatory framework. The Government response to the Online Harms White Paper consultation will be published in due course.

**Carolyn Harris:**

**[64968]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps his Department has taken to prevent the sale of unsafe electrical goods on online platforms.

**Paul Scully:**

The UK has a strong product safety system which requires that products should be safe before they can be placed on the market, including those sold online.

Officials in OPSS are reviewing the product safety legislation to determine whether the existing legislative framework is adequate in light of the changes to traditional supply and distribution chains brought about by e-commerce.

## ■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Coronavirus

**Geraint Davies:**

**[64057]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made an assessment of the implications for his policies of the report of the all-party group on air pollution entitled Air Quality Strategy to Reduce Coronavirus Infection, published on 29 May 2020.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

As we recover from COVID-19, the Government intends to deliver a UK economy which is stronger, cleaner, more sustainable and more resilient. This includes ensuring we improve air quality while cutting emissions, for example through more building UK supply chains in low carbon transport.

## ■ Electric Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries

**John Spellar:**

**[64071]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 23 June 2020 to Question 59368, how much has been spent on funding the purchase of British made (a) electric bicycles and (b) scooters.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

We do not hold records of how much has been spent on funding the purchase of British made electric bicycles and scooters.

## ■ Employment: Diabetes

**Andrew Rosindell:**

**[64100]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is planning to take to support people with diabetes when they return to work during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Paul Scully:**

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

Nothing in this guidance affects employers' existing responsibilities under employment and equalities legislation. Employers therefore need to bear in mind the particular needs of different groups or individuals, and make sure that the steps they take to address the risk of COVID-19 do not unjustifiably impact on some groups compared with others.

The safer workplaces guidance provides information to employers on how best to meet these responsibilities in the context of COVID-19.

## ■ Employment: Industrial Health and Safety

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

[\[64220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of ensuring that people with (a) diabetes and (b) other clinically vulnerable conditions are able to (i) work from home and (ii) receive fair remuneration if their employer cannot guarantee a covid-19 safe workplace.

**Paul Scully:**

The advice to those who are clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) remains that they should take extra care to follow hygiene and social distancing guidelines but they can leave their homes, including to go to work. This includes employees with diabetes.

The Government is clear that in order to prevent the spread of coronavirus, anyone who can work from home should still do so. Employers also have a legal duty to make sure the workplace is safe for their employees. Where working from home is not possible, employers should provide the safest onsite roles available to enable clinically vulnerable employees to follow social distancing measures.

In addition, the Government has set out an unprecedented package of financial support to help the country through the coronavirus pandemic, such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme which has supported 9.2million jobs.

## ■ Energy: Conservation

**Sarah Olney:**

[\[66167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Queen's Speech of December 2019, what progress has his Department made on investing £9.2 billion to improve the energy efficiency of homes and public buildings.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

Tackling climate change and reaching our legally-binding emission reduction targets continue to be a top priority for the Government.

We remain committed to our aspiration for as many homes as possible to reach Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2035 where practical, cost-effective, and affordable. Improving the energy efficiency of existing homes will play a critical role in delivering our greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, including Net Zero by 2050 as well as lifting households out of fuel poverty.

We continue to enable greenhouse gas emission reductions in public buildings through the Public Sector Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme, and the fund for England will stand at £385 million by the end of 2020/21.

BEIS remains committed to energy efficiency and decarbonising buildings, in line with the Manifesto commitment to invest £9.2 billion in low carbon buildings. The funding decisions are a matter for my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer.

**Sarah Olney:**

[\[66168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has encourage the uptake of energy efficiency retrofitting by households to increase private sector investment in that sector.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

In the Clean Growth Strategy, we set our aspiration for as many homes as possible to be Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2035, where practical, cost-effective and affordable.

The Government is planning to publish a Heat and Buildings Strategy in due course, which will set out the immediate actions we will take for reducing emissions from buildings.

These actions include the deployment of energy efficiency measures and low carbon heating as part of an ambitious programme of work required to enable key strategic decisions on how we achieve the mass transition to low-carbon heat and set us on a path to decarbonising all homes and buildings.

#### ■ **Foreign Investment in UK: Coronavirus**

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[64862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of overseas investors seeking to buy large stakes in UK businesses in the event that the UK enters a recession as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Paul Scully:**

As we take steps to jumpstart our economy and get on the road to recovery from Covid-19, investment from abroad could provide a much-needed boost to companies right across Britain. But we must not be blind to the risks it could pose to businesses that are right at the heart of our battle against the virus and vital for our subsequent recovery.

That is why on 22 June, this Government laid secondary legislation to amend the Enterprise Act 2002, thereby strengthening the Government's powers to intervene in certain investments made into the UK. The Government can now intervene on public interest grounds in order to maintain the UK's capability to combat and mitigate the effects of public health emergencies. Further, subject to Parliament's approval of a draft statutory instrument, the Government will be shortly be able to intervene in smaller mergers in three of the most national security sensitive sectors: artificial intelligence, cryptographic authentication and advanced materials.

**■ Future Circular Collider****Sir Edward Davey:** [\[64831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it is Government policy to support the creation of the Future Circular Collider; and if he will make a statement.

**Amanda Solloway:**

As a member of CERN's governing Council, the UK has agreed to the 2020 update of the European Strategy for Particle Physics, and to the commencement of a technical and financial feasibility study for a next-generation hadron collider.

**■ Global Navigation Satellite Systems****Sir Edward Davey:** [\[64832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the costs incurred to date of developing a UK satellite system similar to the European Galileo system; and if he will make a statement.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The purpose of any project engineering, design and development process is to research and understand what would best suit the UK's requirements. We are taking the appropriate time to investigate the requirements, design specifications and costs as fully as possible.

The UK GNSS programme incurred costs of approximately £45.5m up to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2020.

For the period 1 April 2020 to 30 September 2020 the GNSS Programme is managing costs within its budget allocation of approximately £18.7m.

**Sir Edward Davey:** [\[64833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the Government's policy is on developing its own satellite system as a replacement for the Galileo system.

**Amanda Solloway:**

This Government has made clear its ambitions in space through a new ministerial level National Space Council and by developing a Space Strategy to bring long term strategic and commercial benefits for the UK. The Government recognises the contribution the space sector makes to our economy, national security, global influence and in helping the nation to tackle the COVID crisis.

The GNSS programme is currently in its Engineering Design and Development Phase to research and understand what would best suit the UK's requirements.

**Owen Thompson:** [\[66121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress he has made in developing a replacement for the Galileo satellite navigation system.

**Amanda Solloway:**

This Government has made clear its ambitions in space through a new ministerial level National Space Council and by developing a Space Strategy to bring long term strategic and commercial benefits for the UK. The Government recognises the contribution the space sector makes to our economy, national security, global influence and in helping the nation to tackle the COVID crisis.

A project led by the Cabinet Office is developing the UK's positioning navigation and timing (PNT) requirements, bringing together expertise from across Whitehall, industry and the PNT community to consider requirements across military, civil and Critical National Infrastructure sectors. In addition to other technologies, a UK GNSS capability could form part of the mix of solutions needed.

**Owen Thompson:**[\[66124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the Government plans to publish its feasibility study on the plan to build a UK global navigation satellite system.

**Amanda Solloway:**

This Government has made clear its ambitions in space through a new ministerial level National Space Council and by developing a Space Strategy to bring long term strategic and commercial benefits for the UK. The Government recognises the contribution the space sector makes to our economy, national security, global influence and in helping the nation to tackle the COVID crisis.

The GNSS programme is currently in its Engineering Design and Development Phase to research and understand what would best suit the UK's requirements. The programme is taking the appropriate time to investigate the requirements, design specifications and costs as fully as possible. This work is ongoing, and we envisage that the majority of this will be complete this year.

**■ Hydrogen****Owen Thompson:**[\[64257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with (a) the Chancellor and (b) other Cabinet colleagues on establishing a UK-wide hydrogen strategy.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The Government is committed to developing hydrogen as a strategic decarbonised energy carrier. We are currently developing our strategic approach to hydrogen and its potential to deliver against our net zero goals.

We are undertaking extensive stakeholder engagement as we develop new policy to help bring forward the technologies and supply chain we will need to grow the UK hydrogen economy. This includes business models to support the deployment of, and investment in, low carbon hydrogen production and a £100m Low Carbon Hydrogen

Production Fund to stimulate capital investment. We will be further engaging with industry on both schemes throughout the year.

BEIS ministers have held no formal discussions with my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer or other Cabinet colleagues on establishing a UK-wide hydrogen strategy.

### ■ NHS: Holiday Leave

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[64996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to Government guidance entitled Holiday entitlement and pay during coronavirus (COVID-19), published 13 May 2020, whether NHS staff contracted with a third party will be able to carry forward their annual leave entitlements for up to two years, in line with their front line colleagues.

**Paul Scully:**

Any individual who is a worker under the Working Time Regulations 1998 is entitled to 5.6 weeks of statutory annual leave. 1.6 weeks of this annual leave can be carried forward into the next leave year if provided for in a binding written agreement between the worker and their employer.

The Working Time (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 provide for the remaining four weeks of annual leave to be carried into the following two leave years if, due to the effects of coronavirus, it is not reasonably practicable for a worker to take this leave in the year to which it relates. This applies to all workers who are unable to take their annual leave due to the coronavirus, including non-medical NHS staff.

It is a matter for individual employers and their workers to consider whether it is possible to facilitate a worker taking annual leave. In these unprecedented times, the Government urges employers to carefully consider the guidance and the welfare of their workforce.

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[64997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to Government guidance entitled Holiday entitlement and pay during coronavirus (COVID-19), published 13 May 2020, whether non-medical NHS staff will be able to carry forward their annual leave entitlements for up to two years in line with their front line colleagues.

**Paul Scully:**

Any individual who is a worker under the Working Time Regulations 1998 is entitled to 5.6 weeks of statutory annual leave. 1.6 weeks of this annual leave can be carried forward into the next leave year if provided for in a binding written agreement between the worker and their employer.

The Working Time (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 provide for the remaining four weeks of annual leave to be carried into the following two leave years

if, due to the effects of coronavirus, it is not reasonably practicable for a worker to take this leave in the year to which it relates. This applies to all workers who are unable to take their annual leave due to the coronavirus, including non-medical NHS staff.

It is a matter for individual employers and their workers to consider whether it is possible to facilitate a worker taking annual leave. In these unprecedented times, the Government urges employers to carefully consider the guidance and the welfare of their workforce.

## ■ Offshore Fixed Structures: Decommissioning

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[64161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the outcomes were of the bilateral discussions between UK, German and Dutch Government officials on the Shell proposal to decommission Brent rigs Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta; and whether a record of those meetings will be published.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The meetings with officials from Germany and the Netherlands took place earlier in the year, following the OSPAR Special Consultative Meeting. The meetings were constructive and focussed on possible ways forward to address their concerns. As these meetings were informal, there was no intention to record or publish the discussions.

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[64162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what response his Department has made to the expert reports commissioned by the (a) German Government and (b) Dutch government on the Shell proposal to decommission Brent rigs Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta tabled at the Special Consultative Meeting of the OSPAR Commission in October 2019; and when he plans to publish that response.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The content of the reports provided by Germany and the Netherlands were supplementary to their objections to the derogation consultation for Brent and were therefore part of the discussion at the OSPAR Special consultative meeting in October 2019. A record of that meeting was published by the chair of OSPAR in early November 2019.

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[64163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to make a formal decision on the decommissioning plans for (a) Brent Alpha, (b) the other Brent platforms and (c) any other similar applications which the UK government may have received seeking derogation from resolution OSPAR 98/3.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

In regard to the proposal to leave in-situ the footings of the Brent Alpha steel jacket, we expect to be in a position to make a decision within the next few months.

The decision on the Brent Bravo, Brent Charlie and Brent Delta concrete gravity-based installations is currently being considered, and we are keeping the OSPAR Contracting Parties informed of our progress. We have no detailed timetable and a formal decision is expected to be made in due course.

We are currently considering two Decommissioning programmes where a derogation is likely to be sought.

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[64164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the proposed permit conditions relating to the Shell application to decommission Brent oil rigs Bravo, Charlie and Delta in respect of technology development for the management of the structures (a) will consider only in-situ remediation as an option or (b) there will be requirement to invest in technology development for the removal of those contents to shore.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

Conditions to be included in the derogation permit for Brent Bravo, Brent Charlie and Brent Delta concrete gravity-based installations are being considered alongside the final decision. We expect to include conditions that would require ongoing analysis and development of technology, consideration of how to remediate the contents of the structure in situ and a management plan for any infrastructure left in situ in perpetuity, which will involve periodic monitoring as well as environmental surveys.

## ■ Personal Care Services: Coronavirus

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[64097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to enable tanning salons with sunbeds that do not require close contact between customers and staff to reopen.

**Paul Scully:**

From 4 July, many close contact services such as hairdressers, pubs and restaurants will be able to reopen provided they adhere to the safer working guidelines. However, others such as tanning salons, beauty parlours and make-up studios remain closed until further notice. The Government recognises that this is difficult for some businesses. Every step is weighed against the evidence, remembering that the more we open up the more vigilant we will need to be.

Our approach to the types of businesses who can reopen is guided by the scientific and medical advice. SAGE provides world-leading scientific advice to the Government. However, making any changes depends on us continuing to meet the five tests.

We will continue to work with those industries that are still closed to understand how best we can reopen them safely, at the right time, guided by the science.

**Carolyn Harris:**

**[64250]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if his Department will publish further clarification on when (a) spas, (b) beauty businesses (c) mobile practitioners can resume their operations during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Paul Scully:**

Hairdressers and barbers in England will be able to reopen from 4 July to offer hairdressing services, once they are following the COVID-secure guidelines.

Other close contact services, like nail salons, beauty and tattoo parlours remain closed until further notice.

We appreciate that this is difficult for some businesses. Our approach is guided by the scientific and medical advice, and every step is weighed against the evidence, remembering that the more we open up the more vigilant we will need to be.

The Government will work with the remaining closed services to establish a timeline for when they can reopen safely.

**Carolyn Harris:**

**[64251]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the evidential basis was for the decision to permit hair and not beauty appointments during the covid-19 outbreak from 4 July 2020.

**Paul Scully:**

From 4 July, hairdressers will be able to reopen provided they adhere to the safer working guidelines. However, beauty parlours and make-up studios remain closed until further notice. The Government recognises that this is difficult for some businesses. Every step is weighed against the evidence, remembering that the more we open up the more vigilant we will need to be.

Our approach to the types of businesses who can reopen is guided by the scientific and medical advice. SAGE provides world-leading scientific advice to the Government. However, making any changes depends on us continuing to meet the five tests.

We will continue to work with those industries that are still closed to understand how best we can reopen them safely, at the right time, guided by the science.

**Carolyn Harris:**

**[64252]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when his Department plans to review the guidelines on restrictions in place for close contact services during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Paul Scully:**

Following my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's announcement on 23 June, some close contact services such as hairdressers, pubs and restaurants will be able to reopen on 4 July, provided they adhere to the safer working guidelines. We have published guidance for these sectors on 23 June to provide ways these businesses can ensure a safe reopening.

As some examples, hairdressers and barbers should wear visors as additional protection, use an appointment only policy, avoid overlapping appointments, distance customer seating appropriately, clean thoroughly after each client, prepare equipment in advance to reduce movement in spaces, and screen customers ahead of the appointment to check they do not have symptoms.

We have been taking a phased, cautious approach to reopening our economy, so that we do not risk a second peak of the virus. We will continue to work with those industries that are still closed to understand how best we can reopen them safely, at the right time, guided by the science.

**Alberto Costa:** [64951]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what guidance his Department has provided to tanning salons on safe reopening as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government published new guidance for Close Contact Services, such as tanning salons, on 23 June. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/close-contact-services>.

**Hilary Benn:** [65939]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, for what reason tanning salons are currently unable to open as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are being eased; what assessment he has made of the risks of their opening; and what guidance he can provide on how to mitigate those risks.

**Paul Scully:**

On 23 June, the Government published guidance for close contact services, including tanning salons, on how they can reopen safely once they are able to do so.

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 massage therapists, beauty salons and tattoo parlours, 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, such as reflexologists and tattoo parlours to re-open as soon as it is safe to do so.

Our approach is guided by the scientific and medical advice, and making any changes to our approach depends on us continuing to meet the five tests.

**Robert Halfon:** [66021]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans the Government has for the reopening of (a) beauty and (b) tanning salons as covid-19 restrictions are eased.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government has published safer working guidance on 23 June for close contact services, including beauty and tanning salons. Following my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's announcement, hairdressers and barbers in England will be able to reopen from 4 July, to offer hairdressing services, once they are following the COVID-secure guidelines. Other close contact services, like beauty and tanning salons, 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 beauty and tanning salons 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.

**Darren Henry:**[\[66232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the scientific basis is to allow hair salons to reopen on 4 July 2020 as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased, but not beauty salons, massage therapists and tattoo parlours.

**Paul Scully:**

Following my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's announcement, from 4 July hairdressers and barbers in England will be able to reopen, to offer hairdressing services, once they are following the COVID-secure guidelines.

Other close contact services, like massage therapists, beauty and tattoo parlours 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 massage therapists, beauty salons and tattoo parlours, 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, such as massage therapists, beauty salons and tattoo parlours to re-open as soon as it is safe to do so.

Our approach is guided by the scientific and medical advice, and SAGE provides world-leading scientific advice to the government. Any changes in approach depend on us continuing to meet the five tests.

**Darren Henry:**[\[66233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of providing further financial support to beauty salons unable to re-open while existing covid-19 lockdown restrictions remain in place.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government has announced an unprecedented package of measures to support businesses and individuals during Covid-19.

In order to support businesses where restrictions remain in place, my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer announced an extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme until October 2020. The level of the grant will be slowly tapered to reflect that people will be returning to work. The Chancellor has also extended the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme with businesses adversely affected being able to claim for the first grant on or before 13 July 2020, and any businesses adversely affected on or after 14 July 2020 can make a claim in August 2020.

Businesses are still able to apply for the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme or The Bounce Back Loan Scheme.

Additionally, beauty salons are able to continue benefiting from the 100% reduction in business rates for 12 months.

**■ Post Offices: Coronavirus****Ruth Jones:****[64329]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions his Department has had with representatives of Post Office Ltd on the operation of post offices as covid-19 lockdown measures are eased.

**Paul Scully:**

BEIS Ministers and Officials have regular discussions with Post Office Ltd to discuss a range of issues, including the impact of Covid-19 on the operation of the Post Office.

The Government announcement on 23 March made it clear that the Government views the services provided by the Post Office as essential and, subject to social distancing guidelines, post offices have been allowed to remain open throughout lockdown. However, for those post offices co-located in a non-essential retailer which therefore had to close for a period, the easing of lockdown measures mean that they can re-start trading. Postmasters, as self-employed businesspeople, will need to consider how best to maintain social distancing at their workplace in line with the latest Government guidance which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches>.

This may include restricting the number of customers in a shop at any one time and making this clear to customers and other visitors. Post Office workers who cannot work from home should go to work as soon as it is practical if their workplace is open and follows the safer working guidelines.

## ■ **Radioactive Waste: Russia**

**Sir Edward Davey:**

[\[64834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the amount of nuclear waste transported from the UK to Russia in each of the last five years.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

There have been no shipments or other transports of nuclear waste from the UK to Russia in the last five years.

The Government's policy is to not allow the export of radioactive waste, except for treatment or processing, under the presumption it will be returned to the UK.

## ■ **Remote Working: Coronavirus**

**Geraint Davies:**

[\[64826\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the barriers which prevent people from working from home.

**Paul Scully:**

As part of its ongoing work to support and promote the more widespread adoption of flexible working, Government has commissioned a programme of research. The results will be published in due course.

Since Covid-19 measures were introduced there have been high proportions of people working from home with many businesses rapidly adapting to remote working, using new technology and finding new ways of working. As we move beyond the current situation, and the economy begins to reopen, we are very keen to do more to promote flexible working in all its forms. In our manifesto we said that, subject to consultation, we would introduce measures to make flexible working the default.

## ■ **Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund**

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

[\[64221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to reallocate the unspent funding allocated to the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund to (a) small breweries and (b) other businesses that support the hospitality sector.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government has put forward a package of support for business in recognition of the disruption caused by Covid-19. As part of this, as of 21 June, £10.48 billion has been paid out to over 853,800 business properties under the Small Business Grants Fund (SBGF) and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund (RHLGF). We are working closely with all local authorities to deliver remaining funding to eligible businesses. Due to reasons of fairness, those local authorities with unspent funding will not be able to reallocate this beyond these schemes, and all local authorities will need to carry out a reconciliation exercise with government in due course.

On 1 May, the Government announced a further up to £617 million available for local authorities in England to support small businesses with ongoing fixed property-related costs that are not liable for business rates or rates reliefs, and are therefore out of scope of the SBGF and RHLGF. Local authorities are responsible for defining precise eligibility for this scheme in their area, within the government guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-grant-funding-local-authority-payments-to-small-and-medium-businesses>.

We are keeping in close contact with local authorities to understand how the schemes are rolling out and any additional support which could be offered to help businesses and support local economies.

## ■ Satellites

**Chi Onwurah:** [66056]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what (a) scientific and (b) engineering advice his Department (i) received and (ii) considered in the decision to approve the allocation of funding for the OneWeb satellite system; and will he publish that advice.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The Chapter 11 bidding process for OneWeb is commercially sensitive, so it would not be appropriate to comment further.

**Chi Onwurah:** [66057]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the ability of (a) OneWeb and (b) other Low Earth Orbit satellite constellations to be adapted to deliver navigation capability in the (i) short, (ii) medium and (iii) long term; and what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of (a) that adaptation for the OneWeb constellation and (b) the number of devices which can receive the signals at the frequency and speed at which OneWeb satellites operate.

**Amanda Solloway:**

Positioning, navigation, and timing (PNT) services underpin a wide range of essential UK public services and national capabilities. Work is ongoing across Government to determine the UK's positioning, navigation, and timing requirements.

The ongoing Chapter 11 bidding process for OneWeb is commercially sensitive, so it would not be appropriate to comment further at this time.

**Owen Thompson:** [66123]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment the Government has made of the capacity of OneWeb's mega-constellation of satellites in low Earth orbit to deliver Government ambitions for UK navigation technology.

**Amanda Solloway:**

We have made clear our ambitions for space and are developing a new National Space Strategy to bring long-term strategic and commercial benefits to the UK.

We are in regular discussions with the space industry as part of this work.

**Owen Thompson:**[\[66247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much the Government has invested in satellite operator OneWeb.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The Chapter 11 bidding process for OneWeb is commercially sensitive, so it would not be appropriate to comment.

**Trade Marks: Legal Profession****Darren Henry:**[\[66227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans the Government has to ensure the equity of treatment of Chartered Trade Mark Attorneys across the UK and EU after the transition period; and whether he plans to ensure that attorneys from the EU do not have rights of representation before the UK Intellectual Property Office that are not reciprocated for UK attorneys before the EU Intellectual Property Office.

**Amanda Solloway:**

On legal services, the UK's starting point for negotiations with the EU is precedent-based. We aim to secure market access commitments for lawyers and minimise barriers to the cross-border supply of services and investment, on the basis of commitments like those in the Canada FTA.

Rights of representation, whether before domestic courts in Member States or EU institutions, are the preserve of the Single Market and so do not form part of the UK approach to negotiations with the EU.

Officials at the Intellectual Property Office are currently exploring options in relation to the rules on address for service once the transition period ends.

**Warm Home Discount Scheme****Gordon Henderson:**[\[64174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure the Warm Home Discount is maintained after the end of March 2021.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

We will consult on a one-year extension of the current Warm Home Discount scheme later this year. We will also consider reform to improve the fuel poverty targeting of the scheme beyond 2022, and will consult on this in due course.

**CABINET OFFICE**■ **Cabinet Office: Ministerial Responsibility**

**Mr William Wragg:** [\[66090\]](#)

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 civil service HR and shared services.

**Mr William Wragg:** [\[66091\]](#)

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 fraud, error, debt and grants.

**Mr William Wragg:** [\[66092\]](#)

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 Geospatial Commission.

**Mr William Wragg:** [\[66093\]](#)

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 Digital Service.

**Mr William Wragg:** [\[66094\]](#)

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 Security Group.

**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.

■ **Climate Change Cabinet Committee**

**Charlotte Nichols:** [\[65027\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make regular reports to the House on the (a) frequency and (b) decisions of meetings of the Cabinet committee on climate change.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

It is a long-established precedent that information about the discussions that have taken place in Cabinet and its Committees, and how often they have met, is not normally shared publicly.

## ■ **Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission**

**Alex Norris:** [\[66185\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what (a) correspondence and (b) representations he has received on proposals to engage citizens in the Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission; and if he will make a statement.

**Alex Norris:** [\[66186\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Prime Minister's oral Answer of 15 January 2020, Official Report column 1019 on Constitutional Reform, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of including citizen engagement in plans for the Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission; and if he will make a statement.

**Chloe Smith:**

The Government has received assorted correspondence on the proposals for a Commission. The Government will publish more details on this work programme in due course.

## ■ **Department for International Development: Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[66174\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Prime Minister's Oral Statement of 16 June 2020 on Global Britain, how many staff in his Department are working on the merger of the Department for International development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; and what the civil service grades of those staff is.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Cabinet Office has a small team working on machinery of government changes. This would include the merger of the FCO and DfID. As has been the case under successive administrations, further details will not be disclosed as five or fewer individuals are involved.

## ■ **European Union: Committees**

**Wendy Chamberlain:** [\[66203\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many times the Union Policy Implementation Committee has met in each of the last three years.

**Chloe Smith:**

It is a long-established precedent that information about the discussions that have taken place in Cabinet and its Committees, and how often they have met, is not normally shared publicly.

## ■ **Government Departments: Contracts**

**Allan Dorans:** [\[65015\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many contracts have been awarded by the Government since the start of the covid-19 outbreak other than under procurement

guidelines requiring at least three competitive tenders; and what the total value is of those contracts.

**Chloe Smith:**

This information is not held centrally.

Details of central government contracts above £10,000 are published on Contracts

Finder: <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>

## ■ Influenza and Pneumonia: Ethnic Groups

**Philip Davies:**

[64869]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people by ethnic group died from (a) flu and (b) pneumonia in each of the last five years.

**Chloe Smith:**

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

### Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ64869.pdf]

## ■ Intelligence Services: Detainees

**Catherine West:**

[66144]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many times the guidance entitled, Consolidated Guidance to Intelligence Officers and Service Personnel on the Detention and Interviewing of Detainees Overseas, and on the Passing and Receipt of Intelligence Relating to Detainees, was followed in 2018.

**Catherine West:**

[66145]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how times decision-making under the Consolidated Guidance to Intelligence Officers and Service Personnel on the Detention and Interviewing of Detainees Overseas, and on the Passing and Receipt of Intelligence Relating to Detainees, was escalated to a Minister in 2018.

**Catherine West:**

[66146]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many times the intelligence agencies informed the Investigatory Powers Commissioner of (a) instances of non-compliance with the Consolidated Guidance to Intelligence Officers and Service Personnel on the Detention and Interviewing of Detainees Overseas, and on the Passing and Receipt of Intelligence Relating to Detainees and (b) instances in which they did not identify that the Consolidated Guidance review process should have been followed, for the year 2018.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Investigatory Powers Commissioner had statutory oversight of the Consolidated Guidance and reported on it annually to the Prime Minister. I refer the Honourable Member to section 10.19 of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's 2018 annual

report where the (then) Commissioner explained why it was not appropriate to publish these details.

The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's 2018 Annual Report can be found at:

<https://www.ipco.org.uk/docs/IPCO%20Annual%20Report%202018%20final.pdf>

The Government does not participate in, solicit, encourage or condone the use of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment for any purpose.

## DEFENCE

### ■ Afghanistan: Russia

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

**[66105]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with representatives of the armed forces on reports that the Russian Government allegedly offered to pay bounties to Taliban-linked fighters to kill US and UK troops in Afghanistan.

**James Heapey:**

It would not be appropriate to comment on sensitive intelligence matters, but the safety of our Service personnel is of paramount importance to the Ministry of Defence. We take all necessary measures to ensure that our Armed Forces are properly trained, equipped and prepared to face any eventuality. We regularly review our force protection posture and take all necessary steps to mitigate the risks. That is no different in Afghanistan.

The Ministry of Defence continues to collaborate with allies and partners, including in the intelligence domain, to fully and robustly respond to the challenges Russia presents. In responding to this malign activity, the UK is a world leader. We led the global effort to expel more than a hundred diplomats from around the world after the Salisbury attack in 2018 and we were the first international partner to deploy a military training team to Ukraine following the illegal annexation of Crimea.

### ■ Aircraft Carriers: Amphibious Vehicles

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

**[65948]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the future amphibious assault capability of UK Carrier Enabled Power Projection (CEPP).

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Ministry of Defence is considering the future amphibious capability, expressed in the Littoral Strike concept, and its relationship with Carrier Strike as part of the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy.

**■ Ammunition and Radioactive Waste: Beaufort Dyke**

**Allan Dorans:** [65014]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent environmental assessment the Government has made of the level of deterioration of munitions and nuclear waste dumped in the sea between Scotland and Northern Ireland at the site known as Beaufort's Dyke.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Ministry of Defence has not undertaken any routine monitoring of items disposed in Beaufort's Dyke.

Historic information on the sea disposals at Beaufort's Dyke and other locations is available through The National Archives at:

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20121203135425/http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/HealthandSafetyPublications/DSEA/DisposalOfMunitionsAtSea.htm>

**■ Army: Vehicles**

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [65952]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his policy is on the future of (a) Mastiff and (b) other legacy Army vehicles.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Army continues to rationalise its legacy vehicle fleets, work commenced in 2017 under the Land Environment Fleet Optimisation Plan. This work has already removed 2,831 vehicles from service and disposed of a number of legacy vehicle fleets. The next strand of this work seeks to remove several further legacy vehicle types from service, including the disposal of the Mastiff, Ridgeback and Wolfhound fleets.

**■ Body Armour: Females**

**Mr Khalid Mahmood:** [65944]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to procure anatomically specific body armour for female service personnel.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Our VIRTUS body armour has eight different sizes of Scalable Tactical Vest and three for the frame. It can therefore be configured in a multitude of ways dependent on the size and shape of the wearer.

Studies are continuing which explore further options for body armour that comes in different sizes and shapes in order to optimise the fit and reduce physical burden on all users.

## ■ Defence: Procurement

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[65950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to mitigate the risks of cost increases on his Department's spending as a result of exchange rate fluctuations.

**Jeremy Quin:**

We mitigate the impact of foreign exchange using forward purchase contracts agreed with the Bank of England. This mechanism provides increased budget stability in the forward programme and is not intended to generate gains or savings from the foreign exchange market.

## ■ RAF Valley: Noise

**Hywel Williams:**

[\[65945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to reduce noise nuisance from Texan T1 aircraft operating from RAF Y Fali over north west Wales.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Ministry of Defence recognises that while aircraft bases bring significant benefits to their local area, the noise generated by aircraft can have an impact on local communities. Unfortunately, a level of disturbance is unavoidable.

RAF Valley takes its responsibilities to the public very seriously and seeks to minimise the impact of noise on local residents as far as possible. Restrictions are placed on the height, speeds and operating procedures of all military aircraft, including the Texan T1, and the amount of training conducted is limited to the operational requirement.

## ■ Syria: Military Intervention

**Clive Lewis:**

[\[66128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if his Department will undertake a public investigation into the air strike at Tal al-Jayer in Syria on 12 June 2018 to determine whether munitions from RAF planes were responsible for civilian casualties.

**James Heappey:**

Abiding by International Humanitarian Law and the Law of Armed Conflict is of the utmost importance to this Government and is central to all of our military operations at home and overseas.

UK aircraft conducted a single strike on 12 June 2018. Ministry of Defence officials have cross referenced the village name with coordinates of that strike and established that they differ by approximately four miles and that the UK did not strike any buildings. Therefore, from the evidence available, we have no reason to believe that the UK was responsible for any civilian casualties on 12 June 2018.

As the Government has stated previously, we will always work closely with partners and civil society and investigate all credible claims that UK aircraft have been responsible for civilian casualties.

### ■ Voyager Aircraft

**Sir Edward Davey:**

[\[65913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 23 June 2020 to Question 61411 on Voyager Aircraft; what effect the new livery will have on the number of refuelling missions the aircraft will be able to undertake.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The new livery will have no effect on the number of refuelling missions the Voyager aircraft can take. Air-to-Air refuelling (AAR) remains the primary role of the aircraft when it is not being used for VIP travel. The aircraft has demonstrated this already and has undertaken routine AAR missions since returning from repaint.

## DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Arts: Finance

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

[\[66102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on allocating additional financial support to (a) music venues, (b) theatres and (c) people who work in creative industries.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

DCMS is engaging with a range of departments to support the economic response to Covid-19, and ensuring that the needs of its sectors including live music, theatre and the wider creative industries, and those who work in them, are fully understood.

DCMS will continue to work with these valuable sectors to understand the difficulties they face and help them access support through these challenging times and through recovery.

To ensure we are assisting all these 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.

## ■ Arts: Government Assistance

**Tracy Brabin:**

[\[66157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many workers in the creative industries are not eligible to apply to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme or Self-Employment Income Support Scheme.

**Caroline Dinanage:**

No estimates have been made. However, we appreciate that the Covid-19 pandemic presents a significant challenge to many of DCMS' sectors including the creative industries which is why the Government has announced unprecedented support for businesses and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency.

DCMS is engaging with a range of departments to support the economic response to Covid-19, and ensuring that the needs of its sectors, and those who work in them, are fully understood.

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. DCMS will continue to work with these valuable sectors to understand the difficulties they face and help them access support through these challenging times and through recovery.

## ■ Broadband: Ceredigion

**Ben Lake:**

[\[65186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent estimate the Government has made of the number of premises in Ceredigion that do not have access to an internet service with a download speed of at least 10Mbps.

**Ben Lake:**

[\[65187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment the Government has made of progress towards at least 10Mbps download speeds under the Universal Service Obligation at qualifying premises in Ceredigion.

**Matt Warman:**

The broadband Universal Service Obligation (USO) provides every UK household 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, where this is not already available or is not due to be made available within a year through a publicly funded intervention.

Ofcom's Connected Nations Report, published in December 2019, found that 5132 (or 13.7%) of premises in Ceredigion have a fixed broadband connection that is delivering speeds below the USO specification. However, some of these premises

are likely to be able to access a 4G mobile data service that provides USO level speeds or higher.

As the Universal Service Obligation only launched on 20 March 2020, no assessment of its progress in Ceredigion has yet been made. However, as the Universal Service Provider, BT is required to report at least every six months on progress to Ofcom, who are implementing and monitoring the broadband USO on behalf of the Government.

In addition to the USO, the Government is also investing to bring gigabit capable broadband to harder to reach areas through the existing £200 million Rural Gigabit Connectivity programme and, from next year, through its new £5 billion UK Gigabit Programme.

#### ■ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Coronavirus

**Geraint Davies:**

[\[64060\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he has made an assessment of the implications for his policies of the report of the all-party group on air pollution entitled, Air Quality Strategy to Reduce Coronavirus Infection, published on 29 May 2020.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The Secretary of State for DCMS welcomes the all-party group's report and has noted its recommendations with interest. Improving air quality is a top priority for the Government and, especially during these unprecedented times, we will continue to take robust and comprehensive action to improve air quality in the UK and minimise public health impacts. DEFRA recently launched a rapid Call for Evidence to understand more fully the impact that coronavirus is having on air pollution emissions, concentrations and exposure and DEFRA's Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG) are currently analysing the responses.

#### ■ Film and Television: Government Assistance

**Munira Wilson:**

[\[66209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing a state-backed fund for film and TV productions that are unable to obtain insurance.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) recognises that Covid-19 exclusions to existing and new insurance policies presents a significant risk for film and TV productions returning to work in the shorter term. With the majority of filming taking place in the summer months, and guidance already published by the sector to allow a safe return to work, we know the sector is keen to get productions up and running again.

DCMS is examining this issue in detail, and engaging closely with our sector stakeholders to aid our work in this area.

## ■ Ice Skating: Coronavirus

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[65958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps the Government is taking to enable the safe re-opening of indoor ice skating rinks as the 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 sport and physical activity sector about the steps required to restart grassroots sport and will update the public when it is deemed safe to reopening indoor sports venues and facilities as soon as it is safe to do so, including ice rinks.

## ■ Music: Coronavirus

**Tommy Sheppard:**

[\[66101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will take steps to provide additional financial support to music venues in response to the open letter of June 2020 to the Government from the UK's Grassroots Music Venues organisation.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

We appreciate that the Covid-19 pandemic presents a significant challenge to the grassroots music sector, which is why Government has put in place unprecedented support for business and workers to protect them against the current economic emergency. These include:

- The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme;
- The Self-Employed Income Support Scheme;
- The Bounceback Loan Scheme;
- Expanding eligibility for the business rates reliefs.

We continue to speak with HM Treasury colleagues to ensure that the full spectrum of government support reaches the UK's world-leading music industry. Our recovery work for this sector is being delivered via the ministerially-chaired Events and Entertainment Working Group, which was established to support the Secretary of State's Cultural Renewal Taskforce. The Music Venue Trust is an active and valued member of the Working Group, the focus of which is to produce sector-led guidance for the safe reopening of a range of creative industries sectors, including live music venues and music recording and rehearsal studios.

**Tracy Brabin:**

[\[66163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the scientific basis is for not allowing choirs and singing activities to resume as the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

**Tracy Brabin:**

**[66165]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to support cultural venues that have announced plans to make a large proportion of their employees redundant.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

Current Public Health England assessment is that singing carries a potential higher risk of transmission and that participation in this activity requires particular attention to the risk involved. Based on this, Government guidance proposes a precautionary risk-based approach to certain activities and aims to develop the ways activities can be carried out as the evidence base is better understood.

To help support the development of the evidence base in regards to singing, DCMS is engaged in a number of scientific activities focusing on the need to understand the different risks associated with singing, brass and woodwind. DCMS is working closely with SAGE and a number of specialists in aerosol transmission and ventilation, who will focus on a number of critical research questions. These groups will be examining existing and emerging evidence to provide advice to guide the future development of policy and guidelines.

#### ■ **Temporary Accommodation: Coronavirus**

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

**[65899]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will make an assessment of the adequacy of provision of support for the proprietors of (a) bed and breakfast and (b) other establishments offering overnight accommodation that are deterred from reopening by the potential for residents with covid-19 symptoms being required to self-isolate on their premises as a result of the absence of guidance on who is liable for the costs of the (i) food, (ii) other supplies and (iii) round-the-clock accommodation of those residents.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

From 4 July, people will be allowed to travel to holiday accommodation - including bed and breakfasts - for overnight stays in England. Guidance has been published on how to open guest accommodation businesses safely whilst minimising the risks of COVID-19.

If a guest is displaying signs of the COVID-19 virus while staying in overnight accommodation, they should inform the accommodation provider, immediately self-isolate where they are to minimise any risk of transmission, and request a test. If they are confirmed to have COVID-19, they should return home if they reasonably can. If a guest cannot reasonably return home, their circumstances should be discussed with an appropriate health care professional and, if necessary, the local authority.

We regularly assess the nature of the tourism sectors' engagement with the Government's comprehensive economic support package. Tourism businesses - including those that do not plan to reopen on 4 July - can continue to access

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

## EDUCATION

### ■ Academic Year: Coronavirus

**Alison McGovern:**

**[66054]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will provide a (a) framework and (b) tailored support to enable schools to open as places for pupil engagement and activity in the 2020 summer holidays.

**Nick Gibb:**

We are not asking schools to open over the summer holidays. Teachers, support staff and head teachers deserve a break, to recharge and rest.

We are aware that some headteachers may be considering using their catch-up premium to provide summer school activities for their pupils. Where this is the case, they have the flexibility, discretion and autonomy to decide how they want to do this. To support schools in planning how to use the catch-up premium, the Education Endowment Foundation has produced a guide which includes advice on summer schools and contains a link to a Teach First toolkit specifically focused on summer schools, for schools that choose to do this.

Holiday clubs and out-of-school clubs for children will also be able to restart over the summer, with safety measures in place. These clubs will be part of Step 3 of the recovery strategy (from 4 July). We have published guidance for the sector on how to implement the protective measures necessary to open safely:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/protective-measures-for-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>.

### ■ Adult Education: Coronavirus

**Sally-Ann Hart:**

**[63546]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to ensure that adults who need training and skills development are supported as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

**Gillian Keegan:**

It will be important that adults who are returning to learning get the skills and development they need.

We have already invested £100 million to develop a National Retraining Scheme to support working adults prepare for future changes to the economy and to help them retrain into better jobs and announced an extra £2.5 billion, over the course of this

Parliament, for a new National Skills Fund, which will support people to learn new skills and prepare for the economy of the future.

In April we launched the “Skills Toolkit” – a new online platform giving people access to free, high-quality digital and numeracy courses to help build up their skills, progress in work and boost their job prospects.

Apprenticeships will be key to the recovery, helping both young people and those wanting to re-train, and we are looking at ensuring that we support employers, especially small businesses, to take on new apprentices this year and will provide further detail in due course.

The department is also exploring further options for how to boost skills to help the labour market recover from the economic effects of COVID-19.

There are a range of further and higher education opportunities open to young people leaving education this summer. In addition, we want to work with employers to ensure that young people have access to an offer of work-based training, work experience, and/or training programmes. My right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, announced this on 29 June.

#### ■ Apprentices: Degrees

**Emma Hardy:**

**[59581]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether degree apprentices will be included in the temporary student number controls for 2020-21.

**Michelle Donelan:**

Apprenticeships will be excluded from student number controls. When monitoring potential recruitment above a student number control, a higher education provider will not be considered to have exceeded the student number control by virtue of the number of apprenticeship students that it has.

Apprenticeships are jobs with a sustained element of training, so this provision is delivered in conjunction with local employers where the apprentice is employed. Relationships between these employers and providers are usually well established so they are unlikely to be vulnerable to aggressive recruitment practices and they pose little or no threat to the stability of the sector.

However, despite apprentices being in full-time employment, they are sometimes also recorded as studying full-time in the Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) data. This data is used to calculate and monitor student number controls.

For HESES20, the Office for Students will provide guidance on how apprentices are recorded in the data return, which will allow all apprenticeship places to be identified.

## ■ Department for Education: Public Opinion

**Judith Cummins:** [\[62465\]](#)

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

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department does not hold this information centrally and could only obtain it at disproportionate cost.

## ■ Department for Education: Renewable Energy

**Sir Edward Davey:** [\[60654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many (a) solar panels and (b) wind turbines his Department's buildings (a) have in 2020 and (b) had in each of the last five years.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department does not have any wind turbines, nor does it have any functioning solar panels. This has been the case across the last 5 years.

## ■ Education: Children

**Catherine West:** [\[64994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of children classified as vulnerable attended (a) primary (b) secondary school in (i) May and (ii) June 2020.

**Vicky Ford:**

The table below presents the latest weekly national figures for vulnerable children with an education, health and care (EHC) plan or social worker in attendance in England during May and June 2020.

DATE	VULNERABLE CHILDREN WITH AN EHC PLAN OR SOCIAL WORK IN ATTENDANCE	PROPORTION OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN WITH AN EHC PLAN OR SOCIAL WORKER [1]
7 May 2020	48,000	9%
14 May 2020	51,000	10%
21 May 2020	52,000	10%
28 May 2020	23,000	5%
4 June 2020	78,000	15%

DATE	VULNERABLE CHILDREN WITH AN EHC PLAN OR SOCIAL WORK IN ATTENDANCE	PROPORTION OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN WITH AN EHC PLAN OR SOCIAL WORKER [1]
11 June 2020	92,000	18%
18 June 2020	112,000	22%
25 June 2020	116,000	23%

The data is available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>.

Please note that the department has not produced separate figures for the primary and secondary phases.

We have also been monitoring contact between social workers and children in need and can confirm that the vast majority of those vulnerable children on a child protection plan have been seen or contacted by a social worker in the past four weeks.

Full guidance on the definition of vulnerable children and options for continued attendance is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>.

[1] We estimate that the total number of vulnerable children with an EHC plan or social worker in England is 508,255.

## ■ Education: Standards

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

**[66001]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department plans to take to reduce the gap in provision between state and private schools after the covid-19 outbreak.

**Nick Gibb:**

We are committed to ensuring that all pupils continue to learn remotely where they cannot attend school due to COVID-19. The Department has published guidance to support state-funded schools in providing online lessons, and using high quality digital and printed curriculum resources.

To support state schools to provide education online, the Government has committed over £100 million to boost access to remote education. This includes providing laptops and tablets and internet access for those who need it most, ensuring every school that wants it has access to free, expert technical support to get set up on Google for Education or Microsoft's Office 365 Education, and offering peer support from schools and colleges leading the way with the use of education technology.

The Department is also supporting sector-led initiatives such as Oak National Academy. This new enterprise has been created by 40 teachers from schools across England. It will provide 180 video lessons for free each week, across a broad range of subjects, for every year group from Reception through to year 10. By 21 June, 3.9 million unique users had accessed the Oak National Academy website and 13.2 million lessons had been viewed. Additionally, the BBC has developed resources for families as part of a comprehensive new education package, which is now available on TV, BBC iPlayer and online at BBC Bitesize.

We expect all pupils to return to school in September, and the Department published guidance on Thursday 2 July. Given the possibility that groups of pupils need to self-isolate, such as for a local lockdown, all schools will be expected to have remote education contingency plans in place. The guidance sets out what is expected from schools for their remote education provision.

We are also providing a package of support worth £1 billion to support catch up for all pupils in state schools next academic year, including extra support for the most disadvantaged.

#### ■ Free School Meals

**Stephen Timms:**

[60646]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will update his Department's online guidance to show that the current maximum income threshold for free school meals eligibility for children in families with No Recourse to Public Funds is £16,190.

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

[60715]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will update the income threshold guidance for eligibility for free school meals for children with no recourse to public funds.

**Vicky Ford:**

During the COVID-19 outbreak, we are temporarily extending free school meal eligibility to include some children of groups who have no recourse to public funds. We will update the guidance as soon as possible.

#### ■ Free School Meals: Coronavirus

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[64981]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the number of children (a) eligible for and (b) receiving free school meals in England.

**Vicky Ford:**

The latest school census data published on 25 June 2020 in 'Schools, pupils and their characteristics' shows that the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is over 1.4 million, as of January 2020. The data is available here:

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>.

We do not hold information on the number of children that have become eligible for benefits-related free school meals due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

■ **Free School Meals: Voucher Schemes**

**Sir Mark Hendrick:**

**[57098]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the free school meal national voucher scheme, whether (a) Edenred's contract as the Government's supplier will be renewed or (b) there will be a competitive tendering process after 21 June 2020.

**Vicky Ford:**

Provision for free school meals is ordinarily term time only. However, owing to the COVID-19 outbreak, the government understands that children and parents face an entirely unprecedented situation this summer. To reflect this, the Edenred contract was extended to enable free school meal provision until the end of the summer term (through the national voucher scheme) and to support the Covid Summer Food Fund.

The free school meal vouchers contract was extended on 22 June following ministerial direction to extend the contract to cover the summer holiday period. In order to ensure families receive the support they needed in a timely manner, the department did not have sufficient time to run a competitive procurement for the extension. The extension did not make any substantial changes to the extant contract as defined by PCR Reg 72(1)(e).

■ **Holiday Play Schemes: Coronavirus**

**Fleur Anderson:**

**[66222]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether holiday clubs in schools will be permitted to open over the summer in 2020.

**Nick Gibb:**

As per my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister's announcement on 23 June, holiday clubs and out-of-school clubs for children will be able to restart over the summer, 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 have published guidance for the sector on how to implement the protective measures necessary to open:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/protective-measures-for-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>.

Holiday clubs that open should implement this guidance from the end of summer term, when state schools in their local area have closed. Until then, while schools are open in a provider's local area, they should follow the same protective measures as schools to limit different groups of children mixing.

We are not asking schools to open over the summer holidays; however, we are aware that some headteachers may be considering using their catch-up premium to

provide summer school activities for their pupils. Schools may also consider hiring out their premises to holiday clubs. Where this is the case, they have the flexibility, discretion, and autonomy to decide how they want to do this.

## ■ Home Education and Teaching Aids: Ealing

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

**[65998]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding has been allocated to schools in the London Borough of Ealing in relation to (a) online tuition and (b) teaching materials.

**Nick Gibb:**

Ealing is receiving an extra £10.1 million for schools this year, an increase of 3.7% per pupil taking total funding for 2020-21 in Ealing to £250.8 million.

It is up to each school to determine how to deliver education to its pupils, and how best to use their funding. We recognise that many schools have already shared resources – both online and printed resources – for children who are at home, and we are committed to ensuring that all children can continue to learn remotely in a number of ways during these very difficult circumstances.

We are committed to ensuring that all children can continue to learn remotely in a number of ways for as long as they are unable to attend school, and are supporting sector-led initiatives such as the Oak National Academy. By 21 June, 3.9 million unique users had accessed the Oak National Academy website and 13.2 million lessons had been viewed.

The Government has also committed over £100 million to boost remote education. This includes: providing devices and internet access for those who need it most, ensuring every school that wants it has access to free, expert technical support to get set up on Google for Education or Microsoft's Office 365 Education, and offering peer support from schools and colleges leading the way with the use of education technology.

The Government have announced a package of support of £1 billion to ensure that schools have the support they need to help children and young people make up for lost teaching time, with extra support in the form of a tutoring programme for those who need it most. We will provide more information on exactly how this funding will be distributed in due course.

## ■ Pupils: Disadvantaged

**Tulip Siddiq:**

**[66138]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether children who become eligible for free school meals during the summer holidays will be eligible for support from the COVID Summer Food Fund.

**Vicky Ford:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 29 June 2020 to Question [60716](#).

**■ Schools: Coronavirus**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[66109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of children at state primary schools are being taught at school (a) in the UK and (b) in York since the reopening of schools after the covid-19 lockdown restrictions were eased.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[66110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of Year 6 children at state primary schools are being taught at school (a) in the UK and (b) in York since the reopening of schools after the covid-19 lockdown restrictions were eased.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[66111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of nursery children have returned to school (a) in the UK and (b) in York since the reopening of schools after the covid-19 lockdown restrictions were eased.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[66112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of children in reception have returned to school (a) in the UK and (b) in York since the reopening of schools after the covid-19 lockdown restrictions were eased.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[66113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of Year 1 children have returned to school (a) in the UK and (b) in York since the reopening of schools after the covid-19 lockdown restrictions were eased.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[66114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of children at secondary schools returned to school (a) in the UK and (b) in York since the reopening of schools after the covid-19 lockdown restrictions were eased.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[66115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of Year 10 children returned to school (a) in the UK and (b) in York since the reopening of schools after the covid-19 lockdown restrictions were eased.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[66116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of Year 12 children at returned to school (a) in the UK and (b) in York since the reopening of schools after the covid-19 lockdown restrictions were eased.

**Nick Gibb:**

The tables below present the daily national figures for nursery, reception, year 1, year 6, year 10 and year 12 pupils in attendance in England during June 2020.

DATE	CHILDREN ATTENDING NURSERY	CHILDREN ATTENDING RECEPTION	CHILDREN ATTENDING YEAR 1	CHILDREN ATTENDING YEAR 6	CHILDREN ATTENDING YEAR 10 [1]	PUPILS ATTENDING YEAR 12 [2]
04/06/2020	28,000	99,000	84,000	127,000	.	.
11/06/2020	40,000	144,000	130,000	179,000	.	.
18/06/2020	52,000	188,000	175,000	228,000	65,000	25,000
25/06/2020	66,000	238,000	226,000	279,000	83,000	34,000

DATE	PROPORTION OF ALL NURSERY CHILDREN ATTENDING	PROPORTION OF ALL RECEPTION CHILDREN ATTENDING	PROPORTION OF ALL YEAR 1 CHILDREN ATTENDING	PROPORTION OF ALL YEAR 6 CHILDREN ATTENDING	PROPORTION OF ALL YEAR 10 CHILDREN ATTENDING <sup>1</sup>	PROPORTION OF ALL YEAR 12 PUPILS ATTENDING <sup>2</sup>
04/06/2020	8.9%	15.2%	12.7%	18.6%	.	.
11/06/2020	12.9%	21.9%	19.6%	26.2%	.	.
18/06/2020	16.5%	28.8%	26.3%	33.5%	10.3%	9.5%
25/06/2020	21.1%	36.3%	34.1%	41.0%	13.0%	12.6%

The data is collected from individual education establishments and the published figures include estimates for non-response. Equivalent estimates have not been made at lower level geographies. In addition, the Department has not produced separate overall attendance figures for the primary and secondary phases.

[1] Secondary schools, sixth form and further education colleges were asked to begin providing face-to-face support to students in year 10 and 12 from June 15<sup>th</sup>. For dates prior to this, no information was collected for these years.

[2] Figures for year 12 attendance do not include students at further education and special post-16 institutions.

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[66119]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what additional educational provision he providing to children who may not be able to return to school in September as a result of limits on capacity at schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

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

teachers and friends. Our intention is for all children to return to school from September.

We have published further information and guidance to help schools prepare for September. The guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>.

We are working with the sector to ensure our guidance provides schools with the further details they need including advice on estates, workforce and curriculum, which can be found in the guidance.

## ■ Schools: Food

**Tulip Siddiq:** [66140]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on what dates Edenred's contracts to deliver (a) the national free school meal voucher scheme and (b) the COVID Summer Food Fund will come to an end.

**Tulip Siddiq:** [66141]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to (a) make schools aware of the deadline for applying for the COVID Summer Food Fund and (b) encourage schools to apply for that funding.

**Vicky Ford:**

Provision for free school meals is ordinarily term time only. However, owing to the COVID-19 outbreak, the government understands that children and parents face an entirely unprecedented situation over the summer. To reflect this, we will be providing additional funding for a COVID Summer Food Fund which will enable families with children who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals to receive food vouchers covering the 6-week holiday period. Our guidance on the COVID Summer Food Fund is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-summer-food-fund>.

The department's contract with Edenred for supplying both the national free school meals voucher scheme and the COVID Summer Food Fund will expire on 31 August 2020.

We have announced details of the COVID Summer Food Fund in our daily bulletin to schools and on social media. A link to information on the COVID Summer Food Fund has been added to our guidance on providing free school meals during the COVID-19 outbreak here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools>.

Edenred have also emailed all eligible schools with information about the fund and the deadlines for placing orders. We have discussed these arrangements with teaching unions and wider stakeholders. When the national voucher scheme was set up, Edenred sent emails to all eligible schools, containing a link with which to activate their accounts. All eligible schools that had not yet activated their account were sent a new link in the week commencing 22 June 2020.

## ■ Schools: Social Distancing

**Mr Virendra Sharma:** [65999]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the additional number of pupils that can attend school in the event that social distancing guidelines are lower to one metre.

**Mr Virendra Sharma:** [66000]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to split primary and secondary classes into multiple bubbles to minimise the risk of covid-19 transmission.

**Nick Gibb:**

We want to get all children and young people back into education as soon as the scientific advice allows because it is the best place for them to learn. We know how important it is for their wellbeing to have social interactions with their teachers and friends. Our intention is for all children to return to school from September.

We have published further information and guidance to help schools prepare for September. The guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>.

We will be guided by the latest scientific advice and are working with the sector to ensure our guidance provides schools with the further details they need. Any protective measures that may be necessary to keep children and teachers as safe as possible, advice on group sizes, staffing advice and transport considerations can be found in the guidance.

## ■ Students: Coronavirus

**Esther McVey:** [59750]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to support students that find themselves in financial difficulty during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Esther McVey:** [59758]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support his Department provides to students that do not have access to (a) a laptop and (b) an internet connection; and what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the digital support packed offered to lower year students to university students.

**Esther McVey:** [59924]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support is available to students that have found themselves in financial difficulty during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Michelle Donelan:**

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

Higher education providers take their responsibilities seriously and are best placed to identify the needs of their student body as well as how to develop the services needed to support it. When making changes to the delivery of their courses, providers need to consider how they support all students, particularly the most vulnerable, to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.

Many providers will have hardship funds to support students in times of need, including emergencies. The expectation is that where any student requires additional support during this exceptional period (for example, they have no access to the internet, no computer at home or cannot afford to purchase a computer), providers will support them through their own hardship funds.

We have worked closely with the higher education regulator in England, the Office for Students (OfS), to help clarify that providers can draw upon existing funding to provide hardship funds and support disadvantaged students impacted by COVID-19. Providers can use the funding, worth around £23 million per month for April, May, June and July, towards student hardship funds, including the purchase of IT equipment.

The OfS has provided guidance for providers on the use of existing student premium funding to support students facing hardship: [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/provider-faq/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/provider-faq/).

Details of the technology support available for children and schools are here: [www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19). These measures are the result of a £100 million allocation to support remote education, including providing routers and laptops to vulnerable students, prioritising care leavers, including those at university.

**Afzal Khan:** [61575]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of domestic students who will study at UK universities in the 2020-21 academic year.

**Afzal Khan:** [61576]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of prospective students who will defer their studies at UK universities in the 2020-21 academic year as a result of the covid-19 pandemic.

**Afzal Khan:** [61580]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with university officials on allowing prospective students to defer their studies due to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Michelle Donelan:**

Our most recent estimate of the number of English-domiciled full-time undergraduate entrants studying at UK universities in the 2020/21 academic year is 377,000. This estimate is from March 2020 (and pre-dates the COVID-19 outbreak). The department is working closely with the sector to understand the likely impacts of COVID-19 on the higher education (HE) sector, including student numbers, and has introduced a HE stabilisation package to support the stability of the HE sector and protect the interests of students.

There is no need for students to defer their studies this year if they do not wish to do so. Any student who wants to defer their studies should do so through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) system, but we would want to be sure that where they do so, they make their decision based on the best possible advice and information. The level of activity most recently reported by UCAS and the Student Loans Company (SLC) indicates that there are no signs of the level of deferrals being significantly different to that seen in previous years.

We have had regular discussions with sector representative bodies, such as Universities UK (UUK), since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak. We know that UUK is working with their members and UCAS to provide as much clarity as possible to applicants about likely arrangements for the delivery of HE university courses this autumn.

**Universities: Coronavirus****Afzal Khan:**[\[61581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussion he has had with university officials on preventing staff redundancies.

**Michelle Donelan:**

Higher education providers (HEPs) are independent institutions and are responsible for their own decisions on staffing and employment contracts.

The department provided sector-specific guidance on 17 April to help providers understand and access the range of government support on offer to support financial viability and sustainability and safeguard jobs. In developing this guidance, the department worked across government to ensure the various funding streams that support university research were included and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) was available in higher education (HE). Officials also consulted trade unions as well as Universities UK (UUK) and the Universities & Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) to understand staff and employer concerns and ensure the guidance addressed these where possible.

The department remains in close communication with partners in the HE sector who are considering educational provision for the academic year 2020/2021. To help HEPs make informed decisions about their provision, the government has issued guidance on reopening campuses and buildings while minimising the risk to students

and staff, which is complemented by principles published by UUK that will underpin HEPs' reopening plans.

## ■ Universities: Scotland

**Peter Grant:**

[\[65161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has had with the Scottish Government on the decision to cap the number of English students attending university in Scotland.

**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.

## ■ Vocational Education

**Helen Hayes:**

[\[62529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress his Department has made on its review of BTECs and other applied general qualifications.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below, alongside the development of T Levels, is central to building a world-class technical education system. The first stage of the qualifications review consultation ran from March to June 2019. The second stage consultation is due to be published later in 2020. The review is looking at complex questions about the range of qualifications needed post-16, including the place of applied general qualifications, and we want to take the time to get this right.

We are taking a number of steps in advance of this to drive up quality and reduce complexity in the system.

From 1 August 2020, we will withdraw funding approval for new starts on 163 older qualifications that have been superseded by newer more rigorous versions. From 1 September 2020, we will not approve new qualifications for funding for students aged 16 and above, to stabilise the publicly funded offer in advance of further reform. We have also, this year, started the process to remove public funding approval of qualifications with low or no publicly funded enrolments. Subject to the outcomes of this process, from August 2021 we will remove funding approval for qualifications with no publicly funded enrolments. Additionally, from August 2022 we will remove funding approval for qualifications with low numbers of publicly funded enrolments, unless doing so would have a significant adverse impact on a particular sector, geographical area or student group.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Fishing Catches: Computer Software

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[64319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the Marine Management Organisation has taken enforcement action using evidence from the under-10m Catch App.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has not taken any enforcement action using evidence from the Catch Recording app as outlined in the MMO's response to the public consultation in June 2019. The MMO's priority has been to continue to support the under 10 metre fleet to adjust to the new licence condition to record their catches of quota species via workshops, drop-in sessions and digital support. The MMO will provide notice to the fishing sector before moving in to an enforcement phase.

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[64320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Marine Management Organisation's management of the under-10 metre CatchApp for recording fish landings.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The development of the Catch Recording application has followed standard Government practice and was quality-assured by the Government Digital Service (GDS). The app is currently in a 'public beta' phase, which includes a rollout of the service to the fishing sector. During this phase the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has published information, advice and guidance to provide support to all users. Current figures indicate a significant portion (77%) of the active under 10 metre fleet have adopted the new recording method with over 27,000 catch records successfully submitted. The comprehensive data that catch recording offers will

enable the MMO to have confidence in its assessments of the total volumes and species of fish being taken from English waters by the under 10 metre fleet.

**Luke Pollard:** [\[64321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which Minister in his Department has responsibility for the CatchApp for fish landings.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, the Rt Hon Victoria Prentis MP, has responsibility for this policy area. The Secretary of State, the Rt Hon George Eustice MP, has overall responsibility for all departmental activity.

## ■ Food: Microplastics

**Sir Greg Knight:** [\[65942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of current levels of micro plastics in food destined for human consumption; and if he will make a statement.

**Sir Greg Knight:** [\[65943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will (a) undertake research into current micro plastic levels in food destined for human consumption and (b) make an assessment of the trend in those levels; and if he will make a statement.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Plastic pollution is one of the greatest environmental challenges facing the world today. The UK is a world leader in tackling plastic pollution, including microplastics.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has been monitoring the scientific literature concerning the occurrence and effects of microplastics in food. On the basis of current evidence, the FSA considers it is unlikely that the presence of microplastics particles that have been reported to occur in certain types of food, especially seafood, would cause harm to consumers.

The FSA will continue to monitor and assess emerging information concerning microplastics in food including further consideration of this issue by the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) later this year.

Despite research findings that show the presence of low levels of microplastics in a few types of food or drink, microplastics analysis is very challenging and there are still no practical fully validated methods that would allow reliable routine analysis for microplastics in food and therefore to assess trends.

Our priority is preventing plastic from entering the environment in the first place. The Government's landmark Resources and Waste Strategy sets out our plans to eliminate avoidable plastic waste by 2042.

## ■ Furs: Sales

**Rosie Cooper:**

[[65966](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to plan for a review of the ban on the sale of animal fur after the end of the transition period.

**Victoria Prentis:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Totnes on 30 June 2020, PQ UIN 62631.

[ [www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-22/62631](http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-06-22/62631) ]

## ■ United Utilities: Japanese Knotweed

**Derek Twigg:**

[[65941](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with United Utilities on the control and eradication of Japanese knotweed on land owned by that company.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Secretary of State has not had any recent discussions with United Utilities about Japanese knotweed.

## FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

### ■ Afghanistan: Russia

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

[[66104](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his counterparts in (a) Russia and (b) the US on reports that the Russian Government allegedly offered to pay bounties to Taliban-linked fighters to kill US and UK troops in Afghanistan.

**Wendy Morton:**

We do not comment on intelligence matters. We regularly discuss with NATO allies our responses to potential threats from Russia and as fellow Permanent Members of the UN Security Council, we engage directly with Russia on matters of international peace and security, including Afghanistan.

### ■ British Nationals Abroad: Coronavirus

**Lisa Nandy:**

[[66049](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of British crew members on cruise ships around the world that are seeking to return to the UK; and what further steps he plans to take to ensure such crew members are repatriated.

**Wendy Morton:**

We recognise this is a worrying time for British crew on board cruise ships around the world. It is primarily the responsibility of their employers - the cruise ship operators - to ensure the welfare and safety of their crew. The Government is in direct contact with these operators, as well as directly with many crew members and their families. Our overseas missions are liaising closely with local authorities in an effort to facilitate disembarkation and ensure British crew can access flights home.

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport wrote to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and World Health Organisation (WHO) on 23 March, reaffirming our international obligations on seafarers' welfare and transit, and calling for clear international guidance for port, flag, coastal states on seafarers' welfare and facilitating seafarer transit.

Not all British crew are seeking to return to the UK. Some may wish to stay with the ship (with their employer's consent), while others may be required by their role to do so as part of the minimum safe manning requirements for the vessel. This is a legislative and flag state requirement to ensure the continued seaworthiness of vessels.

**■ Department for International Development: Foreign and Commonwealth Office****Kate Osamor:**[\[64268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he made of the potential merits of merging the Department for International Development with his Department prior to the planned Integrated Review of foreign, defence, security and development policy announced by the Prime Minister on 26 February 2020.

**James Cleverly:**

The Prime Minister is committed to a unified British foreign policy that will maximise our influence around the world. The review will define the Government's ambition for the UK's global role and its outcomes will shape the objectives of the new department.

**■ Diplomatic Service: Training****Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[64279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what additional training on the UK's development priorities Ambassadors will receive prior to the merger of his Department and the Department for International Development in September 2020.

**James Cleverly:**

As the Prime Minister has said, merging the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department for International Development (DFID) will bring together the best of what we do in development and diplomacy. As the world becomes ever more complex, we need single cross-government strategies, implemented on the ground by the Ambassador or High Commissioner heading all of HMG's work in-country. To facilitate this, the FCO is already working closely alongside DFID

colleagues on our overall leadership offer on both development and diplomacy. One of the key objectives of the compulsory Overseas Leadership Programme undertaken by all Heads and Deputy Heads of Missions is preparing to represent the whole of HMG at Post. This includes sessions with DFID leaders to discuss development priorities and working together effectively as partners across Government. Many of our Heads and Deputy Heads of Mission have had experience of development issues prior to taking up their appointments. The full details of the merger will be set out in due course.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Public Inquiries**

**Lee Anderson:** [\[62611\]](#)

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

**Nigel Adams:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office do not currently have sponsorship responsibilities for any public inquiries.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Taxis**

**Layla Moran:** [\[65006\]](#)

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

**Nigel Adams:**

*[Holding answer 30 June 2020]:* FCO policy states that staff should travel by the most efficient means of transport. Guidance on using private hire cars for official travel is set out in staff guidance and FCO policy is that public transport should be used whenever possible.

■ **Gulf States: Overseas Aid**

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[65183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, which projects received funding from the Integrated Activity Fund in each of the last 5 years.

**James Cleverly:**

*[Holding answer 1 July 2020]:* The Integrated Activity Fund was introduced in Financial Year 16/17 and supports a range of programmes and projects across the Gulf.

**■ Israel: Cemeteries****Afzal Khan:** [\[66194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Israeli counterpart on the recent bulldozing of a historic Muslim cemetery in Jaffa.

**Afzal Khan:** [\[66195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the desecration of Muslim cemeteries in order to build housing projects.

**James Cleverly:**

We have not made representations on this incident. The UK acknowledges the importance of preserving religious sites, including cemeteries. That is why defending Freedom of Religion or Belief, and promoting respect between different communities, is a human rights policy priority for the UK.

**■ Israel: Palestinians****Afzal Khan:** [\[66196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to promote a two-state solution and prevent further Israeli annexation of occupied Palestinian territory.

**James Cleverly:**

We continue to work closely with international partners strongly advocating a two-state solution and encouraging a return to meaningful negotiations. The Foreign Secretary did so most recently in a meeting with French and German Foreign Ministers on 19 June. He has also reiterated to Egyptian Foreign Minister Shoukry on 21 May and Jordanian Foreign Minister Safadi on 28 May. The Prime Minister has conveyed the UK's opposition to unilateral annexation to Prime Minister Netanyahu on multiple occasions, including in a phone call in February and a letter in July. The Foreign Secretary reiterated this message in his introductory calls with Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Gantz on 20 May and Foreign Minister Ashkenazi on 2 June. I also did so at the UN Security Council last week.

**■ Malawi: Politics and Government****Ruth Jones:** [\[64337\]](#)

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

**James Duddridge:**

The UK welcomes the peaceful conduct of fresh Presidential elections in Malawi on 23 June. Malawi has a long history of respect for democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Malawians can be rightly proud of their commitment to resolving political differences through their country's democratic institutions and processes, including in

the aftermath of the contested 2019 Presidential elections. I sent my congratulations to President Chakwera on 29 June. As a long term friend of Malawi, I look forward to working with the new Government to tackle the issues that matter to all Malawians.

The UK has consistently encouraged all political parties in Malawi to respect the rule of law, follow due process under the constitution, and respect the rulings of Malawi's courts. Following the May 2019 Presidential elections, we urged de-escalation of inflammatory rhetoric and peaceful campaigning from all sides. We also urged the parties to be mindful of the risks of holding an election campaign during the Covid pandemic. I reiterated these messages in a phone call with then Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs on 15 May, as did the UK Chargé d'Affaires in his meeting with then President Mutharika on 11 May.

## ■ Overseas Aid: Gender

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[64127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will be required to consider gender inequality ahead of allocating aid and other resources.

**Wendy Morton:**

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. The UK Aid Strategy prioritises the rights of women and girls under its fourth strategic goal of tackling extreme poverty and helping the world's most vulnerable.

Spending 0.7 percent of our national income on aid is enshrined in law and the UK continues to abide by the OECD DAC rules for aid, which include the consideration of gender equality in how aid is spent. We will continue to look at how this money can be spent most effectively, including through the Integrated Review - which will inform the priorities of the new Department.

Any decisions on spending aid will be taken by the ministerial team in the new Department, overseen by the Foreign Secretary and drawing on the expertise of FCDO staff.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[64128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will continue to publish reports on how that Department is supporting (a) gender quality and (b) women's empowerment.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK remains fully committed to supporting gender equality and women's empowerment, including every girl's right to 12 years of quality education. The integrated foreign policy review is expected to conclude later in the year, which 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. Both the review and the merger are evidence of the Prime Minister's commitment to a unified British foreign policy that will maximise our influence around the world, including on gender equality and women's empowerment.

The FCO reports annually on its gender equality work in the FCO Annual report and the FCO Annual Human Rights Report. DFID's Annual Report and Accounts provides an update on key results, including on gender equality, every year. The FCDO will continue to report annually on how the Department is supporting gender equality and women's empowerment.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### ■ Alzheimer's Disease: Tea

**Jim Shannon:**

[63343]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with relevant stakeholders on the potential effect of drinking tea on reducing the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government has had no discussions with stakeholders on any potential effect of drinking tea on reducing the risk of dementia.

The Challenge on Dementia 2020 commitments included action on risk reduction, and messaging has been incorporated in the NHS Health Check for all eligible adults in England aged 40-74 to increase dementia awareness and motivate people in midlife to make positive changes to reduce the risks.

To reduce the risk of dementia the Government recommends:

- eating a healthy diet as depicted in the Eatwell Guide;
- maintaining a healthy weight;
- exercising regularly;
- not drinking too much alcohol;
- stopping smoking; and
- keeping blood pressure at a healthy level.

The Eatwell Guide is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-eatwell-guide>

### ■ Antibiotics: Prescriptions

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[58652]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish data on the number of antibiotics prescribed in each month since April 2019; what assessment has

been made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on trends in the prescription of antibiotics.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England's (PHE) English surveillance programme for antimicrobial utilisation and resistance is working with the National Health Service and across sectors, to develop and maintain surveillance systems for monitoring trends in antimicrobial use and resistance in England. Data can be viewed on the antimicrobial resistance Fingertips webpage at the following link:

<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/amr-local-indicators>

PHE will track the impact of COVID-19 on antimicrobial resistance and utilisation using these established surveillance data systems.

■ **Apprentices and Education: Coronavirus**

**Karin Smyth:**

[\[63385\]](#)

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 education and apprenticeships in the NHS.

**Helen Whately:**

Health Education England (HEE) has continued to prioritise education and training during the COVID-19 outbreak. Regulatory bodies representing health and social care professions have issued statements on how training and education is being managed during this outbreak. HEE and NHS Improvement are working with professional bodies to ensure staff training continues during COVID-19, such as moving studies online.

■ **Blood Cancer: Medical Treatments**

**Martyn Day:**

[\[56074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what treatment options are available to patients with multiple myeloma who have become refractory to previous lines of therapy.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 11 June 2020]:* For patients who have received previous lines of treatment, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) currently recommends the following subsequent treatments in England:

- Daratumumab with bortezomib and dexamethasone (NICE TA573);
- Carfilzomib (NICE TA 457);
- Bortezomib (NICE TA 129); and
- Ixazomib with lenalidomide and dexamethasone (NICE TA505).

For some patients, stem cell transplantation may also be considered, however, the treatment is very intensive and requires a good level of fitness.

**Breast Cancer: Radiotherapy**

**Tim Farron:** [55927]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what information his Department holds on the number of patients who have had shorter courses of breast radiotherapy as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 11 June 2020]:* The data requested is not currently available.

**Cancer: Health Services**

**Rosie Cooper:** [55910]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps NHS England has taken to support NHS staff offer personalised care to people with cancer.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 11 June 2020]:* The NHS Long Term Plan sets a clear ambition that where appropriate every person diagnosed with cancer should have access to personalised care by 2021. Personalised care in cancer is focused on four key interventions:

- Personalised care and support planning based on Holistic Needs Assessments;
- End of treatment summaries;
- Health and wellbeing information and support; and
- A Cancer Care Review with their general practitioner.

NHS England is supporting staff to offer personalised care to people affected by cancer by promoting awareness and understanding of the personalised care interventions and by providing resources such as a handbook on personalised stratified follow up, webinars, and a collaborative online workspace for staff. Cancer Alliances are leading programmes of work to embed personalised care within local providers.

**Cancer: Hospitals**

**Alex Norris:** [41154]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of patients attending cancer-related hospital appointments during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

Data on urgent two week wait cancer referrals group is collected and published by NHS England and available at the following link:

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

The latest available data is for April 2020.

## ■ Cancer: Mental Health Services

**Rosie Cooper:**

[\[55913\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people with cancer have been offered a holistic needs assessment (HNA); and what steps he has taken to ensure that patients' needs are met following an HNA.

**Jo Churchill:**

Across England, as of December 2019 at least 96% of trusts offered Holistic Needs Assessments to all breast cancer patients, 93% for prostate and 92% for colorectal. The figures were estimated to be similarly high for other cancer types. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, trusts are not currently required to submit data to Public Health England on number of Holistic Needs Assessments offered, so we do not have more recent data.

A Holistic Needs Assessment should lead to a personalised care and support plan being agreed between the patient and their health professional. This plan is designed to ensure the person's holistic needs are being met, which may be through referral to other services, signposting to sources of support, or advice and information about the person's concerns and how they might self-manage any issues.

## ■ Cancer: Mental Illness

**Rosie Cooper:**

[\[55908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people have been diagnosed with cancer and a mental health condition in the UK in each year from 2014 to 2019, by region.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 11 June 2020]:* The data is not available in the format requested, as data is collected based on finished admission episodes (FAEs), rather than on number of people.

## ■ Cleft Palate: Health Services

**Scott Benton:**

[\[55052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) financial and (b) healthcare support the Government is providing to people born with a cleft palate.

**Helen Whately:**

NHS England commissions all specialist cleft palate services provided by Cleft Lip and Palate Centres, including services delivered on an outreach basis as part of a clinical network of services.

The service provides surgery and specialist care for patients with cleft lip and/or palate and non-cleft velopharyngeal dysfunction in order to ensure that patients achieve an aesthetic and functional facial appearance, and to maximise oral feeding, hearing, speech and psycho-social wellbeing.

Delivery of the service is through a network of care managed and delivered from the specialist centre. The network will commonly include outreach services and relies on strong links to and coordination with local community services. These local community services are commissioned by clinical commissioning groups including local speech and language therapy; local ear, nose and throat services and audiology; and community and local paediatric care. These locally delivered services work collaboratively with the Centres.

Spend on related cleft lip and palate services in 2018/19 (the most recent year for which financial data is currently available) was £28.6 million.

## ■ Contraceptives

**Alex Norris:**

[\[58066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase access to long-acting reversible contraception.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2020]:* Sexual health services are commissioned at a local level to meet the needs of the local population. The Government has mandated local authorities in England to commission comprehensive open access sexual health services, including “advice on, and reasonable access to, a broad range of contraceptive substances and appliances”. In 2018/19, there were 1.4 million contacts with sexual and reproductive health services for contraceptive reasons and 44% of contraception supplied was for long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARC). In addition there were 1.24 million prescriptions through primary care for LARC in 2018. We want to go further and ensure that all women have easy access to a choice of contraceptive methods and how we can continue to improve access will be considered through the new Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy.

## ■ Coronavirus: Asians

**Apsana Begum:**

[\[61617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to Public Health England's report entitled Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19 published on 2 June 2020, what assessment his Department has made of the reasons for which people of a Bangladeshi background are twice as likely to die from covid-19.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England's (PHE) review 'Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19' presented an analysis of survival among people with confirmed COVID-19 by sex, age group, ethnicity, deprivation and region. It showed that, after taking these factors into account, some ethnic groups still had a higher risk of death than others.

This analysis adjusts for important factors such as age and deprivation, but not for factors such as comorbidities and obesity, which are likely to have an impact on the different risks of dying between ethnic groups.

The review did not aim to determine root causes of findings that are likely to be driven by complex interactions, as the terms of reference shows.

PHE's report 'Beyond the data: understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups' contains a literature review that highlights issues which can be a factor in some ethnic groups being more likely to suffer from COVID-19, including Bangladeshi communities. The report is available to view at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-understanding-the-impact-on-bame-communities>

## ■ **Coronavirus: Demonstrations**

**Sir Charles Walker:**

**[60707]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he will amend the Health protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) Regulations (England) 2020 to clarify that peaceful demonstrations constitute a reasonable excuse for a gathering; and if he will make a statement.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 22 June 2020]:* The Government strongly supports the right to peaceful protest; however, this pandemic has led to many of our individual freedoms temporarily being curtailed in order to protect and save lives. Peaceful demonstrations are a vital part of democratic society and we understand the strength of feeling around the death of George Floyd. However, COVID-19 remains a real and present threat to all of us. As the Prime Minister announced in his oral statement to the House on 23 June, Official Report, columns 1167-1170, the social distancing Regulation are being amended from 4 July to allow for increased social contact, however gatherings of 30 or more people will remain illegal.

The management of protests and the use of powers are an operational matter for the police.

## ■ **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[54940]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Government plans to respond to the Public Health England Report, Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19, published in June 2020.

**Jo Churchill:**

Following the release of the Public Health England review into disparities in the risks and outcomes of COVID-19, the Government's Equality Hub responded on 4 June and set out how work on how to understand the key drivers and the relationships between the different risk factors will be taken forward. The full terms and reference of this work can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/next-steps-for-work-on-covid-19-disparities-announced>

The work will be led by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP) and supported by other Government departments and agencies.

**Dawn Butler:**

**[55895]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the terms of reference were for the report published by Public Health England on 2 June 2020 entitled Covid-19: Review of disparities and risks in outcomes.

**Jo Churchill:**

The terms of reference for Public Health England's review into disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19 are attached.

**Attachments:**

1. COVID-19 risk attachment [COVID-19 Impact Review ToRs.pdf]

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[64130]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to provide regular updates on the rules on physical contact for long-term partners living in separate households who do not fit the criteria to form a social bubble; and if he will make a statement.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government is keeping its social distancing measures under continual review. If at any time we judge that one of the measures is no longer necessary to protect public health we are required by law to change that measure. The Government have provided updates on the changes to the Regulations through both written and oral statements and will continue to do so for future amendments.

On 23 June, the Prime Minister announced changes to the Regulations which come into effect on 4 July. Included in these changes is that people can meet people from other households in all settings including indoors.

To limit the spread of the virus, the Government is advising that meetings with other households should be limited so that you are only meeting one other household, excluding your support bubble, at a time. We are also advising that social distancing is maintained between those who do not live in the same household or are a part of a support bubble.

## ■ **Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups**

**Shabana Mahmood:**

**[51804]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to consider the conclusions of Public Health England's review into the effect of covid-19 on black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities to be taken into account when easing covid-10 lockdown measures.

**Jo Churchill:**

The United Kingdom's response to COVID-19 is underpinned by scientific advice informed by a number of infectious disease models. Each of these is overseen by world-leading academic and public health institutions, who come together in the UK Government's Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling (SPI-M).

At each review point, impacts on black, Asian and minority ethnic groups have been carefully considered, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement for public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

The Government will continue to review the measures, assessing them to ensure that they continue to be necessary and proportionate based on available scientific evidence, which includes up to date data.

**Alex Norris:****[54231]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate the Government has made of the proportion of people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds whose deaths were attributable to covid-19 who had previously received a diagnosis of (a) kidney disease and (b) diabetes.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 8 June 2020]:* Public Health England led a recent rapid review to better understand how different factors can impact on how people are affected by COVID-19.

Chronic kidney disease was mentioned on 10.8% of death certificates where COVID-19 was also mentioned. This was higher in the Black ethnic group (18%) and the Asian group (16%).

Diabetes was mentioned on 21.1% of death certificates where COVID-19 was also mentioned. This was higher in all black, Asian and minority ethnic groups than the White group and was 43% in the Asian group and 45% in the Black group.

**Martyn Day:****[54970]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason the Public Health England review of the effect of covid-19 on BAME communities did not refer to (a) the high proportion of BAME healthcare workers who died from covid-19 and (b) the sociocultural circumstances of BAME victims which affected their exposure to covid-19; and what steps he plans to take to protect BAME communities from covid-19.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 9 June 2020]:* Public Health England (PHE) led a rapid review to better understand how different factors can impact on how people are affected by COVID-19. This includes analysis of ethnicity, deprivation, age, sex (male and female) and obesity, where surveillance data was available to PHE.

The review also referred to findings from other studies, where possible, including those analysing the deaths of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) National Health Service staff and sociocultural circumstances of BAME communities.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP) will be taking forward work to better understand the drivers behind the report's conclusions and interactions between different risk factors and consider where further data or analysis is needed. The Terms of Reference for that work can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/next-steps-for-work-on-covid-19-disparities-announced>

## ■ **Dementia: Coronavirus**

**Siobhain McDonagh:**

**[62274]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has for the covid-19 social care taskforce, announced on 8 June 2020, to review the effect of covid-19 on people affected by dementia.

**Helen Whately:**

The Social Care Sector COVID-19 Support Taskforce will ensure the delivery of two packages of support that the Government has put in place for the care sector – the Social Care Action Plan and the Care Homes Support Plan. The Taskforce will be supported by several advisory groups including one on support for older people and people living with dementia.

We are monitoring the impact of the pandemic. We have commissioned research through the National Institute for Health Research on how to manage or mitigate the psychological, physical and social impact of COVID-19 on people with dementia living in the community, and their carers. Work has already started with phased outputs to August 2020. The project has produced a leaflet for people living with dementia, and a leaflet for carers of people living with dementia. These are available at the following link:

<http://www.idealproject.org.uk/covid/>

## ■ **Health Professions: Students**

**Caroline Nokes:**

**[62417]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans the Government has to cancel the tuition fees of NHS staff who graduated early to treat people with covid-19.

**Helen Whately:**

There are no plans to cancel tuition fees for National Health Service staff who have graduated early and joined the NHS to support the COVID-19 response.

## ■ Health Professions: Training

**Sarah Owen:**

[\[63511\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with (a) trade unions (b) royal colleges that represent nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare students on changes to the current system of tuition fees and maintenance grants.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 29 June 2020]:* Ministers regularly meet with key stakeholders including trade union and royal college representatives, to discuss the Government's approach to National Health Service workforce supply and the financial support available to nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare students.

In 2017 pre-registration nursing, midwifery and allied health profession students became eligible for tuition fee and maintenance loans instead of receiving an NHS Bursary. We also introduced the Learning Support Fund which provides a child dependents allowance, reimbursement of all additional travel costs to attend clinical placements and an exceptional hardship fund.

In December 2019, the Government announced that from September 2020, all eligible new and continuing pre-registration nursing, midwifery and most allied health profession students studying at English universities would benefit from a new, non-repayable, training grant of at least £5,000 per academic year in addition to the funding available already through the Learning Support Fund.

Students on the loans system receive at least 25% more funding for living costs support than under the previous system.

## ■ Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020

**Justin Madders:**

[\[60781\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to include a full necessity and proportionality assessment in the 28 day reviews of the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (England) 2020.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government is keeping its social distancing measures under continual review. If at any time we judge that one of the measures is no longer necessary to protect public health we are required by law to change that measure.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 came into force on 26 March and have been amended four times (21 April, 12 May, 31 May, and 12 June) to reflect technical changes and the outcomes of the three previous reviews (16 April, 7 May and 28 May). At each of these review points we have considered the necessity and proportionality of existing measures. The changes made with each amendment have been in relation to removing restrictions that are no longer considered proportionate or necessary, in light of the evolving situation. This is consistent with the approach taken for the review on 23 June which the Prime

Minister outlined in an oral statement to the House on the same day, *Official report, columns 1167-1170*.

■ **Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (England) 2020**

**Justin Madders:**

[\[61531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will provide written and oral statements to Parliament following each 28 day review of the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (England) 2020 to disclose the findings of those reviews.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government is keeping its social distancing measures under continual review. If at any time we judge that one of the measures is no longer necessary to protect public health we are required by law to change that measure.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 came into force on 26 March and have been amended four times (21 April, 12 May, 31 May, and 12 June) to reflect technical changes and the outcomes of the three previous reviews (16 April, 7 May and 28 May). At each review point of the Health Protection Regulations, the Government has provided a written or oral statement to Parliament. The Prime Minister made oral statements to the Commons on 11 May, *Official report, columns 24-27*, and 23 June, *Official report, columns 1167-1170*. The Prime Minister's statement on 23 June outlined the changes being implemented after the fourth review, which come into effect on 4 July. In addition, we have made Written Ministerial Statements to the House of Commons and the House of Lords on 28 April ( [HCWS206](#) ) and 2 June ( [HCWS253](#) ). This process will be continued by the Government following future reviews.

■ **Health Services: Stress**

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[62435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reduce stress in the health sector workplace.

**Helen Whately:**

The health and wellbeing of National Health Service staff is very important to the Government. We anticipated that they would potentially need additional mental health support to help them face any additional stresses from COVID-19 response.

We commissioned NHS England and NHS Improvement at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak to develop a comprehensive package of emotional, psychological and practical support for NHS staff - building on local support already in place. NHS Employers' latest mental wellbeing guidance also encourages managers to remind their staff to take breaks and discuss their emotional wellbeing.

The NHS People Plan will set out a 'new offer', detailing the health and wellbeing support that all NHS staff can expect to receive from their employer.

## ■ HIV Infection: Screening

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**

**[56112]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to increase access to home-based and community testing for HIV during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England (PHE) supports HIV testing initiatives across England through its national programmes where appropriate.

During the COVID-19 outbreak PHE has committed to supporting the 56 Dean Street Breaking the Chain campaign via HIV Prevention England, the national HIV Prevention Programme and the national HIV self-sampling service. From 5 June 2020, residents of all local authorities in England can order a free self-sampling kit through the national HIV self-sampling service. PHE has committed to paying for 7,000 HIV tests, including syphilis opt-out testing, throughout the promotional period.

PHE is in the process of tendering a new Sexual and Reproductive Health Framework that will enable local authorities to provide a range of online and postal sexual and reproductive health services including HIV and sexually transmitted infections self-sampling, chlamydia treatment, emergency contraception and oral contraception.

## ■ Influenza: Coronavirus

**Catherine West:**

**[59239]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans the Government has put in place to avoid a flu epidemic at the same time as managing the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 17 June 2020]:* The Government has taken unprecedented action to support the health and care system to respond to COVID-19 and help to ensure that services were not overwhelmed.

The Government will continue to support health and care services and is working with the National Health Service, Public Health England, local government and other key stakeholders on planning, to take account of the risk this winter of seasonal influenza cocirculating with COVID-19.

The flu vaccination programme will be a critical part of preparing the United Kingdom for winter, and to manage pressures on the NHS should we have co-circulation of seasonal flu and COVID-19 this winter.

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](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 most at risk of flu and its complications, who are eligible for free flu vaccination so they are protected over the winter months.

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

■ **Influenza: Pharmacy**

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

[60747]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he is having with representatives of the pharmacy sector to ensure preparedness for the 2020 flu season; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

There have been discussions with community pharmacy organisations to consider how the influenza vaccination service can be best delivered, as well as local flu delivery board conversations between commissioners and pharmacy providers. These are ongoing with the aim of maintaining and improving the uptake of the influenza vaccine across primary care.

The final agreed service requirements will be published during the summer, in preparation for the flu season. Discussions between NHS England and NHS Improvement and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee are also ongoing to update the Community Pharmacy Seasonal Influenza Advanced Service for the 2020/21 flu season. This includes our preparation on COVID-19.

■ **Influenza: Vaccination**

**Alex Norris:**

[57326]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of extending the provision of the NHS-funded flu vaccination to key workers.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2020]:* The flu vaccination programme will be a critical part of preparing the United Kingdom for winter. 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](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.

■ **Joint Biosecurity Centre**

**Helen Hayes:**

[52272]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Prime Minister's announcement of the Joint Biosecurity Centre, what plans the Government has for the (a) budgets, (b) ministerial oversight and (c) senior leadership of that Centre.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 4 June 2020]:* The Joint Biosecurity Centre is an integral part of the Test and Trace Service in the Department for Health and Social Care, and led by a Director General.

**Caroline Lucas:**[\[62376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 8 June 2020 to Question 49643 on Joint Biosecurity Centre: Staff and the Answer of 8 June to Question 49644 on Joint Biosecurity Centre, what progress he has made on the (a) establishment, (b) funding and (c) staffing of the new Joint Biosecurity Centre.

**Helen Whately:**

The Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) announced the appointment of its Director General Claire Gardiner on 5 June and is an integral part of the Test and Trace Service in the Department. It engages with a wide range of partners and stakeholders, including other Government departments. Like the wider Test and Trace Service, we will be as transparent as possible in our work and, wherever we can, will publish our delivery figures and publications. Staffing levels currently stand at just under 200 people.

**■ Learning Disability: Coronavirus****Sir Mark Hendrick:**[\[57097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implication for his policies of the Care Quality Commission's published data of 2 June 2020 in relation to deaths of people with a learning disability as a result of covid-19; and if he will make a statement.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2020]:* Since the start of this outbreak we have been working closely with the sector and public health experts to put in place guidance and support for adult social care, including for people with learning disabilities.

We have commissioned Public Health England to undertake a thorough analysis of the numbers of deaths of people with a learning disability. This will draw on data published by NHS England and the Care Quality Commission to give as complete a picture of the impact of COVID-19 on this group of people as possible.

**■ Members: Correspondence****Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[62350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the letter of 23 March 2020 on home care workers from the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull North.

**Helen Whately:**

I replied to the hon. Member's letter on 26 June 2020.

## ■ Midwives: EU Nationals

**Martyn Day:**

[\[61545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many midwives from the EU are working in the NHS in the latest period for which data is available, broken down by each EU nationality.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2020]:* NHS Digital publishes Hospital and Community Health Services workforce statistics. These include staff working in hospital trusts and clinical commissioning groups, but not staff working in primary care, general practitioner surgeries, local authorities or other providers.

The following table shows the number of midwives as at December 2019, the latest available data from each European Union nationality, headcount.

NATIONALITY	MIDWIVES, HEADCOUNT
Austrian	11
Belgian	15
Bulgarian	27
Cypriot	1
Czech	17
Danish	19
Dutch	60
Estonian	4
Finnish	10
French	56
German	51
Greek	32
Hungarian	17
Irish	296
Italian	226
Latvian	5
Lithuanian	17
Maltese	2

NATIONALITY	MIDWIVES, HEADCOUNT
Polish	118
Portuguese	45
Romanian	17
Slovak	11
Slovenian	1
Spanish	240
Swedish	22
All EU	1,329
United Kingdom	23,986
Rest of the World	448
All Unknowns	989

**Martyn Day:**[\[61740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many midwives work in NHS England by each EU nationality.

**Helen Whately:**

NHS Digital publishes Hospital and Community Health Services workforce statistics. These include staff working in hospital trusts and clinical commissioning groups, but not staff working in primary care, general practitioner surgeries, local authorities or other providers.

The following table shows the number of midwives as at December 2019, the latest available data from each European Union nationality, headcount.

NATIONALITY	MIDWIVES, HEADCOUNT
Austrian	11
Belgian	15
Bulgarian	27
Cypriot	1
Czech	17
Danish	19

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NATIONALITY	MIDWIVES, HEADCOUNT
Dutch	60
Estonian	4
Finnish	10
French	56
German	51
Greek	32
Hungarian	17
Irish	296
Italian	226
Latvian	5
Lithuanian	17
Maltese	2
Polish	118
Portuguese	45
Romanian	17
Slovak	11
Slovenian	1
Spanish	240
Swedish	22
All EU	1,329
United Kingdom	23,986
Rest of the World	448
All Unknowns	989

## ■ NHS: Apprentices

**Karin Smyth:**

[\[63383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of backfilling costs in the NHS on the NHS' ability to provide affordable apprenticeships programmes for (a) nursing and (b) other careers in healthcare.

**Helen Whately:**

The Department for Education operate the apprenticeship levy to support employers across all sectors to undertake training as apprentices. Apprenticeships funding can be used to cover the eligible costs of training and assessment for the apprentice, but it currently does not allow costs of backfill to be met – this falls to National Health Service employers employing apprentices.

We recognise that the nursing apprenticeship requires a high percentage of apprentice time spent in off the job training. Apprenticeships are real jobs with training and employers cover employment costs as they would with any employee, including wages while training.

Apprenticeships continue to play a vital role in delivering the high-quality skills employers need and that will support our economic recovery post COVID-19.

## ■ NHS: Coronavirus

**Karin Smyth:**

[\[63391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure the wellbeing of NHS trainees during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Helen Whately:**

The health and wellbeing of National Health Service trainees is very important to the Government. We commissioned NHS England and NHS Improvement to develop a comprehensive package of emotional, psychological and practical support.

NHS England and NHS Improvement launched the support package on 8 April 2020. The support package is available to all NHS trainees and it includes a helpline and text service for counselling and support, a dedicated bereavement helpline, and a range of well-being apps. All the support available can be accessed via the following link:

[people.nhs.uk/help](https://people.nhs.uk/help)

Medical trainees will continue to have access to the support of their clinical and educational supervisors, their schools and Performance Support and Wellbeing Units. Health Education England has introduced the 'Wellness Check in' to ensure learners know how to seek help.

**■ NHS: Mental Health****Sir Mark Hendrick:****[57908]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS staff have sought mental health support through the NHS staff mental health hotline since its launch in April 2020.

**Helen Whately:**

The National Health Service staff support helpline was launched on 8 April 2020 and provides confidential listening, signposting, and support. It is operated by Samaritans from 7am – 11pm, seven days a week.

From 8 April 2020 until 12 June 2020 there have been 3,120 calls to the helpline. This information was collected by Samaritans.

**■ NHS: Overseas Workers****Daniel Zeichner:****[59233]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if the exemption for registered health or care professionals travelling to the UK to provide essential healthcare, including where this is not related to coronavirus, in quarantine rules applies to health care professionals who currently work in the NHS but have gone abroad and are now returning.

**Helen Whately:**

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (England) Regulations 2020 are clear in that they include an exemption for registered healthcare professionals from the requirement to quarantine, if they are required to return to, or start work within 14 days of arrival in the United Kingdom, if they are staying in England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

**■ Nurses: Apprentices****Robert Halfon:****[64159]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people are currently working towards nursing degree apprenticeships in England.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 29 June 2020]:* Public sector organisations in scope to meet the public sector apprentice target provide data annually to the Department for Education. Data on the numbers of people currently working towards nursing degree apprenticeships, termed 'participation', is not available in year.

Available data on apprentice starts and participation is included in the following table.

-	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20 (AUGUST - APRIL)
Starts <sup>1</sup>	300	1,040	770
Participation	300	1,330	-

*Note :*

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/apprenticeships-and-traineeships-june-2020>

## ■ Social Distancing: Supported Housing

**Julian Sturdy:**

**[61481]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he made of the need for adults in supported living to receive emotional support through contact with family members when drafting his Department's guidance on covid-19 social distancing measures.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government acknowledges that social distancing policy is having an impact on mental health and wellbeing. Public Health England has published guidance on social distancing and self-isolation, and advice on how to look after your mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 outbreak.

On 23 June, the Prime Minister announced changes to the Regulations which come into effect on 4 July. Included in these changes is that two households of any size can now meet inside and outdoors. This change in the Regulations enables more opportunity for emotional support through contact with family members for those in supported living.

The Department and Public Health England are currently updating the guidance for supported living provision to include advice on visiting in light of the easing of rules for social gatherings. We expect this guidance to be published shortly.

## ■ Social Distancing: Visual Impairment

**Hilary Benn:**

**[61665]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what advice has been provided to blind and partially-sighted people about the operation of social distancing; and if he will make a statement.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government are committed to supporting blind and partially sighted people through every stage of the COVID-19 pandemic and are working across Government to ensure that all disabled people are able to get the support they need. The Government has set out in guidance to businesses that they should consider the

particular needs of those with protected characteristics, such as those who are visually impaired, at the following link:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb9703de90e07082fa57ce0/working-safely-during-covid-19-shops-branches-v2-140620.pdf>

If a blind and/or partially sighted person needs to go out for a walk or to access essential goods they can contact friends or family who may be able to help the person to be guided safely. If a person cannot organise alternative care they can contact their local authority or health care provider. The Government has published advice regarding social distancing for blind and/or partially sighted individuals who need to go out for a walk or to access essential goods. The regulations allow for a person from another household to guide them (under the 'provide care or assistance to a vulnerable person' provision). This guidance can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-unpaid-care/guidance-for-those-who-provide-unpaid-care-to-friends-or-family>

## ■ Social Services

**Abena Oppong-Asare:**

**[62690]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if she will restore as soon as it is safe to do so the Care Act 2004 duties on local authorities to ensure that the care of elderly, vulnerable and/or disabled people is not diminished.

**Helen Whately:**

Public safety throughout this period is the Government's top priority and this includes keeping those who need care and support safe. The changes to the Care Act 2014 duties on local authorities will be kept under review and the Secretary of State will suspend them based on expert clinical and social care advice, in accordance with the Coronavirus Act 2020.

## ■ Social Services: Housing

**Giles Watling:**

**[63503]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with representatives from the care sector on increasing the level of private sector investment in the housing with care sector.

**Helen Whately:**

Housing-with-care has a vital role in enabling older people to live independently, with the necessary care and support available if required. In the context of an ageing population, we will continue to work with the sector to improve the diversity of housing options available to older people.

## ■ Social Services: Minimum Wage

**Tracey Crouch:**

[\[64135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a social care minimum wage.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government does not set the levels of pay for care workers; however, we are committed to raising the profile of the social care sector. Putting social care on a sustainable footing, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, is one of the biggest challenges that we face as a society. There are complex questions to address, which is why we have invited cross-party talks. These will take place at the earliest opportunity in light of the current circumstances. The Government will then bring forward a plan for social care for the longer term.

## ■ Social Services: Reform

**Helen Hayes:**

[\[64976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) plans and (b) support he is putting in place to reform the social care sector and help it recover from the covid-19 outbreak.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 30 June 2020]:* The Government's priority for adult social care during the pandemic is for everyone who relies on care to get the care they need. We are doing all we can to protect carers and people receiving care from the still present risk of infection.

We know that this does not reduce the need for a long-term action plan for social care. Putting social care on a sustainable footing, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, is one of the biggest challenges that we face as a society.

There are complex questions to address in considering the future of social care, which is why we have invited cross-party talks. These will take place at the earliest opportunity in light of the current circumstances. The Government will then bring forward a plan for social care for the longer term.

Our support to the sector includes £3.2 billion made available to local authorities so they can address pressures on local services caused by the pandemic, including in adult social care. On 15 May we published details of an additional £600 million Infection Control Fund for Adult Social Care. This funding is to support adult social care providers in England reduce the rate of transmission in and between care homes and to support workforce resilience.

## ■ Tobacco: Sales

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

[\[59661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will enable the sale of menthol cigarettes after the end of the transition period.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 introduced a ban on flavoured cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco. As the ban is part of United Kingdom legislation, it will remain in place when the UK exits the transition period with the European Union. Removing menthol cigarettes is an important milestone to help people quit smoking and improve their health and support the Government's drive towards a smoke-free society by 2030.

■ **Vaccination****Chris Green:**[\[52081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the opportunities to provide other adult vaccinations alongside the flu programme to maximise every contact with a patient and decrease pressure on the NHS by avoiding multiple visits by vulnerable people.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Department is working with colleagues at NHS England and NHS Improvement, and Public Health England on the delivery of the 2020/21 seasonal flu vaccination programme. The operational plans for flu include consideration of the requirements of vulnerable people, the workforce and providers, with respect to current social distancing measures, and the potential impact on other vaccination programmes. We continually assess opportunities to improve access to all vaccinations. This includes whether other adult vaccination can be delivered alongside flu vaccination where possible.

■ **Vaccination: Children****Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[58651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to resume the childhood vaccination programme during the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of including chickenpox vaccination in that programme.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England and NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with regional commissioners to ensure routine childhood immunisations continue to be delivered throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, ensuring those eligible are protected against a range of vaccine-preventable diseases. Programmes delivered through schools are currently on hold and will be rescheduled as schools open.

The Government's Coronavirus Action Plan requested that everyone should ensure that they and their family's vaccinations are up-to-date, as this will help to reduce any pressure on the National Health Service from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Guidance can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan/coronavirus-action-plan-a-guide-to-what-you-can-expect-across-the-uk>

In 2010, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation found that offering a universal varicella vaccination programme against chickenpox would not be cost effective and may increase the risk of severe disease and complications in adulthood, both from chickenpox and shingles.

## ■ **Vaccination: Procurement**

**Alex Norris:** [\[59578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many suppliers there are for each vaccine on the routine immunisation schedule.

**Alex Norris:** [\[59579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the need for multiple suppliers of routine vaccinations.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 18 June 2020]:* Each of the routine vaccines in the United Kingdom vaccine schedule has one supplier, with the exception of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine, which has two suppliers.

Where there is more than one possible supplier of a vaccine for a programme, and the vaccines are clinically equivalent and interchangeable in the schedule, a decision to source the vaccine from either single or multiple suppliers is based on the risk of an interruption to supply and the resulting impact to the programme. This includes an assessment of the manufacturing and supply chain risks and how effectively the supplier has mitigated those risks. In addition, where shelf life allows, Public Health England holds stockpiles to protect the National Health Service programmes from interruptions in supply.

## ■ **Visual Impairment: Social Distancing**

**Theresa Villiers:** [\[62336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the exceptions to social distancing rules are for people with visual impairments who depend on assistance from others.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 25 June 2020]:* The Government is committed to supporting blind and partially sighted people through every stage of the COVID-19 pandemic and are working across Government to ensure that all disabled people are able to get the support they need.

If a blind and/or partially sighted person needs to go out for a walk or to access essential goods they can contact friends or family who may be able to help the person to be guided safely. If a person cannot organise alternative care they can contact their local authority or health care provider. The Government has published advice regarding social distancing for blind and/or partially sighted individuals who need to go out for a walk or to access essential goods. The regulations allow for a

person from another household to guide them (under the 'provide care or assistance to a vulnerable person' provision). This guidance can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-unpaid-care/guidance-for-those-who-provide-unpaid-care-to-friends-or-family>

On 23 June, the Prime Minister announced changes to the Regulations which come into effect on 4 July. Included in these changes is that two households of any size can now meet inside and outdoors. This change in the Regulations enables more opportunity for assistance through contact with family members for those with visual impairments.

## HOME OFFICE

### ■ Agriculture: Seasonal Workers

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[39484]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support her Department has provided to UK Border Force to ensure that seasonal agricultural workers arriving in the UK do not display symptoms of covid-19.

**Kevin Foster:**

Effective from 8 June, rules are in place for entering the UK because of COVID-19. The rules are for residents and visitors. Passengers will need to provide journey and contact details when travelling to the UK and will not be allowed to leave the place they are staying for the first 14 days except in very limited situations (known as self-isolation).

Seasonal agricultural workers in the edible horticulture food chain are included on the short list of exemptions from these measures, but will need to provide details of the farm where they will be staying and remain there for 14 days.

Should symptomatic passengers be encountered at the Primary Control Point (PCP) they will be referred to medical professionals for assessment and treatment as necessary.

All operational staff have the relevant Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available to them, along with detailed guidance on how to safely deal with individuals who display coronavirus symptoms.

### ■ Asylum: LGBT People

**Sir Edward Davey:**

[62268]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to asylum claims, which countries her Department has assessed as persecuting LGBTQ+ people.

**Chris Philp:**

Our assessment of the situation for LGBTQ+ people in different countries is set out in the relevant country policy and information notes, which are available on the Gov.uk website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/country-policy-and-information-notes>

**China and India: Coronavirus****Sammy Wilson:**[\[62366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she has taken to help ensure that UK visa offices in (a) China and (b) India process visa applications for students planning to study at UK universities in the academic year 2020-21; what estimate his Department has made of the number of days those offices have been closed since 28 March 2020; and what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Education on ensuring that overseas student applications for the academic year 2020-21 are not disrupted by closure of those offices during the covid-19 outbreak; and if she will have discussions with the Home Secretary on prioritising visa applications of overseas students with travel, reception and quarantine arrangements in place.

**Kevin Foster:**

Visa applications are processed by UK Visas & Immigration in the Home Office. All visa applications for students planning to study in the UK are processed by the student immigration case working team based in the UK, this includes those submitted overseas and in the UK. Immigration case-working operations have been impacted by COVID-19, with most locations going into lockdown at the end of March although we have continued to make decisions where we have been able to.

Students, like other visa applicants, are required to attend a visa application centre (VAC) to provide documents and enrol their biometrics. VACs in China and India have been closed since January and March respectively, but as restrictions continue to be lifted by host governments, overseas VACs are reopening, enabling students to apply for the required visa to study in the UK. Our Visa Application Centres in China began to open on 2nd June 2020 and all centres currently have available appointments. Our Visa Application Centres in India will reopen from 6 July.

As centres reopen, details of these will be published on our commercial partner websites. Unless exemptions apply, all travellers to the UK are required to comply with the border health measures. UKVI operations and the Education sector are working closely to ensure that student applications are not impacted by earlier closures as a result of Covid-19.

**Domestic Abuse: Coronavirus****Dr Luke Evans:**[\[42198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Office, what steps her Department is taking to protect individuals from abusive partners during the covid-19 lockdown.

**Victoria Atkins:**

We are working closely with domestic abuse charities, the Domestic Abuse Commissioner and police to monitor the impact of covid-19 on incidents of domestic abuse.

The Government has posted advice regarding national helplines on gov.uk to guide victims to the most appropriate support for their individual needs. This has been extensively promoted through our awareness raising campaign #YouAreNotAlone.

The Home Office has provided £2m of funding including to help bolster such helplines at this time; £1.2m of this has been allocated. This is in addition to the £750 million funding package announced by the Chancellor, £76 million of which will support survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence and modern slavery as well as ensure that vulnerable children and young people continue to get the help they need. From this funding the HO launched a £2m fund for national and regionally based domestic abuse organisations, bids to which are currently being assessed.

**Alex Sobel:**[\[43158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure the provision of a victim focused approach in relation to domestic abuse during the covid-19 lockdown.

**Victoria Atkins:**

We are acutely aware of the need to put victims at the heart of our approach to tackling domestic abuse at this time. We are working closely with the domestic abuse sector to monitor and assess impacts and needs.

The Government has posted advice regarding national helpline on gov.uk to guide victims to the most appropriate support for their individual needs. This has been extensively promoted through our awareness raising campaign #YouAreNotAlone.

The Home Office has provided £2m of funding including to help bolster such helplines at this time; £1.2m of this has been allocated. This is in addition to the £750 million funding package announced by the Chancellor, £76 million of which will support survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence and modern slavery as well as ensure that vulnerable children and young people continue to get the help they need. From this funding the HO launched a £2m fund for national and regionally based domestic abuse organisations, bids to which are currently being assessed.

**Health Services: Immigrants****Sir Edward Davey:**[\[62257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many foreign nationals working in the NHS paid the NHS surcharge in each month of 2020.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office has no published data to answer this question.

## ■ Home Office: Public Inquiries

**Lee Anderson:**

[\[62613\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the (a) statutory and (b) non-statutory public inquiries being undertaken by her Department.

**James Brokenshire:**

The Home Office currently sponsors five statutory inquiries, established or converted under the Inquiries Act 2005, and one non-statutory inquiry:

a) Statutory inquiries:

- Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse
- Undercover Policing Inquiry
- Manchester Arena Inquiry
- Brook House Inquiry
- Jermaine Baker Inquiry

b) Non-statutory inquiry:

- Daniel Morgan Independent Panel

## ■ Home Office: Revenue and Customs

**Stuart C McDonald:**

[\[66075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what Partnership Agreements are in operation between HMRC and her Department; and plans she has to revise those plans in response to the UK leaving the EU.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office and HMRC have a long-established relationship underpinned by a single Partnership Agreement. The Partnership Agreement sets out the framework under which HMRC and the Home Office work together to ensure the effective enforcement of customs controls at the border. The Partnership Agreement is undergoing a review to ensure governance of the relationship remains rigorous, robust and effective into the future.

## ■ Immigrants: Health Services

**Justin Madders:**

[\[66086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) NHS and (b) social care workers who are foreign nationals have (i) paid and (ii) been refunded the NHS surcharge since 21 May 2020.

**Kevin Foster:**

This information is not readily available nor held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost due to the fact the IHS is payable across multiple application routes.

**■ Immigrants: Health Services and Social Services:****Justin Madders:** [\[66087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many NHS and social care workers paid the Immigration Health Surcharge in each month of 2020.

**Kevin Foster:**

This information is not readily available nor held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost due to the fact the IHS is payable across multiple application routes.

**■ Immigration****Dr Dan Poulter:** [\[62385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of granting indefinite leave to remain to (a) overseas nationals working as health and social care staff and (b) their spouses and dependents.

**Kevin Foster:**

NHS workers from overseas have made a huge contribution in tackling the current pandemic. We are extending the leave of key NHS frontline health workers and their dependants by one year, free of immigration fees and health surcharge, if it was due to expire before October 2020. This offer has also been extended to cover those working in key healthcare roles in the independent health and care sector. However, indefinite leave to remain is based on several requirements, including a period of lawful residence in the UK without excess absences, sufficient knowledge of the English language and life in the UK, and any specific requirements of the visa route they are in.

Families and dependants of all health workers who sadly pass away due to contracting the COVID-19 virus will be offered immediate indefinite leave to remain, without a requirement to pay a fee. We hope the number of people who find themselves in this position is very small. Our thoughts go out to the families and friends of all medical professionals who have passed away while working to keep us safe.

**■ Immigration: Applications****Caroline Lucas:** [\[62384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the statistics relating to covid-19 and the immigration system, May 2020, published 28 May 2020, what steps her Department is taking to tackle the delays in decisions on immigration applications that have resulted from the covid-19 outbreak, and what the average timeframe is for an immigration decision on (a) a visa application, (b) an application to the EU Settlement Scheme and (c) an asylum application.

**Kevin Foster:**

Immigrations case-working operations have been impacted by COVID-19 and we have continued to make decisions where we have been able to. The re-opening of case-working offices has commenced and all teams are committed to decide applications as quickly as possible. Information on processing times for visa applications is published as part of the Migration Transparency data, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data>.

Due to the digital nature of the EU Settlement Scheme, it has remained open throughout the pandemic for customers able to apply on line using the EU Exit: ID Document Check app.

The current expected processing times are between 5 working days and a month but in some instances may take longer depending on the circumstances of the case and if we need to request further information from an applicant. The extent and length of time taken to complete these enquiries varies according to the prevailing circumstances of each particular application. The expected processing times are based upon current performance and can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-application-processing-times/eu-settlement-scheme-pilot-current-expected-processing-times-for-applications>

Additional support is available to those EU citizens in the UK who do not have the appropriate access, skills or confidence to apply online through Assisted Digital, which can offer assistance over the phone.

The Home Office takes the wellbeing of asylum seekers extremely seriously and has already put in place a range of measures to support asylum applicants affected by the covid-19 outbreak. In line with the Home Office' commitment to protect the health and wellbeing of its staff and applicants as a top priority, Asylum Operations made the decision to cease face to face substantive asylum interviews with effect from Thursday 19th March 2020. Asylum Operations has continued to make decisions where there is enough information on file to allow a decision to be made.

The Home Office remains committed to delivering a fair and humane asylum system and minimising delays to decision making; our ability to interview applicants is critical that that. To keep people safe but allow the Home Office to gather relevant information needed to make a decision on their claim for protection, Asylum Operations have secured additional mobile digital and video interviewing kit that enables more applicants to be interviewed remotely. Substantive asylum interviews will restart as soon we can establish a process that allows the participants - applicants, representatives, interpreters and interviewers - to do so safely.

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

on a case by case basis, based on their individual merits, against a background of relevant case law and up to date country information.

### ■ Immigration: Coronavirus

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[62383]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support her Department is providing to people outside of the UK who are unable to (a) provide their biometric information or (b) take an approved English language test for their immigration applications due to the closure of (i) UK Visa Application Centres and (ii) test centres during the covid-19 pandemic.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office has already implemented a number of measures for visa applicants, including for those who are unable to take an English language tests due to the impact of Covid-19. Details of all published concessions are available at - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents>.

Some specific concessions are in place on English language testing, for example for those applying to enter the UK or remain on the basis of family or private life you can apply for an exemption if the test centre was closed or you couldn't travel to it due to Covid-19. For students, Higher Education Providers (HEP) can self-assess the English ability of those studying at degree level or above and due to Covid-19, this provision has been temporarily extended to allow HEPs to self-assess the English ability of students undertaking pre-sessional courses.

Secure English Language Testing (SELT) centres have started to reopen in England and in a number of overseas locations outside of the UK, where local restrictions have eased.

In order to submit their biometric data, visa customers are required to attend a visa application centre (VAC). The decision to reopen each VAC location is taken in conjunction with our outsourced operators (commercial partners) and is subject to the easing of restrictions in each location. A number of centres have already reopened and details of which centres are open or will be opening are published on the relevant commercial partner websites. UKVI and its partners are ensuring that regular communications are issued to keep customers informed of re-opening dates and appointment availability

### ■ Immigration: EU Nationals

**Hilary Benn:**

**[65940]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to issue reminders to EU citizens who have been granted pre-settled status of the when they should apply to convert to settled status; and if she will make a statement.

**Kevin Foster:**

UK Visas & Immigration are committed to sending out reminders to those people whose pre-settled status is due to expire and who have not yet applied for settled status. This is set out in paragraph 1.18 of the Statement of Intent published in June 2018

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/718237/EU\\_Settlement\\_Scheme\\_SOI\\_June\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718237/EU_Settlement_Scheme_SOI_June_2018.pdf)

As pre-settled status is valid for 5 years from the date of issue, the earliest any reminders will be sent out will be 2023.

**■ Marriage: Coronavirus****Darren Henry:**[\[66231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when registry office wedding ceremonies will resume as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Government announced on 23 June that small weddings, with up to 30 people in attendance, could resume in England from 4 July. The Welsh Government permitted weddings to resume in Wales from 22 June.

It will be for individual local authorities to ensure that their register offices can undertake ceremonies safely in accordance with public health guidelines.

**■ Police: Schools****Afzal Khan:**[\[62598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of schools-based police officers in reducing crime.

**Afzal Khan:**[\[62600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has assessed the effect of deployment of schools-based police officers on each of the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office has reviewed the existing evidence on schools-based police officers. In particular, the findings of a 2012 systematic review (Petrosino et al., 2012) were noted, which assessed studies from the UK, the US and Canada. This concluded that while the evidence base for the effectiveness of policing in schools is promising, it is not yet developed enough to conclude whether policing schools has an effect on crime in schools. What evidence does exist has recently been reviewed by Prof Ben Bradford of UCL and this can be found on the PSHE Association website here: [https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/sites/default/files/u26918/Police%20in%20schools%20Evidence%20Review\\_0.pdf](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/sites/default/files/u26918/Police%20in%20schools%20Evidence%20Review_0.pdf) The Home Office has not undertaken an assessment of the effect of

deployment of schools-based police officers on each of the characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010

**Afzal Khan:**

**[62599]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance her Department provides on schools-based police officers (a) wearing uniform, (b) carrying tasers and (c) carrying batons.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Government does not issue specific guidance on the use of police equipment and uniforms in schools. This is an operational matter for Chief officers to determine. Officers must pass a comprehensive training programme before they can carry tasers.

## ■ Prostitution: Coronavirus

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

**[44004]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to protect sex workers during the covid-19 outbreak; what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of decriminalising sex work and introducing a moratorium on raids, arrests and prosecutions during that outbreak; and what discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on (a) financial, (b) welfare, (c) housing and (d) healthcare support for sex workers.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Throughout the Covid-19 outbreak, the Government's priority is to protect those selling sex from harm and exploitation and target those who exploit vulnerable people involved in sex work and prostitution. We continue to work closely with the police and Crown Prosecution Service to ensure current legislation achieves these aims.

We have no plans to introduce a moratorium. Local areas and police forces are best placed to identify and respond to issues related to sex work. They are supported in this by National Police Chiefs Council guidance which rightly prioritises the safety of sex workers over enforcement action.

Though the Government is aware of different legislative approaches to sex work and prostitution, we have not seen unequivocal evidence that decriminalisation is the best way to reduce harm and exploitation.

We understand that those who are vulnerable and involved in selling sex can face a number of challenges that affect their ability to access services particularly during the Covid-19 outbreak. The Government has published guidance on accessing services such as those for health, sexual violence, modern slavery and domestic abuse. Existing specialist support services continue to be available to those seeking help. We are also providing £76m to charities and organisations throughout the country to support victims of modern slavery, sexual violence and domestic abuse. Of this, the Ministry of Justice is providing £10m to support sexual violence services through

Covid 19 pressures. A further £3m per annum until 2022 will also be invested in the recruitment of more Independent Sexual Violence Advisors across the country.

We have also taken swift action to ensure we continue to deliver essential services and support for victims of modern slavery enabled sexual exploitation during the Covid-19 pandemic. We will provide £1.73 million of funding for charities, announced by the Chancellor last month, to provide emergency support to victims of modern slavery. We also announced on 6 April 2020 that all individuals in accommodation support provided by the Victim Care Contract will not be required to move on for the next three months.

In terms of financial and welfare support, the Government is providing support to those who are self-employed and have lost income due to Covid-19. Those affected may be eligible to claim a grant through the Covid-19 Self-employment Income Support Scheme. The Government is committed to providing a safety net for the most vulnerable in society and recognises that access to regular financial support is vital. We have made changes to ensure people who need financial help have access to the benefit system. We have temporarily relaxed the application of the Minimum Income Floor for all self-employed Universal Credit claimants affected by the impact of Covid-19, for the duration of the outbreak.

The Government has put in place measures to support those experiencing homelessness during Covid-19. The Secretary of State for Housing announced a total of £3.2 billion of additional funding for Local Government to help them respond to Covid-19 pressures across services they deliver. This includes increasing support for services such as housing to help the most vulnerable.

Healthcare services remain open including general practice, drug and alcohol, and sexual health services. Whilst they have reduced face to face appointments, some services are able to see urgent, priority or vulnerable clients (including sex workers) seeking support where necessary.

## ■ Road Traffic Control: Police

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

[R] [[65938](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the report by the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety entitled Roads policing and its contribution to road safety, published on 4 June 2020, if she will make roads policing a strategic policing requirement.

**Kit Malthouse:**

There is a high threshold for inclusion of national threats in the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) which is subject to periodic review. Before the Secretary of State can make any changes, legislation requires her to seek advice from key policing stakeholders. The department remains committed to reviewing the SPR this year and subject to sufficient recovery from the COVID-19 response and consequent capacity in policing, the review of the SPR is scheduled to commence in the Autumn.

## ■ Sexual Offences: Victim Support Schemes

**Sarah Champion:** [\[59778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what metrics her Department uses to assess the effectiveness of its spending on prostitution/sexual exploitation specialist support services.

**Sarah Champion:** [\[59779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of the £750 million of funding for charities at risk of financial hardship which provide key frontline services to vulnerable people affected by the covid-19 outbreak has been allocated to prostitution/sexual exploitation specialist support services.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Government and the Police remain rightly focussed on combatting the harms and exploitation associated with prostitution and helping those that wish to leave sex work. During the current unprecedented circumstances, we have also provided £750m to a range of charities. This will support those organisations at risk of financial hardship that are providing key frontline services to vulnerable people affected by the pandemic. We understand that those involved in prostitution can be vulnerable to exploitation. That is why £76m of this funding will be allocated to charities and organisations throughout the country to support the vulnerable in our society during the pandemic, including for victims of modern slavery, sexual violence and domestic abuse. Of this, the Ministry of Justice is providing £10m to support sexual violence services through Covid 19 pressures. A further £3m per annum until 2022 will also be invested in the recruitment of more Independent Sexual Violence Advisors across the country. The Home Office will distribute £7.8 million in emergency support for charities helping vulnerable children who have been impacted by the coronavirus outbreak (including those supporting children who may be at risk of sexual abuse). Wider funding from the £750m will be provided by the National Lottery Community Fund, which is currently open for applications.

Previously, we have provided funding for women's charities to help women exit prostitution through the tampon tax and from dedicated funding of £100 million for specialist Violence Against Women and Girls services.

## ■ Travel: Coronavirus

**Rachel Hopkins:** [\[63566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to verify that people travelling to the UK comply with quarantine measures by staying at a specified address.

**Kevin Foster:**

Unless they fall into an exempt category, anyone travelling to the UK should complete a Passenger Locator Form that specifies where they will be self-isolating. Border Force officers carry out spot checks at the border to ensure this form is completed

Public Health England undertake assurance calls against those not exempt from quarantine arrangements. In cases of concern or where they haven't been able to reach a passenger, the details are passed to Border Force, who undertake further scrutiny of the data before passing the details to the police for enforcement action. The devolved administrations have their own individual arrangements for enforcement and access to the data captured by the Passenger Locator Form.

Anyone found failing to comply with the quarantine measures may be liable to a fixed penalty notice of £1000 in England.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[64124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of people asked to quarantine for 14 days on arrival to the UK have (a) not been contacted, (b) contacted once and (c) contacted more than once; if she will make it her policy for a text message to be sent to people at the end of the 14 day quarantine period to advise them that their quarantine period has ended; and if she will make a statement.

**Kevin Foster:**

New measures introduced on 8 June require all passengers arriving in the UK, who do not fall under a specified exemption, to self-isolate for 14 days to reduce cases of COVID-19 being brought in from abroad and to help prevent a devastating second wave of the disease.

An assurance service is contacting a random sample of non-exempted arrivals to ensure that people understand the restrictions, as well as how to recognise symptoms, and what to do if they are experiencing them. Calls will also include an assurance check as to whether individuals are complying with restrictions.

Public information messaging is in place at points of entry to reinforce this message.

These measures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are in line with the latest scientific evidence and remain effective and necessary

## ■ Travellers: Caravan Sites

**Laura Trott:**

[\[62648\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department will publish its response to the consultation on Strengthening police powers to tackle unauthorised encampments, which closed on 4 March 2020.

**Kit Malthouse:**

On 5 November 2019, the Government launched a consultation seeking views on measures to strengthen police powers to tackle unauthorised encampments. The consultation closed on the 5 March. We will announce the outcome of this consultation in due course.

**■ Uk Border Force****Stuart C McDonald:**[\[66074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 9 June 2020 to Question 54929 on UK Border Force: Recruitment, if she will publish the number of Border Force officers empowered to carry out customs tasks under section 3 of the Borders, Immigration and Citizenship Act 2009; and how many of those officers will be based in (a) Scotland and (b) the rest of the UK.

**Chris Philp:**

Border Force has a workforce model clearly setting out roles and skills coupled with a strategic workforce planning process enabling effective identification of resourcing needs, training requirements and the effective deployment of staff. Any requirement to increase activity in one area will be managed in this context.

**■ Youth Mobility Scheme****Caroline Lucas:**[\[62382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the UK's points-based immigration system: policy statement on 19 February 2020, if she will make it her Department's policy for EU citizens aged 18 to 30 to be eligible for the Tier 5 (Youth Mobility Scheme) visa.

**Kevin Foster:**

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

**HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT****■ 5G****Damian Green:**[\[64043\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when his Department plans to bring forward legislation to reform permitted development rights to support the (a) deployment of 5G and (b) expansion of mobile coverage.

**Christopher Pincher:**

In August 2019, a joint consultation by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport was launched to consider amending permitted development rights to support increased mobile coverage and 5G deployment.

The consultation closed on 04 November 2019. The Government is considering the replies and will issue a response in due course. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, if the proposals are taken forward, we anticipate undertaking a further consultation on the detail of those proposals.

**Daisy Cooper:**

[64357]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when his Department plans to publish its response to the consultation on the proposed reforms to permitted development rights to support the deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage.

**Christopher Pincher:**

In August 2019, a joint consultation by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport was launched to consider amending permitted development rights to support increased mobile coverage and 5G deployment.

The consultation closed on 04 November 2019. The Government is considering the replies and will issue a response in due course. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, if the proposals are taken forward, we anticipate undertaking a further consultation on the detail of those proposals.

## ■ Help to Buy Scheme: Coronavirus

**Peter Gibson:**

[64356]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he has taken to extend the Help to Buy scheme to mitigate for delays in construction because of 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 United Kingdom 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. We continue to monitor the situation.

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/>.

## ■ Housing: Construction

**Damian Green:**

[64042]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to relax housing delivery targets for local authorities in 2020-21 in response to the covid19 outbreak, and if he will make a statement.

**Christopher Pincher:**

We note the concerns you raise regarding Housing Delivery Test under current circumstances. It is important to keep the planning system moving as much as we can, so that it is able to play its full part in the economic recovery to come, but we will continue to monitor the situation.

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Coronavirus****Geraint Davies:**[\[64061\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has made an assessment of the implications for his policies of the report of the all-party group on air pollution entitled, Air Quality Strategy to Reduce Coronavirus Infection, published on 29 May 2020.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government welcomes the all-party group's report and has noted its recommendations with interest. Improving air quality is a top priority for the Government and, especially during these unprecedented times, we will continue to take robust and comprehensive action to improve air quality in the United Kingdom and minimise public health effects. Defra recently launched a rapid Call for Evidence to understand more fully the effect that coronavirus is having on air pollution emissions, concentrations and exposure, and Defra's Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG) are currently analysing the responses.

**Mortgages****Gareth Thomas:**[\[64062\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when he plans to hold a roundtable meeting with mortgage lenders to discuss mortgage valuations on properties under 18m; and if he will make a statement.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The Minister for Fire and Building Safety held a roundtable with mortgage lenders on Thursday 25 June, where they were pressed to consider a more proportionate approach to mortgage valuations on properties under 18 metres. The lenders present confirmed that they had, or were, reviewing their policies and guidance to valuers.

**Planning Permission****Steve Reed:**[\[66065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the 2012 Guidance on Planning Propriety Issues is the current guidance for Ministers on how to interact with planning applications.

**Christopher Pincher:**

Yes, the 2012 Guidance on Planning Propriety Issues is the current guidance for Ministers on how to interact with planning applications. The Secretary of State has

asked his Department to review the extant Planning Propriety Guidance to see how there can be clearer, practical guidance to Ministers and civil servants.

## ■ Planning: Reform

**Tracey Crouch:**

[64882]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the compatibility of proposed planning reforms with measures contained in the Environment Bill.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The planning system has a vital role to play in enabling the delivery of housing and to support sustainable economic growth and renewal, and we want to see better planning for nature, in a way that's more efficient as well as effective. In March, the government signalled its intention to modernise our planning system, ensuring it supports the delivery of homes that local people need and creates more beautiful and greener communities. Since then, we have developed a number of planning regulation easements to support businesses to operate through Covid-19, such as enabling restaurants, cafes and pubs to offer a takeaway and delivery service and removing specific publicity requirements for planning applications. We have recently introduced a Bill to parliament with further measures to help businesses to resume and to support economic recovery, and will continue to work across government to investigate options for broader regulatory reform to support sustainable economic growth and renewal, and to protect and conserve our environment.

## ■ Property Development

**Tracey Crouch:**

[64142]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the effect of exempting developments granted planning permission through development orders on the effectiveness of the Government's policy that new developments should enhance biodiversity and create new green spaces.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The Government's response to biodiversity gain consultation published in <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/biodiversity-net-gain-updating-planning-requirements> made it clear that the new biodiversity gain regime – currently being legislated for in the Environment Bill - would not apply to permitted development rights which are granted under the General Permitted Development Order. The provisions do apply to development permitted by local development orders and neighbourhood development orders.

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT****■ Coronavirus: Children****Sarah Champion:**[\[64927\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to prioritise child protection in its response to the covid-19 pandemic.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK Government is committed to protecting vulnerable children and helping them to grow up free from violence through COVID-19 and beyond. DFID is working with international partners to ensure that child protection is prioritised and integrated into the multi-sectoral response to the pandemic. We have provided £20 million to UNICEF to support the continuity of essential social services for children, women and vulnerable populations, including child protection.

DFID is adapting its child protection programming to respond to COVID-19. For example, our support to the UN Global Programme to End Child Marriage is responding across 12 countries by strengthening national child helplines and the social welfare workforce and raising awareness on child marriage risks through radio stations. In Ethiopia we have provided an additional £5 million to UNICEF, which is supporting the provision of Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support services to affected children and families and capacity building for frontline health and education workers on child protection risks.

Keeping children safe while they are out of school is a priority for DFID. The UK is the largest donor to Education Cannot Wait and we recently agreed an additional £5 million of funding for the COVID-19 response that is supporting emergency education measures and information campaigns, and upgrading water and sanitation facilities in schools. As the largest donor to the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children our £5 million contribution to the Safe to Learn campaign is now focusing on keeping children safe in the out-of-school learning environment.

**Sarah Champion:**[\[64929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to integrate its policy on (a) mental health support, (b) psychosocial support and (c) child protection in its response to the effect of the covid-19 pandemic on children.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK Government is committed to supporting vulnerable populations during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, including children. We have committed £296 million to support the global health response and vulnerable countries, including £145 million to UN appeals. This includes £20 million to UNICEF to support essential social services for children, women and vulnerable populations, including child protection, and £5 million to Education Cannot Wait to support children in crisis settings while they are out of school including mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) interventions.

DFID's country programmes supporting vulnerable children have also adapted to Covid-19, including in Ethiopia where we have provided an additional £5 million to UNICEF to support the provision of MHPSS services to affected children and families.

DFID will be publishing a new Position Paper and Theory of Change on mental health to act as a global tool for Covid-19 responses. This has been developed in consultation with the mental health sector and provides practical advice for DFID and the sector as to how to support those with mental health and psychosocial disabilities.

**Sarah Champion:**

[\[64932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to (a) assess and tackle the increased risk of child labour as a result of the covid-19 pandemic and (b) ensure its covid-19 response prioritises the protection of children.

**James Cleverly:**

DFID is working as quickly as possible to assess and respond to the unprecedented challenges arising from COVID-19 and provide support to vulnerable populations most at risk, especially children.

We are working closely with delivery partners on the ground to adapt our programmes to support vulnerable communities impacted by COVID-19. We continue to push for coordinated action to tackle modern slavery and human trafficking at the international level to mitigate the primary and secondary impacts of the pandemic.

For example, through the £26 million Asia Regional Child Labour Programme, UNICEF is identifying and tracking vulnerable children in India and Pakistan and linking them to social protection systems. They are also supporting governments and local communities with psychosocial support services, hygiene activities and efforts to reduce stigma.

## ■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[64864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment she has made of the challenges associated with the equitable and efficient international supply and distribution of a vaccine for covid-19.

**Wendy Morton:**

On 27 June, the PM told Global Citizen's international summit that world leaders have a moral duty to ensure that vaccines, treatments and tests are truly available to all. We are working with international partners, including industry, to agree collaborative approaches to supporting vaccine development, manufacturing scale-up and future distribution to meet both domestic and international needs.

The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), to which we have provided £250 million this year, is committed to ensuring that appropriate vaccines are available to populations when and where they are needed, regardless of a

country's ability to pay. CEPI selects vaccines for its portfolio based on their potential for success, rapid development and scalability. CEPI negotiates global access requirements as part of its funding agreements.

Through the COVAX partnership, under the Access to Covid Tools (ACT)-Accelerator, CEPI, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the World Health Organization are working together to ensure that the vaccines are affordable and available equitably. As part of this, Gavi's Advance Market Commitment (AMC) will incentivise vaccine manufacturers to produce sufficient quantities of eventual COVID-19 vaccines and to ensure access for LMICs. The UK has contributed £48 million to the AMC.

### ■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Humanitarian Aid

**Sarah Champion:**

[\[64931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the covid-19 pandemic on her Department's humanitarian work in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**James Duddridge:**

In June 2020, the UN published revised estimates that 25.6 million people are now in need of humanitarian assistance in DRC, an increase from the previous estimate of 15.6 million. This increase is primarily due to the impact of COVID-19 on food security and the already fragile healthcare system. In addition, access challenges, disruption to supply chains, and increased insecurity will continue to exacerbate humanitarian needs.

The UK is continuing to respond at scale to meet urgent humanitarian needs and has adapted our programmes to reduce the risk of, and respond to, COVID-19 transmission.

### ■ Department for International Development: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

[\[66010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if the Government will consult the trade unions of the her Department's staff members at each stage of the merger of her Department with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

We have commenced discussions with our trade unions (PCS and FDA) and they will be consulted as we design and develop the new Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

[\[66011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if the Government will takes steps to ensure that no employees of her Department will be made redundant during the merger of her Department with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

There will be no compulsory redundancies for DFID employees as a result of the decision to create a new Department. Some roles may change due to business needs and any changes will be handled in compliance with relevant civil service policy and guidance or local labour law for staff appointed in country overseas.

**■ Forced Marriage: Children****Sarah Champion:**[\[64928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to progress its work on ending child marriage after the covid-19 pandemic.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK remains resolute in our commitment to end child marriage, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. The UK's Strategic Vision on Gender Equality is clear on this.

Through our flagship investments, DFID committed a total of £39 million over 5 years (2015-2020) to support international efforts to end child marriage, in 12 high prevalence countries across the world. Since 2015 the programme has reached over 7.7 million girls with schooling initiatives, skills training and girls' clubs to prevent and respond to child marriage.

This programme is now adapting to respond to COVID-19 by strengthening national child helplines and the social welfare workforce and raising awareness on child marriage risks.

DFID also tackles child marriage through a range of other programmes, including on women and girls' empowerment and girls' education. Making progress on ending child marriage will remain a key focus through and beyond COVID-19, including as part of our work to deliver the Prime Minister's commitment to champion 12 years of quality education for girls.

**■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office****Yasmin Qureshi:**[\[66009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that the new Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will be structured to effectively deliver on the UK's commitment under the UN Sustainable Development Goals to leave no one behind.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The UK remains committed to the Sustainable Development Goals – and to the underpinning pledge to Leave No One Behind as we strive to achieve them. The SDGs will play an important role in post-COVID-19 recovery, recognising the connection between healthy lives, healthy societies and a healthy environment. As the Prime Minister affirmed on 28 May, we owe it to future generations to build back better, basing our recovery on a fairer, greener and more resilient global economy, and to get our shared goals on track, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

**■ Humanitarian Aid: Children****Sarah Champion:****[64926]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to integrate its (a) development and (b) humanitarian initiatives to protect children from violence in its response to the covid-19 pandemic.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK Government is committed to protecting vulnerable children and helping them to grow up free from violence through COVID-19 and beyond. DFID is working with international partners to ensure that child protection is prioritised and integrated into the multi-sectoral response to the pandemic.

We have committed £296 million to support the global health response and vulnerable countries, including £145 million to UN appeals. This includes: £20 million to UNICEF to support the continuity of essential social services for children, women and vulnerable populations, including child protection; £20 million to UNHCR to ensure continuity of critical protection activities, including child protection, through community-based interventions, remote protection interventions and counselling using a variety of channels and; £5 million to Education Cannot Wait to support children in crisis settings while they are out of school.

DFID is also working with all our humanitarian partners to ensure that they mainstream child protection within their operations and use available guidance and tools, including the 2019 Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. DFID's existing development programmes – which often support crisis-affected communities - have also adapted to the pandemic, integrating urgent response measures to keep children safe. For example, our Children on the Move programme, which is improving the child protection system for children migrating in Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia, has now established hotline services for children affected by the pandemic and is training social workers in family tracing.

**■ Nigeria: Oil****Sir Edward Davey:****[64843]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what support her Department has allocated to the Ogoniland region of Nigeria for the clearing up of pollution resulting from oil extraction; and if she will make a statement.

**James Duddridge:**

The UK Government provided technical support to Nigerian institutions through DFID's Foster programme from 2016 to 2018 and through the Conflict, Security and Stability Fund. UK support included project management, community participation in clean-up operations, and to government bodies to fulfil their responsibilities as well as monitoring of the overall project. Support was also given for alternative businesses e.g. cassava processing. We have no plans to provide further support at this time due to prioritisation of Aid projects and because the UN Environment Programme and other donors remain engaged through monitoring and advice.

## ■ Overseas Aid: Standards

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[66171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the cumulative financial value was of the projects and programmes which have received red ratings by the Independent Commission for Aid Impact in each of the last five years.

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[66172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the cumulative financial value was of the projects and programmes which have received amber ratings by the Independent Commission for Aid Impact in each of the last five years.

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[66173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the cumulative financial value was of the projects and programmes which received amber/red ratings by the Independent Commission for Aid Impact in each of the last five years.

**Wendy Morton:**

ICAI's reviews cover thematic policy areas rather than individual projects and programmes. It is not possible to extract the cumulative financial value of projects and programmes covered by all reviews based on the methodology used.

## ■ Rohingya: Refugees

**Sarah Champion:** [\[64930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the covid-19 pandemic on her Department's support for the Rohingya refugees.

**Nigel Adams:**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the Rohingya refugee camps. From the start of the crisis, DFID has worked with partners to help mitigate the impact of the virus on the Rohingya refugees and host communities in Cox's Bazar. Our existing work has been adapted to respond to the crisis. UK funding has helped to establish isolation and treatment centres, such as a 60-bed facility, to treat severe and critical cases, as well as the delivery of home-based healthcare and monitoring. We are supporting WHO to coordinate the health response with the Government. Our funding is also distributing soap and building more handwashing structures; and producing and rolling out a range of communication tools to share vital information.

While we have prioritised budget and activities to focus on the immediate impact of COVID-19, we continue to deliver our routine support comprising providing food and nutrition, shelter, health, protection, water and sanitation, targeted support for women and girls, and the elderly. We also fund the education sector which – while learning centres are closed - is supporting caregivers for learning at home and preparing for the Myanmar curriculum pilot rollout.

Whilst every effort is being made to minimise transmission in the camps, the highly congested conditions and vulnerability of the population will pose major challenges when cases reach peak levels. We will continue to work closely with our implementing partners and the humanitarian community in Cox's Bazar to respond as best as possible.

We remain committed in our support of Rohingya refugees in both Bangladesh and Myanmar. The Development Secretary has recently undertaken a virtual visit to Bangladesh and had the opportunity to see the continued humanitarian needs of the Rohingya. She stressed the UK's continued commitment to helping Bangladesh and the refugees the country is hosting.

### ■ Yemen: Humanitarian Aid

**Gill Furniss:**

[R] [\[66153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking following UNICEF's call for urgent humanitarian support in Yemen.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK is extremely concerned by the devastating humanitarian crisis in Yemen and the rapid spread of COVID-19.

As part of our new £160 million commitment to Yemen this financial year (2020/21), we are continuing to support UNICEF to provide essential health services, treat malnutrition and provide clean water and sanitation. By the end of July 2020, we expect to have disbursed over £20 million of funding for UNICEF, including £10 million for their COVID-19 response.

We are also encouraging other donors to urgently provide funding to the UN humanitarian response ahead of Yemen's expected COVID-19 peak in late July.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[66170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the proposed reductions in Official Development Assistance expenditure on UK (a) humanitarian and (b) development assistance to Yemen.

**James Cleverly:**

Yemen remains a key priority for the UK Government.

I announced that the UK will commit £160 million of new aid for the current financial year (2020/21) at the 2020 Yemen Humanitarian Pledging Conference on 2 June. This was the third highest pledge at the conference and brings the total UK commitment to nearly £1 billion since the conflict began in 2015.

This funding will be provided through humanitarian and development agencies and will 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 1 million people with improved water supply and basic sanitation.

**JUSTICE****■ Magistrates' Courts****Dr Julian Lewis:****[65896]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate his Department has made of the rate of escalation of cases awaiting trial in magistrates courts; what the size of the backlog has been in each of the last three months; what recent assessment he has made of the likelihood of witnesses' testimonies being held to be reliable, if up to five years elapse between alleged offence and the accused facing trial; what the effect of such delay is likely to have on public confidence in the Justice system; and if he will take steps, on a temporary basis if necessary, to reduce that backlog.

**Chris Philp:**

The work to reduce the backlog is moving at pace so we can continue to increase the number of trials. More than 150 courts remained fully open to the public throughout the pandemic and by the middle of July all court centres will have reopened. We have prioritised the most urgent cases, such as domestic abuse and COVID-19 related cases, to keep the public safe, and the interests of victims and witnesses are continually considered as a part of the reopening of courts.

Data showing the number of outstanding cases in the Magistrates Court is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/hmcts-weekly-management-information-during-coronavirus-march-to-may-2020>

A courts recovery plan has been published which will sets out the urgent next steps that we are taking to increase capacity in the courts:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/court-and-tribunal-recovery-update-in-response-to-coronavirus>

**■ Prisoners' Release: Coronavirus****Ms Lyn Brown:****[61687]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 12 June 2020 to Question 54062, on Prisoners' Release: Coronavirus, how many and what proportion of prison-leavers released without an address to go to were from BAME backgrounds.

**Ms Lyn Brown:****[61689]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 12 June to Question 54062 on Prisoners' Release: Coronavirus, how many people within each of the categories in the table provided were released into (a) each of the regions of England and (b) Wales.

**Lucy Frazer:**

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

As a result of the pandemic, we have secured up to £8.5 million to support individuals at risk of homelessness on their release from prison for up to eight weeks and help to move on into permanent accommodation. This scheme was originally due to run until 26 June; however, we have recently undertaken our first review and, following this, have extended the scheme until 31 July.

Of the 7,814 offenders released between 23 March-30 April 2020, 5,892 (75%) were from white backgrounds, 1,521 (19%) were from BAME backgrounds and the ethnic background of 401 offenders (5%) is unknown.

Of the 7,814 offenders released, 1,014 were described as homeless (total of rough sleeping and 'other homeless' combined). Of these 1,014 offenders, 174 (17%) were from BAME backgrounds, 804 (79%) were from white backgrounds and the ethnic background of 36 (4%) homeless offenders is unknown.

Please note, 'other homeless' refers to individuals who identify as homeless but have not been identified as sleeping rough. In some cases, it is not recorded whether an individual that is identified as homeless is rough sleeping.

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

	OFFENDERS RELEASED FROM CUSTODY	ROUGH SLEEPING	OTHER HOMELESS***	UNKNOWN ACCOMMODATION CIRCUMSTANCE
<b>Young Adults*</b>	<b>1289</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>188</b>
London	276	4	11	42
Midlands	216	#	9	28
North East	230	#	7	40
North West	179	#	16	18
South East and Eastern	164	5	15	15
South West and South Central	135	5	6	16
Wales	89	#	4	29
<b>Other Males**</b>	<b>5933</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>933</b>
London	916	52	125	168
Midlands	1037	19	100	173

	OFFENDERS RELEASED FROM CUSTODY	ROUGH SLEEPING	OTHER HOMELESS***	UNKNOWN ACCOMMODATION CIRCUMSTANCE
North East	1080	22	111	179
North West	984	23	104	103
South East and Eastern	763	50	88	106
South West and South Central	716	26	76	80
Wales	437	6	38	124
<b>Other Females**</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>88</b>
London	81	5	14	20
Midlands	139	4	13	22
North East	119	4	13	13
North West	86	#	15	10
South East and Eastern	62	5	4	10
South West and South Central	68	4	#	7
Wales	37	#	#	6

# Denotes values less than 4, or secondary suppression (suppressed to avoid disclosure).

Regions correspond to National Probation Service division boundaries at the end of March but also include Community Rehabilitation Company managed offenders.

\*Young adults are offenders between 18 and 24

\*\* Other male and females are offenders 25 and over

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

Please note, offenders not managed by either the National Probation Service or a Community Rehabilitation Company (including those offenders subject to electronic monitoring) are not included in the dataset. Release on temporary licence (RoTL),

End of Custody Temporary Release (ECTR), releases where the offender is subject to same-day recall to custody, and release from unsupervised short sentences are also not included.

## ■ Trials: Coronavirus

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[64213]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans the Government has to tackle the backlog of trials as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Chris Philp:**

COVID-19 has been an unprecedented challenge for the criminal justice system, but we have kept courts open and cases flowing through the system throughout. The UK has been a global leader and we are ahead of comparable systems.

The most time-critical hearings have continued to take place in the Magistrates' Courts, including hearings where the defendant is in custody or there is a risk to the public, as well as dealing with applications to extend custody time limits. In Crown Courts, jury trials were restarted on the 18 May and I am pleased to say that we will have reopened all courts by mid-July.

HMCTS has now published a Court Recovery Plan, which sets out that court operating hours will be extended, alternative venues will be used as courts to increase capacity and the use of the Cloud Video Platform (CVP) will be rolled out into all Magistrates' and Crown Courts. Further measures to increase jury trial capacity are also being explored. The Court Recovery Plan can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/court-and-tribunal-recovery-update-in-response-to-coronavirus>

## SCOTLAND

### ■ Coronavirus: Scotland

**Simon Baynes:**

[65028]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on co-ordinating a UK wide response to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mr Alister Jack:**

I have regular discussions with all my Cabinet colleagues on the Covid-19 outbreak, including the co-ordination of a UK-wide response.

This Government continues to be absolutely committed to a UK-wide approach. We will continue to work together with the Scottish Government and other Devolved Administrations to ensure a coordinated approach across the UK, while respecting the devolution settlements.

**Wendy Chamberlain:**

[\[66204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many meetings of the Covid-19 Operations Committee he has attended.

**Mr Alister Jack:**

The Covid-19 Operations Committee was set up in June to deliver the policy and operational response to Covid-19. It is chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, attended by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and other Cabinet Ministers will be invited according to the agenda.

Given the operationally sensitive nature of the information discussed, it is not appropriate to disclose the additional information requested.

**Wendy Chamberlain:**

[\[66205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many meetings of the Economic Operations Committee he has attended since the start of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mr Alister Jack:**

The Economic and Business Ministerial Implementation Group was set up in March to consider the economic and business impact and response, including supply chain resilience. It was chaired by the Chancellor, with the Business Secretary as deputy chair, and attended by other Ministers and officials. Given the operationally sensitive nature of the information discussed, it is not appropriate to disclose the additional information requested.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Bicycles: Repairs and Maintenance

**Mr Toby Perkins:**

[\[64148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when people will be able to apply for Fix Your Bike vouchers.

**Mr Toby Perkins:**

[\[64149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of bicycle shops that will have the £2 million public liability insurance that is required for them to meet the eligibility criteria for the Fix Your Bike voucher scheme.

**Mr Toby Perkins:**

[\[64150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the number of bicycle repair shops who are SMEs that will be able to accept Fix Your Bike vouchers.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

On 23rd May the Secretary of State announced £25 million of funding to provide up to £50 to members of the public wanting to get their old cycles roadworthy again through the Fix Your Bike Voucher Scheme and to help increase the provision of

cycle fixing facilities across the country through the Big Bike Revival. We are aiming for applications for vouchers to open to members of the public as soon as possible.

With the help of representatives from the cycle industry, we have designed a scheme that is accessible to a wide range of types and sizes of businesses, including independent shops and SMEs, provided repairs are carried out by competent mechanics.

It is a requirement of the scheme that businesses have appropriate liability insurance to cover the repairs they carry out. This level of cover is an appropriate and standard form of insurance for the sector, and one which is easily accessible to businesses. We therefore expect that the great majority of bicycle repair businesses in England, SME's included, will be able to achieve this requirement and participate in the scheme

The scheme opened to registration for bicycle shops on the 22nd of June and we have so far received hundreds of applications from businesses of all sizes. A list of participating businesses is available on the scheme website:

[fixyourbikevoucherscheme.est.org.uk/](http://fixyourbikevoucherscheme.est.org.uk/).

#### ■ **Cycling and Walking: Bosworth**

**Dr Luke Evans:**

**[64363]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much and what proportion of the funding announced by the Government on 9 May 2020 for cycling and walking is planned to be allocated to Bosworth constituency.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

On the 29<sup>th</sup> May, indicative allocations to local authorities from the Emergency Active Travel Fund were published on gov.uk. Leicestershire County Council has been allocated £335,164 from tranche 1 of the Emergency Active Travel Fund and indicatively allocated £1,451,000 from tranche 2. The Department will invite bids from authorities for tranche 2 of the fund shortly. Before receiving any funding, authorities must submit satisfactory plans to the Department, and the amount each authority receives will depend on it satisfying the Department that it has ambitious plans in place to reallocate road space to cyclists and pedestrians.

#### ■ **Motorcycles: Driving Tests**

**Fleur Anderson:**

**[66221]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when motorcycle driving tests can resume as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency's priority throughout the COVID-19 pandemic has been the safety of its staff and the wider public. That remains its priority as it restarts its services.

From 4 July 2020, people will be able to take motorcycle and moped compulsory basic training, and motorcycle direct access scheme training.

Motorcycle and moped module 1 and module 2 tests will be available from 13 July 2020.

## ■ **Public Transport: Fares**

**Geraint Davies:**

**[64817]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect on household income of people using public rather than private transport.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

No such assessment has been made. While household income varies across the users of public and private transport, we are not aware of any reason why household income would be affected by people using public rather than private transport.

## ■ **Shared Spaces: Coronavirus**

**Royston Smith:**

**[64249]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve safety in shared spaces for (a) cyclists and (b) pedestrians while social distancing is required during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Local authorities are responsible for ensuring any changes to their road networks are safe and fit for purpose. The statutory guidance published on 9 May on reallocating road space set out the steps Government expects local authorities to take to provide more space to cycling and walking, and to enable social distancing, in response to Covid-19. It is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reallocating-road-space-in-response-to-covid-19-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities>

Alongside the guidance, the Department announced emergency active travel funding of £225M, to help local authorities make changes to their roads to enable more walking and cycling, and to enable social distancing.

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government has published guidance for local authorities with information and examples of measures that may be undertaken to adapt and manage public spaces in order to help social distancing. It is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safer-public-places-urban-centres-and-green-spaces-covid-19>

## ■ Transport: Schools

**Geraint Davies:**

[\[64049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to promote (a) walking buses and (b) cycling as means of transport to and from school.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The Department for Transport is making £225 million available to local authorities this financial year for urgent measures to make it easier for people to walk and cycle for all short journeys, including to school.

The Department has also provided significant amounts of funding to keep buses running to serve those who rely on them. On 3 April, the Government announced £397 million of support for bus services, and on 23 May the Secretary of State announced a further £254 million to help increase bus services across England as we begin to re-open our economy.

The Department for Education has produced guidance on implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings. This guidance sets out that schools should 'ensure parents and young people are aware of recommendations on transport to and from education or childcare settings' and encourage parents and children and young people 'to walk or cycle to their education setting where possible'.

A few months ago we announced that Bikeability training for schoolchildren would be expanded to cover all children nationwide.

## ■ Travel: Coronavirus

**Owen Thompson:**

[\[66122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether UK citizens travelling to countries rated (a) green and (b) amber under the Government's proposed traffic light travel system will face mandatory testing for covid-19 on (i) leaving and (ii) returning to the UK.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

UK citizens returning to the UK will not face mandatory testing for COVID-19. All passengers flying into the UK are provided with the latest public health advice at various stages in their journey and we expect them to follow the latest guidance, including around social distancing and the wearing of face coverings.

In relation to UK citizens leaving the UK, it is the responsibility for all countries to set their own entry and public health requirements. Each country will have its own approach depending on their individual circumstances.

These measures will be subject to regular review and we will continue to explore further measures at airports in line with the latest scientific evidence and data.

The Government expects other countries to follow best practice in relation to aviation guidance and Covid-19, such as our own UK guidance or ICAO and EASA guidance.

**TREASURY****■ Concert Halls and Theatres: VAT****Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**[\[66103\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to reduce VAT on ticketing for (a) music venues, (b) theatres and (c) other creative venues.

**Jesse Norman:**

Admissions to cultural venues are already exempt from VAT if they are provided by a local authority or an eligible body such as a charity, otherwise they attract the standard rate of VAT.

Extending this relief would carry a very significant cost to the Exchequer and must be viewed in the context of almost £50 billion of requests for relief from VAT since the EU referendum and in response to Covid-19. The Treasury keeps all taxes under review.

**■ Consumers: Protection****Drew Hendry:**[\[66106\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of enabling access to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme for Wirecard Card Solutions Limited customers utilising the institution for current account activities.

**John Glen:**

Wirecard Card Solutions Ltd is required to maintain appropriate measures to safeguard customers' money under the Electronic Money Regulations. It does this by holding customer funds separate from its own money in accounts with credit institutions. Effective safeguarding arrangements are critical to help ensure that customers' money is protected and returned if a firm fails. Adequate safeguarding arrangements which are compliant with the regulatory requirements are a condition of Wirecard's ongoing FCA authorisation.

**■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme****Ian Lavery:**[\[66063\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the median wage is of people in receipt of Government support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, by Parliamentary constituency.

**Jesse Norman:**

It is not possible to provide an answer in the time available.

## ■ Customs: Brexit

**Stuart C McDonald:**

[\[66076\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what contingency plans he has put in place for the potential eventuality that customs declarations software fails after the transition period has ended.

**Jesse Norman:**

HMRC continue to test their customs systems to ensure they will remain effective following the end of the Transition Period. In the unlikely event of an unplanned outage there are fallback procedures in place. In addition, there is a disaster recovery system for CHIEF, and the new Customs Declaration Service is protected by the cloud-based environment it is hosted on.

## ■ Customs: Electronic Government

**Stuart C McDonald:**

[\[66077\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for what reason he decided to develop a bespoke customs management software instead of using UNCTAD's ASYCUDA system.

**Jesse Norman:**

HMRC are not developing a bespoke Customs Management software. They have selected a commercial package called Declaration Management System (DMS) as part of the CDS programme. DMS has been deployed into HMRC's live environment and traders are already making transitions onto the new platform.

UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) offer the ASYCUDA system to developing countries as an alternative to DMS. There are about 90 countries with relatively small Customs functions (e.g. Albania, Palestine, and Samoa) using ASYCUDA worldwide. ASYCUDA is not used by any G7 or G20 countries.

ASYCUDA was considered alongside DMS as one of the options for CHIEF replacement. It was not selected as the preferred option because (a) it did not meet all of the Union Customs Code functional requirements and (b) there were no reference countries processing anything like (pre EU Exit) UK declaration volumes, and no guarantees that ASYCUDA could meet UK volumes. With an expected five-fold increase in declaration volumes resulting from our departure from the EU, ASYCUDA looked less well suited to UK requirements.

## ■ Developing Countries: Debts

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

[\[65898\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will takes steps to assist the 77 poorest countries to meet the (a) challenges and (b) effect of the covid-19 pandemic by (i) cancelling the bilateral debt payments already suspended for 2020 between those countries and the UK for 2020 and 2021, (ii) encouraging the (A) World Bank and (B) IMF to cancel such payments, (iii) discouraging other UK creditors not to initiate legal action against any of the 77 poorest countries that default on their 2020 and 2021 debt

payments and (iv) initiating an international arrangement for the restructuring of the debts owed by those countries to render their future payments economically sustainable.

**John Glen:**

The Chancellor joined his G20 counterparts to commit to a temporary suspension on debt service repayments from the 77 poorest countries under the debt service suspension initiative (DSSI). The DSSI extends to the end of the 2020, but the G20 will review the possibility for extension later this year, based on advice from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group (WBG).

At Budget, the Chancellor announced a leading contribution of up to £150m to the IMF's Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust, which will provide the world's poorest countries relief on IMF repayments. The WBG has made available significant amounts of new finance to help countries counter the effects of the pandemic, ensuring net positive financing flows to all DSSI eligible countries. For the poorest countries at high risk of debt distress, support from the World Bank's International Development Association is provided on grant terms and does not add to debt vulnerabilities.

The Chancellor and his G20 counterparts called upon commercial creditors to participate in the DSSI on comparable terms to the official sector on a voluntary basis. It will be important that developing countries do not see their access to international capital markets become too costly or restricted as mobilising private finance will be essential for crisis recovery and long-term sustainable development.

The DSSI provides time to assess what further assistance for may be needed for these countries on a case-by-case basis. If debts do require restructuring, the UK will work with the Paris Club of official creditors, IMF, and WBG to support equitable debt reductions to long-term sustainable growth.

■ **Government Departments: Development Aid**

**Chris Law:**

[\[66078\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what (a) impact and (b) risk assessments the Government has made of planned reduced ODA spend across Government departments.

**Steve Barclay:**

The UK has a legal commitment to spend 0.7% of its gross national income (GNI) each year on Official Development Assistance (ODA). Given the expected fall in GNI this year, commitments of aid spending are being reviewed across all departments.

HM Treasury allocates ODA budgets to departments and is responsible for decisions on changes to these. Departments are responsible for assessing and assuring the impact and value for money of their ODA programmes on an ongoing basis in line with Managing Public Money. HM Treasury take evidence-based spending decisions and ensure departments maintain high standards of programme delivery that are consistent with HMG best practice.

**PAYE****Kirsten Oswald:**[\[66082\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 17 June 2020 to Question 57401 on PAYE, how many limited companies that registered an annual PAYE scheme for the financial year 2018-19 made an RTI notification of payment to HMRC after 20 March 2019; and what assumption his Department made about the volume of such notifications in respect of the 2019-20 tax year when he set the rules for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

It is not possible to provide an answer in the time available.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, including the cut-off for RTI notifications, was designed in a way that mitigated the risk of fraud and could be delivered quickly in order to provide the support that employers and employees needed in April. Where individuals are not eligible to be furloughed the Government has put in place a significant package of temporary welfare measures including a £20 per week increase in the Universal Credit standard allowance and working tax credit basic element, and a nearly £1 billion increase in support for renters through increases to the Local Housing Allowance rates for Universal Credit and Housing Benefit Claimants.

**Kirsten Oswald:**[\[66083\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 17 June 2020 to Question 57401 on PAYE, how many employees who paid PAYE under an annual scheme in financial year 2018-19 were the subject of an RTI notification of payment to HMRC after 20 March 2019; and what assumption his Department made about the volume of such notifications in respect of 2019-20 tax year when he set the rules for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

It is not possible to provide an answer in the time available. PAYE schemes may apply to operate on an annual scheme basis and later relinquish their annual scheme status. The time period for which each PAYE scheme has operated on an annual basis is not readily available for analysis.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, including the cut-off for RTI notifications, was designed in a way that mitigated the risk of fraud and could be delivered quickly in order to provide the support that employers and employees needed in April. Where individuals are not eligible to be furloughed the Government has put in place a significant package of temporary welfare measures including a £20 per week increase in the Universal Credit standard allowance and working tax credit basic element, and a nearly £1 billion increase in support for renters through increases to the Local Housing Allowance rates for Universal Credit and Housing Benefit Claimants.

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[66084\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) employers and (b) employees have (i) registered and (ii) operated annual PAYE schemes in each tax year since the introduction of HMRC's Real Time Information system.

**Jesse Norman:**

It is not possible to provide an answer in the time available. PAYE schemes may apply to operate on an annual scheme basis and later relinquish their annual scheme status. The time period for which each PAYE scheme has operated on an annual basis is not readily available for analysis.

■ **Schools: Wales**

**Ben Lake:**

[\[66180\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much of the £1 billion schools rebuilding programme in England is new funding; and how much money the Welsh Government will receive in Barnett consequentials.

**Steve Barclay:**

The government is committing over £1bn to fund the first 50 projects of a new, ten-year school rebuilding programme, starting from 2020-21. These projects will be confirmed in the autumn, and construction on the first sites will begin from September 2021.

Funding for these measures, including Barnett consequentials, will be set out at the Comprehensive Spending Review later this year.

■ **Small Business Grants Fund: Insurance Companies**

**Ben Lake:**

[\[66177\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he will take to ensure that insurance companies do not deduct the £10,000 Coronavirus Small Business Grant from insurance payouts relating to holiday booking cancellations; and what discussions he has had with representatives of the Financial Conduct Authority on that matter.

**John Glen:**

Insurers must treat customers fairly and firms are required to do so under the Financial Conduct Authority's (FCA) rules. The FCA sets the conduct standard required of insurance firms in relation to their business which aim to ensure customers are treated in a fair manner. For example, the FCA's rules require insurers to handle claims fairly and promptly; provide reasonable guidance to help a policyholder make a claim, and appropriate information on its progress; not reject a claim unreasonably; and settle claims promptly once settlement terms are agreed.

The Government is aware of the issue that some insurance companies are deducting the Coronavirus Small Business Grant from insurance payouts, on the basis that this would be compensating businesses twice for the same loss. The government is

working closely with the FCA on this issue to understand whether this approach is consistent with their conduct rules.

The Government is also in continual dialogue with the insurance sector to understand its response to Covid 19.

## WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

### ■ Females: Coronavirus

**Karin Smyth:**

**[64958]**

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the UN Report The Impact of Covid 19 on Women; and what steps she is taking in response to that report's findings that the covid-19 outbreak has had a greater negative economic impact on women, has led to an increase in unpaid care work, and has led to a rise in gender-based violence.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

This Government is working tirelessly to support people impacted by COVID-19, including women.

The UN Report has highlighted some key issues that women are facing globally as a result of this pandemic. To respond to these challenges, we have taken unprecedented steps to support lives and livelihoods, including increasing the generosity of Universal Credit, introducing the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, and made changes to ensure people do not miss out on parental leave, childcare support or carer's allowance. We have also been clear that those with caring responsibilities (including childcare) can access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, which will continue until October. We have also engaged extensively with a wide variety of key stakeholders to inform our work in this area, including the Fawcett Society, Equally Ours, a network of UK equal opportunities organisations, the UK Civil Society Women's Alliance, and small women's organisations. The cultural shift in flexible working for all that we've seen in recent months can and must be part of how we build back better after the crisis.

Gendered violence of any kind is unacceptable, which is why we announced an extra £76 million to support the most vulnerable – including survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence. This is in addition to the £2 million made available by the Home Office to help bolster domestic abuse helplines and online services, to ensure that support continues to be available for victims. Despite lockdown regulations, we made clear that anyone at risk of domestic abuse could still leave their home and go somewhere they feel safe. The Home Office is running an awareness campaign - #YouAreNotAlone - to signpost victims to the support services available.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Access to Work Programme: Sign Language

**Lilian Greenwood:**

[\[66032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the accuracy of the current British Sign Language translation published in 2015 of the Access to Work factsheet for customers.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Access to Work have been working hard to ensure high standards of their British Sign Language (BSL) translations, including working with the British Deaf Association (BDA) to obtain feedback on their videos and BSL translations and to better understand what matters to BSL users.

Access to Work works with one professional translator when developing BSL products. Recognising the need to ensure the translator has enough time to understand the key messages and interpret them in a way that can be easily understood by BSL users, additional time is built into the contract. The additional times enables Access to Work to work closely with the translator to go through the draft scripts and ensure information is accurately translated and that key messages are interpreted in a way that makes sense for BSL users whilst ensuring accuracy.

Wherever possible, post-production testing is included as part of the assurance process, to ensure user comprehension. This has been more difficult during the COVID-19 outbreak, due to the pace of change and social distancing measures.

Please note that the Access to Work factsheet was not published in 2015 – it was first published on 1 October 2012 and has been amended 12 times in subsequent years.

**Lilian Greenwood:**

[\[66033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when her Department plans to update its British Sign Language translation of the Access to Work factsheet for customers.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Access to Work (ATW) is a demand-led, discretionary grant scheme administered by Jobcentre Plus (JCP). The scheme de-risks the recruitment and retention of disabled people for employers by contributing towards covering the costs of support above the level of reasonable adjustment for disabled people at work.

Since the Access to Work factsheet was published in October 2012, it has been amended 12 times in subsequent years. Access to Work recognises the importance of providing information in accessible formats and works with stakeholders to gain an understanding of the key issues. To ensure accessible information was made available during the coronavirus pandemic, British Sign Language (BSL) videos reflecting the new measures Access to Work introduced to support disabled people were developed. These videos can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLC0aQWFFHARyXcQd-0mz0IOTZOfl15L8H>

To provide accessible information Access to Work continues to work with stakeholders including UK Council on Deafness (UKCOD) to ensure key communications are translated into British Sign Language. Access to Work engages regularly with stakeholders to prioritise communications, and will be publishing advice on Access to Work “Reconsiderations” in the near future, with more communications to follow.

**Lilian Greenwood:**

**[66034]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what criteria her Department uses when deciding which Access to Work materials are translated into British Sign Language.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Access to Work (ATW) is a demand-led, discretionary grant scheme administered by Jobcentre Plus (JCP). The scheme de-risks the recruitment and retention of disabled people for employers by contributing towards covering the costs of support above the level of reasonable adjustment for disabled people at work.

Access to Work guidance is available in English and Welsh in html, word and PDF formats on the gov.uk website, and in addition information on DWP services is produced in accessible formats, including BSL videos.

When deciding which communications are translated into British Sign Language, Access to Work will consider the following:

- Direct feedback from Access to Work British Sign Language users,
- Stakeholder engagement with disability charities and organisations, including the UK Council on Deafness (UKCOD),
- Feedback from the Access to Work Stakeholder Forum, and
- Departmental communication priorities.

Using feedback from these groups and taking account of the wider Departmental communication priorities, Access to Work will identify communications that are causing the most concern and will be the most beneficial for British Sign Language users.

Disabled people who are British Sign Language users who have queries about Access to Work can contact Access to Work via the BSL video relay service (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) to discuss queries.

## ■ Child Maintenance Service: Coronavirus

**Karl Turner:**

**[66035]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Child Maintenance Service in enforcing payments for resident parents during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mims Davies:**

Paying parents are still expected to pay child maintenance throughout this period. We know the vast majority of parents take their responsibilities extremely seriously and will do whatever is needed to ensure their children are supported. Where payments have been missed we have asked parents to report the changes via the self-service portal.

In order to ensure that receiving parents do not lose out in the long run, we will update cases with notified changes as soon as possible. Where payments have been missed the Service will take action to re-establish compliance and collect any unpaid amounts that may have accrued.

No one will get away with giving false information. Those found to be abusing the system can be subjected to the full extent of our enforcement powers and the Child Maintenance Service will pursue these, where appropriate.

**■ Employment Schemes: Young People****Cat Smith:**[\[64238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans she has to use (a) a Future Jobs Fund or (b) a similar scheme to support young people unemployed as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mims Davies:**

*[Holding answer 29 June 2020]:* DWP is engaging cross-government to understand supply & demand across the labour market throughout and beyond the COVID-19 crisis. We are in discussions with other Government Departments and a range of stakeholders to explore all options. This is to ensure the right support is in place for individuals who have been adversely impacted by COVID-19 that will meet the needs of both the individuals, as well as local priorities. This engagement includes the Youth Employment Group, which includes Prince's Trust, Youth Employment UK, Institute for Employment Studies, Youth Futures Foundation and Impetus.

**■ Food Banks****Layla Moran:**[\[63477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when a Minister from her Department last visited a food bank on an official visit.

**Will Quince:**

Ministers engage closely with food bank providers and I meet regularly with the Trussell Trust. The Secretary of State and I held an independent foodbank provider roundtable meeting on 12 February.

Ministers in the Department also visit food banks on a regular basis. The most recent official visit was made by Baroness Stedman Scott on 30 January. The Department has been respecting Governmental guidelines around non-essential travel but is maintaining close contact with its stakeholders until normal visits and roundtables can be resumed. This includes those in the food bank sector.

**■ Health and Safety Executive: Finance****Lloyd Russell-Moyle:****[64286]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much funding has been allocated to the Health & Safety Executive for (a) delivering Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals after the transition period and (b) establishing a new building safety regulator following the Grenfell Tower disaster; and whether these funding allocations are in addition to the £14 million announced by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on 12 May 2020 for making workplaces safe during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mims Davies:**

The total funding allocated to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) for (a) delivering Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals after the transition period for 2020/21 is £3.46m. This funding is provided by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Allocations for future years will be decided as part of the Spending Review process for 2020.

HSE has not yet been allocated any funding in respect of (b) the new Building Safety Regulator. Costs to the organisation are currently being met by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). HSE and MHCLG are currently discussing future funding arrangements for this work.

The additional HSE funding of up to £14m is additional funding and is ring-fenced for dealing with additional work arising from the Covid-19 pandemic.

**■ Industrial Health and Safety: Coronavirus****Alyn Smith:****[49120]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many reports relating to covid-19 the Health and Safety Executive has received in each of the last three months.

**Mims Davies:**

*[Holding answer 2 June 2020]:* RIDDOR places duties on employers, the self-employed and people in control of work premises (the Responsible Person) to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and specified dangerous occurrences (near misses). Reports relate to incidents occurring within Great Britain.

Under RIDDOR, duty-holders are obliged to report cases of Covid-19 when:

- an unintended incident at work has led to someone's possible or actual exposure to Covid-19 (reportable as a 'biological agent' dangerous occurrence under Regulation 7, Schedule 2 – Section 10);
- a worker has been diagnosed as having Covid-19 and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by exposure at work (reportable as an 'exposure to a biological agent' case of disease under Regulation 9(b));
- a worker dies as a result of occupational exposure to Covid-19 and this is confirmed as the likely cause of death by a registered medical practitioner

(reportable as a 'death due to exposure to a biological agent' case of disease under Regulation 6(2)).

The attached Tables 1 and 2 provide numbers of all Covid-19 related reports i.e. reports of incidents under the RIDDORs (Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) which fall to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Local Authorities (LA) as enforcing authorities. Table 3 shows the number of Covid-19 workplace concerns reported to HSE.

**Attachments:**

1. HSE Tables [49120 HSE Attachment.docx]

■ **Jobcentres: Coronavirus**

**Neil Coyle:**

[\[66067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of Jobcentres will be open at their usual operating times from 6 July 2020 as the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased..

**Neil Coyle:**

[\[66068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of Jobcentres will be operating with a full complement of staff from 6 July 2020 as the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

**Mims Davies:**

Jobcentres have remained open throughout, providing support to our most vulnerable customers. In line with the easing of restrictions in England, from 1<sup>st</sup> 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. We will continue to align with current guidance from Scotland and Wales.

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. We have already committed to increasing the number of Work Coaches and Case Managers and recruitment is already underway.

■ **Poverty: Children**

**Afzal Khan:**

[\[63493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what most recent estimate she has made of the number of children in (a) England, (b) the North West and (c) Manchester Gorton constituency living in poverty; and what proportion of those children are BAME.

**Will Quince:**

National Statistics on the number and percentage of children in low income households are published annually in the "Households Below Average Income" publication.

Latest statistics for the number of children who are in low income households for England and the North West region can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-199495-to-201819>, “children-hbai-timeseries-1994-95-2018-19-tables” in table 4.17ts (relative low income, before and after housing costs) and 4.23ts (absolute low income, before and after housing costs).

The latest figures for children in low income households in Manchester Gorton, up to 2018/19, can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

The survey used by the Department to estimate numbers in low income households does not collect data on the ethnicity of children in households responding to the survey so it is not possible to provide estimates of children living in low income households by ethnicity.

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Coronavirus

**Jane Stevenson:**

**[54248]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what additional support has been made available for claimants of (a) jobseeker's allowance and (b) employment support allowance during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mims Davies:**

*[Holding answer 8 June 2020]:* In response to the Covid-19 outbreak, the Chancellor announced an unprecedented series of measures to support businesses and their employees to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. This includes over £6.5 billion of extra support through the welfare system.

We introduced a range of additional measures to support legacy claimants deal with the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. From the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020 we provided for claimants who have an award of old-style Jobseeker's Allowance to be treated as available for work and actively seeking employment for a period of three months, for the purposes of their entitlement to the benefit.

We also removed the waiting days for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) for claimants affected by Covid-19, so it will be payable from day one of the claim, subject to the claimant satisfying the normal conditions of entitlement. On Monday 20 April, we launched the New Style ESA online portal which allows applications to be completed online. We have been receiving claims successfully since then. For those claimants or appointees who still require a telephony service, this remains available.

This also included increasing the Local Housing Allowance rates for private renters claiming Housing Benefit to the 30th percentile of local rents. As a result, claimants receiving Housing element or Housing Benefit claim will gain on average an additional £600 this year in increased housing support.

We regularly update the guidance and up-to-date information about the employment and benefits support available, including Universal Credit, Statutory Sick Pay, New style Jobseeker's Allowance, and Employment and Support Allowance, can be found here:

[www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/employment-and-benefits-support/](http://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/employment-and-benefits-support/).

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Terminal Illnesses

**Mr Steve Baker:**

[66041]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans to publish the findings from the review, announced in July 2019, on how the welfare system supports people who are terminally ill.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

The evaluation remains a priority for the Department. The Department has made good progress and we expect to be able to provide an update on the outcome of the evaluation shortly.

## ■ State Retirement Pensions: Females

**Jack Dromey:**

[65109]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the underpayments of state pension to women who have not received their full state pension will be passed on to the (a) surviving spouse and (b) beneficiaries of a will where a female pensioner is deceased.

**Guy Opperman:**

*[Holding answer 1 July 2020]:* Where arrears of Cat BL pension are payable, they will be distributed to those who have a legitimate claim to the monies. This could include the surviving spouse and the beneficiaries of a will.

## ■ Unemployment: Training

**Martyn Day:**

[54962]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what additional support and training her Department offers to unemployed people to help them to fill long-term vacancies in (a) the UK, (b) Scotland and (c) Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency.

**Mims Davies:**

DWP offers significant support to unemployed people across Great Britain, through our network of Jobcentres. Since the start of June, our work coaches have made over a quarter of a million outbound customer support calls, each week. They are providing support on finding a job, help with retraining or skills advice, CV, job applications and access to the new vacancies we record every day, as well as signposting to our new Jobhelp website.

DWP are also using technology to host virtual jobfairs, working with employers to deliver online mentoring circles and facilitating sector based work academies.

We also work with partners to help customers access key provision. In Scotland this includes close working with Scottish Government to ensure customers can access the employability programme Fair Start Scotland. And in Falkirk Jobcentre customers are now able to access Fair Start Scotland from the first day of their qualifying benefit claim as part of a pilot with Scottish Government.

## ■ Universal Credit

**Sir Edward Davey:**

**[63208]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans implement the decision of the Court of Appeal of 22 June 2020 in the case Johnson, Woods, Barrett and Stewart vs the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions; and if she will make a statement.

**Will Quince:**

As I informed the House on Thursday 25 June 2020 in answer to the Urgent Question asked by Rt Hon Member for East Ham (Hansard Col. 1455, Vol. 677).

*'I hope Members will appreciate that as the judgment was passed down on Monday, it would be remiss not to afford more consideration before we press on, particularly when the Court has not called for immediate action. We will now begin the process of carefully considering possible solutions, and we will keep the House updated as progress is made.'*

Full transcript available at: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2020-06-25/debates/9D5B55BA-F1F2-4A95-856A-565303FE04B5/UniversalCreditCourtOfAppealJudgment#contribution-C1A5CE72-B6A2-4D75-8C9E-289A31BC3475>

**Dave Doogan:**

**[65013]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in receipt of universal credit who were previously in receipt of legacy benefits have successfully reapplied for universal credit in the last (a) six months, (b) 12 months and (c) 24 months.

**Will Quince:**

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

## ■ Universal Credit: Dunfermline and West Fife

**Douglas Chapman:**

**[65137]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many advanced universal credit payments have been issued in Dunfermline and West Fife constituency since 1 March 2020; and what the cost was of those payments to the nearest thousand pounds.

**Will Quince:**

*[Holding answer 1 July 2020]:* Between 1 March 2020 and 16 June 2020 inclusive, 2,310 Universal Credit advance payments were issued to the Dunfermline and West Fife parliamentary constituency totalling a value of £1,013,000.

**Notes:**

1. Volumes are rounded to the nearest 10 and values to the nearest £1000.
2. Figures include all types of advances, including advances paid after the first assessment period.
3. Figures provided to 16 June 2020 in line with published management information relating to Universal Credit advances.
4. If a claimant has applied for more than one advance, each one is counted separately in these figures.

**■ Universal Credit: Wales****Tonia Antoniazzi:**[\[66176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people claiming universal credit in Wales from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 were employed in the care sector.

**Will Quince:**

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

## MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

### HOME OFFICE

#### ■ Health Services: Immigrants

**Sir Edward Davey:**

[\[62257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many foreign nationals working in the NHS paid the NHS surcharge in each month of 2020.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 2 July 2020. The correct answer should have been:**

**Kevin Foster:**

~~The Home Office has no published data to answer this question.~~

**This information is not readily available nor held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost due to the fact the IHS is payable across multiple application routes.**

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Business Update

**Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Alok Sharma):**  
**[[HCWS332](#)]**

I would like to update the House on a commercial agreement that the Government has concluded with Celsa Steel (UK) Ltd.

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government has set out a far-reaching package of support to protect jobs and the UK economy. However, in exceptional circumstances, where a viable company of strategic importance has exhausted all other options available to it, the Government has said that we will consider bespoke support on a 'last resort' basis.

There is an extremely high bar for making use of taxpayers' money in this way, and any companies seeking support from the Government should do so only as an absolute last resort.

Such circumstances applied to Celsa, which is a key supplier to the construction industry.

While commercial confidentiality prevents me from setting out detail, I can assure the House that the Government has agreed terms that will protect taxpayers' money and ensure that the financial burden is shared with the company's shareholders and lenders.

The Government has agreed legally binding contractual conditions with Celsa on employment, climate change and tax. We have also put in place legally binding conditions on corporate governance, including restraints on executive pay and bonuses. We would expect any company seeking such support from the taxpayer to play their role in our society's shared endeavours and challenges in the same way.

More broadly, the Government has already taken wide-ranging actions to support the UK steel industry, including more than £300 million in relief for electricity costs since 2013. We have also created public procurement guidelines with annual reports on the proportion of public sector steel bought from British companies, and details of a steel pipeline on national infrastructure projects worth around £500 million over the next decade.

This agreement achieves a positive outcome and secures over 1000 jobs, including more than 800 positions at the company's main sites in South Wales.

We want to praise the commitment of Celsa's workforce and management. Our focus is now on working with all parties to secure the company's future success, as well as ensuring that the loan is repaid and Celsa continue to deliver employment, climate change, corporate governance, and tax commitments.

**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT****■ DCMS Contingencies Fund Advance**

**Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Oliver Dowden):**  
[\[HCWS331\]](#)

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has sought in its Main Estimate 2020-21 (Central Government Supply Estimates, 2020-21, Main Supply Estimates, HC 293 published 4 May 2020) the resources, capital and cash it requires to operate for this financial year.

The funds associated with this Estimate will not be released until the Supply and Appropriation Bill achieves Royal Assent later in the summer. The department has therefore sought a contingencies fund advance which will be repaid once Royal Assent has been obtained.

Parliamentary approval for resources of £550,327,000 and capital of £41,808,000 has been sought in a Main Estimate for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £592,135,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

**HOME OFFICE****■ Annual Report of the Biometrics Commissioner**

**The Minister of State for Crime, Policing and the Fire Service (Kit Malthouse):**  
[\[HCWS330\]](#)

My Noble Friend the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Williams of Trafford) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am pleased to announce that my Rt Hon Friend the Home Secretary is today publishing the sixth annual report of the Biometrics Commissioner, together with the Government's response.

The Commissioner, Paul Wiles, is appointed under Section 20 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. His responsibilities are:

- to decide applications by the police for extended retention of DNA profiles and fingerprints from persons arrested for serious offences but not charged or convicted;
- to keep under review National Security Determinations made by Chief Officers under which DNA profiles and fingerprints may be retained for national security purposes;
- to exercise general oversight of police use of DNA samples, DNA profiles and fingerprints.

His report is a statutory requirement of section 21 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

I am grateful to Mr Wiles for this report, which we have published in full.

Copies of the report will be available from the Vote Office. The Government's response will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

## HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Local Government Update

**Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Robert Jenrick):** [\[HCWS333\]](#)

I wish to set out to the House the further measures this Government is putting in place so that local government can continue to fulfil its essential role in the national response to Covid-19 and lead us through the next phase of recovery.

I said at the start of the pandemic that we would ensure local authorities have the resources they need. To do that, the Government has provided £27 billion to support local councils, businesses and communities; including £3.8 billion of support specifically for local authorities. This funding has allowed councils to deliver for their communities: including helping get rough sleepers off the streets, establishing our shielding programme, controlling infection in care homes and providing support for 800,000 small and medium-sized businesses.

The comprehensive plan I am announcing today demonstrates my commitment by ensuring that local councils have the certainty they need to manage their finances to the end of the financial year. The plan covers Covid-related expenditure, income losses from sales, fees and charges, and irrecoverable tax losses.

#### **Additional funding for spending pressures**

We recognise the pressures on councils and our communities have not yet passed, and today I have announced a further £500 million to help ensure that councils have the money they need to meet costs in the coming months. I would like to thank councils for the financial information they have provided, and I will continue to work with my cabinet colleagues to monitor the pressures on the sector.

This award follows two previous rounds of grant allocations. The first was primarily focussed on getting emergency support into Adult Social Care. The second round addressed both expenditure pressures and income shortfalls. With the benefit of better data, we now plan to address income shortfalls separately to expenditure and so we have created a new formula for the additional £500 million. This formula will reflect the factors which the data returns have told us correlate most closely with expenditure, and will take account of population, deprivation and the way that service costs vary across the country. Details on allocations will be announced in due course.

#### **Non-tax income**

The pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on councils' income from sales, fees and charges - for which they could not have planned. To help mitigate this, the

Government is also introducing a co-payment scheme to compensate local authorities for relevant, irrecoverable losses in 2020-21. Under this scheme councils bear the first 5% of losses compared to their budgeted income – reflecting the fact these income sources are by their nature volatile from one year to the next – but the Government will support those worst affected by covering 75p in every pound of losses beyond this.

**Irrecoverable tax losses**

I am also committed to supporting the sector through an apportionment of irrecoverable Council Tax and Business Rates losses between central and local government, to be agreed at the Spending Review. I have announced today that the repayment of collection fund deficits arising in 2020-21, will be spread over the next three years rather than the usual period of a year, giving councils breathing space in setting budgets for next year.

Taken together, these measures will give local councils sufficient confidence to continue to deliver the services their communities rely on. Nevertheless, my department will continue to work closely with councils to monitor the situation as it develops, and I will return to the House setting out any further measures necessary should a changing situation require it.