



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 9 October 2020 and the information is correct at the time of publication (04:30 P.M., 09 October 2020). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Staff

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[97476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many personnel make up the Post Office policy team within his Department.

Paul Scully:

The Post Office Policy team in BEIS has 4 full-time equivalent staff. The team works with the UKGI Post Office Shareholder team as well as experts from other functions within BEIS, including analysts, lawyers, and a correspondence team.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[97477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the oral contribution of Lord Callanan of 25 February 2020, Official Report, column 95GC, what plans he has to further expand the post office policy team.

Paul Scully:

In April 2019 the BEIS Post Office policy team was made up by 2 staff members and has doubled in size since then.

■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

Gareth Johnson: [\[97548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many applications he has received for the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme in the last 12 months.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Between September 2019 and August 2020, the Office for Low Emission Vehicles received 38,612 applications under the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme.

■ Government Assistance: Coronavirus

Darren Jones: [\[98272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish the (a) names of the beneficiaries and (b) amounts of the loans with a nominal value of over €100,000 provided under the (a) Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, (b) Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme and (c) Bounce Back Loan Scheme and (d) Future Fund as required under the European Commission's Temporary Framework for State Aid Measures.

Paul Scully:

Details of individual aid awards under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme and Bounce Back

Loan Scheme will be published as required on the European Commission's Transparency Aid Module in due course. Details of investments made through the Future Fund alongside private investors are commercially confidential.

■ Job Creation and Labour Market: ICT

Paula Barker:

[\[97741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the (a) medium and (b) long-term effect of automation on (i) the labour market and (ii) new job creation.

Paul Scully:

The Government is continuing to monitor the impact of automation on the labour market. The World Economic Forum estimate that robots will replace 75 million jobs globally between 2018 and 2022 but create 133 million new ones – a “net positive”.

We are committed to capitalising on this opportunity. The launch of the Robotics Growth Partnership will support our national ambition to put the UK at the cutting edge of the smart robotics revolution, turbo-charging economic productivity and unlocking benefits across society.

The Government also recognises that demand for skills will continue to change, in part in response to automation. We have committed to improving the UK's system for training in digital skills, ensuring that working people have the support they need to navigate the challenge of automation to a higher-wage future. This includes fully funding adults to take their first full level 3 qualification and a new entitlement to flexible loans over a lifetime, boosting opportunities to retrain and enhancing the nation's technical skills.

■ Manufacturing Industries: North Wales and North West

Dr James Davies:

[\[98255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to support the manufacturing sector in the North Wales Mersey Dee region.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Department continues to engage with industry and suppliers to ensure that we can support our manufacturing sectors during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Ministers have been leading a series of roundtables, bringing together businesses, business representative groups, and leading academics, including representatives from the Welsh Government, to consider the measures needed to support the UK's economic recovery.

The Government's support for the manufacturing sector includes £147 million towards the Made Smarter programme to support digitalisation in UK manufacturing, £1 billion for the Automotive Transformation Fund, and £1.9 billion committed to the Aerospace Technology Institute programme.

In addition, the UK Government is investing £120 million in the North Wales Growth Deal, which includes support for manufacturing. The manufacturing project that the Growth Deal is funding is run by Glyndwr University.

■ Music: Internet

Jonathan Edwards: [\[97530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with streaming music companies on enhancing cultural plurality for listeners.

Amanda Solloway:

The Government has not had recent discussions with music streaming companies on enhancing cultural plurality for listeners, nor has the Government been approached on this matter.

Jonathan Edwards: [\[97532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the amount of royalties paid by music streaming companies as a proportion of revenue in the latest period for which figures are available.

Amanda Solloway:

Streaming contracts are private commercial agreements between the parties concerned.

The Government recognises the importance of understanding how rights holders are remunerated in the global streaming environment. To this end, the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) is working closely with the UK Council of Music Makers on a research project to investigate the flow of money from streaming to creators. This will run for 12 months and is due to report in summer 2021. This project will help improve our understanding of the issue.

■ Postal Services: Standards

Jim Shannon: [\[97579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Royal Mail on ensuring the continuation of letter deliveries on Saturdays.

Paul Scully:

Ministers have regular discussions with stakeholders on a number of issues.

The Universal Service Obligation is set out in the Postal Services Act 2011. This requires Royal Mail to deliver letters 6 days a week as part of the universal postal service. It also sets out a clear and transparent process for how longer-term changes to service standards would be considered. Any changes would need to be made through secondary legislation and agreed by Parliament.

■ Unemployment: York

Rachael Maskell:

[\[98252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions has he had on unemployment levels in York in the next 12 months.

Paul Scully:

York has been an economic success story over the past decade. Unemployment in the wider local enterprise partnership area halved between 2010 and March 2020, and is almost 50 per cent lower than the average for England.

At a local level, the Government's Small Business Grants Fund (SBGF) and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund (RHLGF) have enabled City of York Council to pay out over £46.5m in grant payments to over 3,500 business premises in York. The Government is also continuing to invest in York and North Yorkshire's long term economic potential including a three-year Local Growth Deal worth over £145m, a £15.4m share of the Getting Building Fund, and investment in the York Central Enterprise Zone which will support 6,500 new jobs in the next few years.

These local investments supplement our unprecedented support for businesses and employees on at the national scale, including the measures announced on 24 September in my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer's Winter Economy Plan. This package includes a new Jobs Support Scheme to protect millions of returning workers, an extension of the Self Employment Income Support Scheme, and help for businesses in repaying government-backed loans. We have also strengthened the welfare the safety net to help people who need it, including by increasing the standard allowance for Universal Credit and the Working Tax Credit by up to £1,000 this year.

DEFENCE

■ Iran: Foreign Relations

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[97671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he last spoke to his Iranian counterpart.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The Ministry of Defence regularly engages with a range of stakeholders across the Middle East to discuss bilateral and regional issues.

■ Navy: Military Bases

John Spellar:

[\[98149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the health and safety record over the course of the Maritime Support Delivery Framework.

Jeremy Quin:

The Ministry of Defence takes the health and safety practices of its industrial partners extremely seriously and we expect suppliers to comply with all applicable regulatory and legal requirements.

The health and safety performance of contractors working on the Maritime Support Delivery Framework Contract is routinely monitored as part of contractual governance provisions. The contractors are also independently regulated by the Health and Safety Executive and, for the nuclear sites at HMNB Clyde and HMNB Devonport, the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

■ Trident Submarines**John Spellar:**[\[98147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what risk assessment has been made for in-service support of (a) complex warships, (b) submarines and (c) naval base services with relation to the future life extension requirements of the Vanguard; what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of ageing critical infrastructure and complexities around logistics and transport on (i) cost and (ii) equipment in-service dates.

John Spellar:[\[98148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what risk assessment has been undertaken as part of the planning and consultation process on the move from a single source supplier at HMND Clyde to multiple contractors; and what assessment he has made of the potential merits of that move on the delivery of integrated operations in support of CASD.

John Spellar:[\[98151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what measures have been included in the Future Maritime Support programme contract to mitigate the future life extension requirements of the Vanguard and ageing critical infrastructure and complexities around logistics and transport for the in-service support of (a) complex warships, (b) submarines and (c) naval base services.

Jeremy Quin:

The Future Maritime Support Programme employs a full suite of professional project and programme management planning and risk tools. The provision of services under this programme is currently under commercial tender and negotiation and I am therefore withholding the requested information as its disclosure at this time would be prejudicial to the commercial interests of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and for the purpose of safeguarding National Security more widely.

I am, however, able to confirm that the MOD is currently delivering a significant programme of recapitalisation updates for HM Naval Base Clyde nuclear infrastructure assets, to the value of some £1.6 billion. This programme is scheduled to complete by 2032 and will deliver around £0.425 billion of investment in nuclear assets on the Clyde by the end of this financial year.

■ Veterans: Housing

Dr Luke Evans:

[\[99132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to help ensure that armed forces veterans have access to housing at the end of active service.

Johnny Mercer:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) works closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to ensure that veterans have access to housing when they leave their Service. However, the MOD does not have primary responsibility for housing veterans.

MOD recognises that many Service personnel seek stability for their families and a key part of this is helping personnel buy their own home. Since its introduction, the MOD's Forces Help to Buy scheme has helped around 21,000 Service personnel purchase their own property. We have also amended our policies to help Services leavers transition to civilian life by allowing them to remain in Service Family Accommodation for up to a year after departure.

MOD assists Service personnel and their dependants wishing to move to civilian accommodation at any time in their career, including during resettlement, through its Joint Service Housing Advice Office which acts as a tri-service focal point for civilian housing information.

New statutory guidance to improve access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces, veterans and their families was published in June 2020. This guides local authorities in ensuring that housing applications from this group are identified, considered and prioritised appropriately, and that they are not disadvantaged as a result of the circumstances of their Service.

As part of the Homelessness Reduction Act's Duty to Refer, which came into force in October 2018, the Secretary of State for Defence and other public named authorities are required to refer consenting members of the Regular Armed Forces in England, to a local housing authority within 56 days, if they believe they may be homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Service personnel can also be provided with a certificate of cessation six months before they leave the Armed Forces demonstrating when their entitlement to Service accommodation ends. This can be considered by local authorities as evidence of impending homelessness and will allow them to conduct an assessment of individual housing needs.

■ War Pensions

Justin Madders:

[\[97598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to introduce virtual medical assessments for war pension applicants.

Johnny Mercer:

The Centre for Health and Disability Assessments, which conduct medical boards for the War Pension Scheme, is currently investigating the use of video medical assessments for War Pension claims. In the meantime, as face to face medical assessments are currently suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions, Veterans UK is piloting new processes to ensure claims can continue to be considered.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT■ **5G**

Luke Pollard: [\[97720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what progress he has made in appointing another company to replace Huawei as a 5G supplier.

Matt Warman:

Ultimately it is the responsibility of the mobile network operators to appoint suppliers to replace Huawei in their 5G networks. This will be based on their specific commercial and technical requirements.

The Government's work on telecoms security will ensure that security and resilience are also primary considerations for operators as they make those decisions.

■ **Cinemas: Coronavirus**

Ian Murray: [\[98936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will provide sector-specific support to the cinema sector following the closure of Cineworld venues; and if he will make a statement.

Ian Murray: [\[98937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the economic effect of Cineworld's decision to close its cinemas affecting up to 6,000 UK jobs.

Caroline Dinéage:

The government deeply regrets the unfortunate news of Cineworld's temporary closure and is in direct and regular contact with the screen industry, including distributors and exhibitors, as well as through the BFI Screen Sector Task Force.

The government has supported cinemas through the VAT cut on tickets and concessions, business rates holiday and Bounce back loans. Independent cinemas are also eligible for a share of £30m from our unprecedented £1.57bn Culture Recovery Fund, and funding has started to be allocated already.

We recognise that cinemas need an incoming stream of new releases to show and we are supporting production by establishing a £500 million in a UK-wide Film and TV Production Restart Scheme to help get productions back up and running again. This

will support the creation of new content which can be released into cinemas of all sizes.

Cinemas up and down the country are open for business and Covid secure - we urge the British public to support their local cinema and save jobs by visiting and enjoying a film in accordance with the guidance.

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Sarah Owen:

[99131]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he (a) has had and (b) plans to have with Cabinet colleagues on preparation to counteract misinformation being spread (i) online and (ii) in traditional media on the distribution of a covid-19 vaccine.

Caroline Dinenage:

Ministers have regular meetings and discussions with their ministerial colleagues on a range of issues, including the spread of misinformation surrounding Covid-19. Details of Ministerial meetings are published quarterly on the [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website.

The Government is committed to ensuring that information people access about Covid-19 is accurate. We continue to work closely with social media platforms to help them identify and take action against incorrect claims about the virus in line with their terms and conditions. This includes anti-vaccination narratives that could endanger people's health.

In May 2020, Ofcom published specific guidance on Covid-19 content and expects broadcasters to be alert to the potential for harm to audiences. The government is also committed to independent self-regulation of the press. The majority of traditional publishers are members of independent press regulators which issue codes of conduct on accuracy in news.

■ **Digital Technology**

Jim Shannon:

[96893]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to support the growth of the digital economy.

Caroline Dinenage:

The digital sector contributed £149bn to the UK economy in 2018, accounting for 7.7% of UK GVA. It supports 1.2 million jobs and around 194,000 businesses of which almost all are SMEs. Last year venture capital investment in the UK's tech sector leapt by 44%, with record growth in many of the key sub-sectors including cyber security and AI.

The Department is taking great strides to support this growth. This year alone we have introduced the UK Gigabit Programme and the Shared Rural Network programme to develop the country's broadband infrastructure; introduced a Digital Markets Taskforce, an Online Harms White Paper response and a Digital Identity Call

for Evidence to ensure people remain safe online; and ran an entirely digital London Tech Week to show our support for the sector. This event was a resounding success, with initial figures suggesting 2,500 unique viewers attended each day, with 24,000 registering for the entire event.

We also deliver support through Tech Nation and our Digital Trade Network. Tech Nation is the main vehicle used by DCMS to support scale-ups. They deliver a programme of initiatives to support the UK tech sector, specifically startups and scale-ups, notably 'Upscale', a programme for scale-ups, aimed at accelerating growth. It comprises workshops, socials, & meetups. Alumni include Monzo, depop and Mixcloud.

The Digital Trade Network (DTN) is a joint DCMS/DIT initiative, announced at London Tech Week 2020. This £8m programme supports UK tech businesses to internationalise in Asia Pacific, attract capital and talent to the UK and enhance UK digital economy collaborations internationally.

Finally, the government will publish a new Digital Strategy this year to drive growth in the digital sector and wider economy, and ensure we maximise the benefits of a digital-led economic recovery. It will set out a path to harnessing new appetite for digital transformation, accelerating growth, and building a more inclusive, competitive and innovative digital economy for the future.

■ Events Industry and Music: Coronavirus

Imran Ahmad Khan:

[99780]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to improve the application process for covid-19 related support for businesses in the (a) events and (b) music industry.

Caroline Dinéage:

The £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund will provide targeted support to critical cultural, arts and heritage organisations to help them survive and recover through the coronavirus pandemic.

Our priority is to ensure that organisations get the funding they need as swiftly as possible. That is why £3.36 million has already been allocated to 136 grassroots music venues across England, in view of the urgent need to protect organisations in that sector from imminent collapse. The delivery bodies are also currently processing more than £800 million of applications for grant funding, and will make announcements about hundreds of allocations in the coming weeks.

We are aware that the events industry and its supply chain has been severely impacted by Covid-19. We continue to engage with stakeholders, including through the Visitor Economy Working Group and the Events Industry Senior Leaders Advisory Panel, to monitor the situation.

■ Sports: Video Games

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[98914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of establishing (a) a DBS checking process and (b) safeguarding guidance for e-sports coaching.

Caroline Dinenge:

The government recognises the value of esports which has the potential to develop as an area of real national strength in the UK, building on our world-class video games, entertainment and sports sectors.

To deliver on this, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport recently hosted the first government roundtable with the esports industry, discussing a range of issues including the importance of safeguarding to ensure young people can engage with esports safely.

Safeguarding will be a key area of consideration as the government builds on the roundtable, developing plans over the next few months to support the growth of a safe and inclusive esports sector in the UK.

■ Telecommunications: Procurement

Anthony Mangnall: [\[97029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Foreign Secretary's Oral Statement of 28 January 2020, what progress he has made on supporting the emergence of new, disruptive entrants to the telecommunications supply chain.

Anthony Mangnall: [\[97030\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Foreign Secretary's Oral Statement of 28 January 2020, what progress he has made on attracting established telecommunications vendors to the UK.

Matt Warman:

We are continuing to work at pace to deliver a targeted diversification strategy to rebalance the supply chain. We will be bringing this strategy forward in the autumn, alongside the Telecoms Security Bill.

The strategy will be based around three core elements; securing incumbent vendors, attracting new vendors and accelerating the development of open interface solutions. It will also focus on building UK capability and influence within the supply chain.

To support the development of the strategy, the Government has recently announced the establishment of a Telecoms Diversification Taskforce. The Taskforce, which is composed of leading figures from industry and academia, will provide independent and expert advice to the Government - turbocharging our work on these three core elements of our strategy.

Throughout the development of the strategy, we have continued to look for opportunities to make progress on market diversification. In the coming weeks we will set out plans and details of some of the first Government supported 'OpenRAN' 5G trials in the UK. These will accelerate the delivery of the strategy and create opportunities for disruptive new entrants in the UK market.

We are also continuing to speak with a range of vendors about how we can support them to enter the market and accelerate diversification. We have actively engaged with major players and emerging vendors and we will continue to work with any vendor - big or small - who can help us achieve our aim to rebalance the supply chain.

■ **Telecommunications: Watford**

Chi Onwurah: [\[96890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what representation there is on the Telecoms Diversification Taskforce of (a) UK telecom system developers and (b) organisations that are based north of Watford.

Matt Warman:

The membership of the Diversification Taskforce has been centered around ensuring we have the right mix of expertise to provide pertinent advice, direction and scrutiny to inform the development of our diversification strategy. All the members have extensive experience in the telecoms industry and academia, and can leverage a vast professional network from across the UK in order to provide their advice. In selecting the membership for the Taskforce, we have prioritised the depth of cyber security expertise individuals can bring to bear, rather than discriminating on the basis of their geographic location

The Taskforce is just one medium through which the Government is seeking advice on its diversification strategy. We have regularly engaged with interested industry parties, both domestic and international, regarding diversification, and will continue to do so.

EDUCATION

■ **Adult Education: Staffordshire**

Jonathan Gullis: [\[97737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps his Department has taken to help ensure that adults in (a) Stoke-on-Trent, (b) Kidsgrove and (c) Talke can access education throughout their lives.

Gillian Keegan:

The government appreciates the importance of adult education to improving people's life chances across all areas of the country.

To better equip people to use digital tools and to adapt to the social distancing measures of COVID-19 the government launched The Skills Toolkit in April 2020. This offers a wide-range of digital and numeracy courses for all skills levels.

Starting this Parliament, we are providing £2.5 billion (£3 billion when including Barnett funding for devolved administrations), for the National Skills Fund to help adults learn valuable skills and prepare for the economy of the future. We are continuing to engage closely with local areas and stakeholders and remain committed to consulting on aspects of the fund, to ensure that we develop a fund that helps adults learn valuable skills and prepare for the future economy.

My right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, recently announced that for adults over the age of 23, who do not currently have a level 3 qualification, the government will be funding their first full level 3 through the National Skills Fund. We will target this level 3 entitlement at areas with economic value and the strongest alignment with government priorities, to ensure the best possible returns for individuals, employers and the nation.

The Prime Minister, also announced the launch of digital bootcamps, in 6 areas, to support local regions and employers to fill in-demand vacancies. The bootcamp training courses will provide valuable skills, based on employer demand, and will offer a fast track to a job interview on completion. Pending the success of the initial bootcamps, we are planning to expand the bootcamps to more of the country from Spring 2021 and we want to extend this model to include other technical skills training.

We are also continuing to invest in education and skills training for adults through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) (£1.34 billion in 2020/21). The AEB fully funds or co-funds skills provision for eligible adults aged 19 and above, from pre-entry to level 3, to support adults to gain the skills they need for work, an apprenticeship or further learning. This includes: fully funded courses in English and Mathematics (for adults who need to improve their literacy and numeracy), fully funded first full level 2 and level 3 for learners aged between 19 and 23 and fully funded specified digital skills qualifications for adults with no/low digital skills.

The AEB enables more flexible and tailored programmes of learning to be made available, which may or may not require a qualification, to help eligible learners engage in learning, build confidence and enhance their wellbeing.

We are looking carefully at further education funding in preparation for the forthcoming Spending Review.

■ Apprentices: West Midlands

Sajid Javid:

[97534]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of apprenticeships in (a) the West Midlands and (b) Worcestershire.

Gillian Keegan:

The government's Plan for Jobs will help to kickstart the nation's economic recovery. We believe that apprenticeships will be more important than ever in helping businesses to recruit the right people and develop the skills they need to recover and grow - both now and in the long term.

To help businesses offer new apprenticeships, we are providing £1,500 for every apprentice they hire as a new employee from 1 August 2020 to 31 January 2021. This will rise to £2,000 if they hire a new apprentice under the age of 25 - in recognition of the particular impacts of COVID-19 on the employment prospects of this group.

The new payment will encourage employers to offer new apprenticeship opportunities and take advantage of existing flexibilities to train their apprentices in a way that suits their needs. We will ensure that there is sufficient funding this year to support small businesses wanting to take on an apprentice.

We also introduced a number of flexibilities to ensure that apprenticeships can continue where possible, helping employers to retain their existing apprentices. We are working with key partners such as the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, the West Midlands Combined Authority, local business to business organisations, sector and trade bodies to raise the awareness of the incentives and the benefits of apprenticeships.

We have increased the amount that levy payers can transfer from 10% to 25% and are seeing numbers of transfers rise steadily. We are also working closely with the West Midlands Combined Authority to promote levy transfers from large employers, to date these include HSBC and Lloyds, BT, BBC, RAC, University of Birmingham and University of Warwickshire. These levy funds are being used to support local small and medium-sized enterprises in the automotive, digital and construction sectors across the West Midlands Region. Hereford and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce are actively promoting levy transfers. They are also now producing marketing materials to promote levy transfers to employers across a broad range of sectors.

We have produced guidance to help employers looking to transfer levy funds. This is supported by online tutorials, but we know we need to make the process even more simple. The guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/transferring-apprenticeship-service-funds>.

We are committed to working with large employers to improve the transfer process, making it easier for them to find smaller employers to transfer surplus levy funds to, thus helping them maximise the amount of funding they will be able to transfer. In doing so we will build on successful regional pilot schemes, such as that in West Midlands Combined Authority.

■ Financial Services: Primary Education

Anne Marie Morris:

[\[98227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing financial education in schools for 7 to 11 year olds.

Nick Gibb:

Education on financial matters helps to ensure that young people are prepared to manage their money well, make sound financial decisions and know where to seek further information when needed. In 2014, for the first time, financial literacy was made statutory within the National Curriculum as part of the citizenship curriculum for 11 to 16 year olds.

The Department also introduced a rigorous mathematics curriculum, which provides young people with the knowledge and financial skills to make important financial decisions. The Government has published statutory programmes of study for mathematics and citizenship that outline what pupils should learn about financial education from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 4.

In the primary mathematics curriculum, there is a strong emphasis on the essential arithmetic knowledge that pupils should have. There is also some specific content about financial education, such as calculations with money.

The Department trusts schools to use their professional judgement and understanding of their pupils to develop the right teaching approach for their particular school, drawing on the expertise of subject associations and organisations such as Young Money.

For the longer term, the Department will continue to work closely with The Money and Pension Service and HM Treasury, to consider how to provide further support for the teaching of financial education in schools.

■ Schools: Coronavirus

Jon Trickett:

[\[97461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of schools were classed as not fully open on (a) 1 September 2020, (b) 8 September 2020, (c) 15 September 2020 and (d) 22 September 2020.

Nick Gibb:

The Department is currently collecting data from schools on a daily basis and publishes data from this collection, including the number and percentage of state funded schools that are fully open, as part of the official statistics series. The publication can be found here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>.

Data has been published from 9 September. Data collected between 1 and 8 September has not been published because many schools had not started term or had inset days during this time.

Schools are considered fully open if they are able to provide face to face teaching for all pupils on roll for the whole school day and they have not asked a group of pupils to self-isolate. The number and proportion of state funded schools not fully open [1] [2] [3] on 15 and 22 September was as follows:

	NUMBER OF STATE-FUNDED	PERCENTAGE OF STATE-FUNDED
	schools not fully open	schools not fully open
15/09/2020	1,200	6
22/09/2020	1,300	6

[1] All figures are adjusted for non-response.

[2] State-funded schools are state-funded primary schools, secondary schools, special schools and alternative provision.

[3] Schools can be not fully open for non-COVID-19 related reasons, such as staggering entry for nursery and reception pupils. Where schools are not fully open, most pupils are still attending. When pupils are unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical or public health advice, schools are expected to immediately offer them access to remote education.

Jon Trickett:

[97462]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many school (a) staff and (b) pupils have received positive covid-19 tests since 1 September 2020.

Nick Gibb:

Keeping a close track of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases in schools is a priority for the Government. Public Health England (PHE) leads in holding data on infection, incidence and COVID-19 cases overall. PHE have published data on COVID-19 incidents by institution, including educational settings. This data can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-covid-19-surveillance-reports>.

The Department is currently collecting data from schools on a daily basis, as well as gathering information from local areas and following up with individual settings. This is to confirm that procedures for requiring pupils to isolate are well understood and that necessary decisions are made on the basis of public health advice.

The Department collects data on the number of schools that have indicated that they have sent children home due to COVID-19 containment measures. The Department is currently looking at the quality of that data with a view to publishing it as part of the official statistics series. The series includes published data on school openings and attendance, which shows that at a national level approximately 93 per cent of state funded schools were fully open on 24 September. Of all schools that responded to the survey, 6 per cent said they were not fully open due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 on 24 September. Approximately 88 per cent of all children on

roll in all state funded schools were in attendance on 24 September. More information 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>.

■ Schools: Transport

Justin Madders: [\[97610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the funding arrangements for post-October half-term school transport will be published.

Nick Gibb:

The Government is committed to ensuring all pupils can travel to school and college safely and on time. We have provided local transport authorities with more than £40 million of funding to increase dedicated home to school and college transport capacity in the first half of the autumn term.

The Department will inform local transport authorities of their funding allocations for the second half of the autumn term shortly.

■ Sign Language: Education

Jon Trickett: [\[97460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of including teaching of British Sign Language in the curriculum of Key Stages one, two and three.

Nick Gibb:

The Department recognises and acknowledges that British Sign Language (BSL) can be a beneficial subject for children to be taught. However, the Department does not have plans to introduce any new subjects to the National Curriculum.

Although BSL is not part of the National Curriculum, schools may choose to offer BSL in their school curriculum or include it as part of their extra curricular activities programme.

The Department is working with subject experts to develop draft subject content for a potential BSL GCSE. The Department is engaging with Ofqual, the independent qualifications regulator, to ensure that the subject content can be assessed appropriately and will be working with stakeholders to ensure that a wide range of views are reflected. Subject to being able to develop subject content, which meets the rigorous requirements which applies to all GCSEs, we are aiming to consult publicly on draft content early in 2021. The precise timings of this may be subject to change.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Animals: Exports****Sir Mike Penning:**[\[97481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to bring forward legislative proposals to ban the export of live animals for slaughter on or before 1 January 2021.

Victoria Prentis:

I refer the Rt. Hon. Member to the reply given to the Rt. Hon. Member for Chipping Barnet on 11 June 2020, PQ UIN 55899.

[\[questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-06-08/55899\]](https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-06-08/55899)]

■ Beverage Containers: Recycling**Gareth Johnson:**[\[97549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the viability of a deposit return scheme in the UK.

Rebecca Pow:

Since consulting on the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers in 2019, officials have been developing final proposals for a DRS using further evidence and ongoing engagement with stakeholders. This will be presented in a second consultation in 2021 alongside a full impact assessment.

■ Committee on Climate Change: Correspondence**Caroline Lucas:**[\[98202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to Answer of 25 September to Written Question 90996, if he will place a copy of the correspondence dated 9th June 2020 from the Committee on Climate Change in the Library of the House of Commons.

Rebecca Pow:

A copy of my correspondence with the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) shall be placed in the Library of the House of Commons.

The correspondence states the following:

The Government welcomes CCC support. We have always been clear of the need to phase out burning of protected blanket bog to conserve these vulnerable habitats. We are currently looking at how legislation could achieve this and considering next steps.

■ Countryside: Access

Rachael Maskell: [\[98251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make it his policy to maintain without changes the right to roam for green and blue spaces.

Rebecca Pow:

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) provides for a right to roam across open access land, giving the public a right of access to most areas of mountain, moor, heath, down, registered common land and coastal margin. We have no plans to change this.

■ Furs: Imports

Emily Thornberry: [\[98165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to review the current rules on the import of fur and fur products after the end of the transition period for the UK's departure from the EU.

Emily Thornberry: [\[98166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on UK businesses of imposing a total ban on the import of fur and fur products.

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]

■ Nature Conservation

Rachael Maskell: [\[98247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has made an assessment of the implications for his policies of the RSPB campaign highlighting a lost decade for nature; and if he will make a statement.

Rachael Maskell: [\[98248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will bring forward proposals for legally binding targets to restore nature by 2030 in response to the RSPB campaign entitled lost decade for nature.

Rebecca Pow:

In 2019, the UK Government published its own assessment of progress made towards the goals and targets set under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). In common with the RSPB's assessment, this highlighted ongoing declines in biodiversity in the UK, and despite progress, a clear need to do more. Both reports

point to success stories on which we can build, and the UK government is determined to do just that.

Biodiversity loss is a global challenge. We are playing a leading role in developing an ambitious post-2020 global framework under the CBD next year. We must learn lessons from the implementation of the Aichi Targets and ensure that the new framework contains ambitious but measurable targets. We are already supporting a global target to protect at least 30% of the global ocean by 2030, and 30 countries have joined our Global Ocean Alliance in support of the target. On 28 September, the Prime Minister announced our support for the same commitment to protect land, globally and at home.

Domestic biodiversity is a devolved matter in the UK. In England, our 25 Year Environment Plan marked a step change in ambition for wildlife and the natural environment. We are already taking steps to meet this ambition, including bringing forward the Environment Bill, investing in woodland expansion and peatland restoration, and developing a new Environmental Land Management scheme that will reward farmers and land managers for delivering environmental public goods.

We are exploring the use of powers in the Environment Bill to strengthen our commitments by setting at least one biodiversity target in law, as set out in our recently published policy paper on environmental targets. These targets will be based on scientifically credible evidence, as well as economic analysis, seeking advice from independent experts and stakeholders. The public will also have an opportunity to provide input. When developing targets, we will consider any relevant international best practice and commitments, including new international biodiversity targets expected to be finalised under the CBD next year. We do not want to prejudge the specific targets that will emerge from these consultations or international processes.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[98249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he is taking steps to respond to the WWF Living Planet report; and if he will make a statement.

Rebecca Pow:

The continued decline in global nature highlighted by the WWF Living Planet report matters to us all. While there will be no formal Government response we will continue to work with WWF and others to achieve the transformative changes needed.

The science is clear, biodiversity loss is a global problem that needs a global solution. It is critical that we act now, internationally and at home, to ensure that we leave our environment in a better state for future generations.

The UK is committed to playing a leading role in developing an ambitious and transformative post-2020 framework for biodiversity under the CBD, reflecting the scale and urgency of the necessary actions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss within a generation and contribute to tackling climate change.

Over 30 countries have joined the UK-led Global Ocean Alliance, calling for a target to protect at least 30 per cent of the ocean by 2030. On the 28 September, the Prime

Minister pledged the UK's support for an equally ambitious commitment to protect 30% of land globally and at home.

As the host of UNFCCC COP26, we are aware that we have an important opportunity to reinforce and amplify awareness and action on the linkages between the two global challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. This is why 'nature' will be a key focus of COP26 in Glasgow.

The UK's commitment to reversing nature decline is also what drove us to co-lead the negotiation of the 'Leaders' Pledge for Nature', alongside the European Commission and Costa Rica. This ambitious Pledge, launched at the UN General Assembly in September, commits leaders to take ten urgent actions to put biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030. The UK is now determined to work with leaders from around the world to ensure these commitments translate into ambitious action on the ground, throughout 2021 and beyond.

Our international aims on biodiversity must be underpinned by credible action at home. In England, the 25 Year Environment Plan (YEP) marked a step-change in ambition for nature and the natural environment. This Government has announced significant funding and legislation to meet this ambition.

■ River Severn: Flood Control

Daniel Kawczynski:

[\[97519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the timescale is for the planned flood defence infrastructure works along the River Severn.

Rebecca Pow:

The next six-year Flood and Coastal Risk Management Capital Investment Programme 2021/22 – 2027/28 is currently being put together by the Environment Agency in partnership with all other Flood Risk Management Authorities along the River Severn Catchment including Shropshire Council.

This six-year programme will be based on indicative bids put forward in previous years as well as new project bids and will use the updated Partnership Funding rules recently published on the GOV.UK website.

Some of those projects currently put forward to form the next six-year programme include the Severn Valley Water Management Scheme, Tenbury Wells, Oswestry Surface Water Scheme, Beales Corner Bewdley as well as a large scale Carbon Offsetting and Natural Flood Risk Management Scheme which has the potential to benefit the whole of the River Severn.

Indicative proposals at this stage in the process suggest the new programme could deliver 3,000 homes better protected from flooding. Business cases will formalise the outcomes that these and other projects will deliver in due course.

Daniel Kawczynski:

[\[97520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to prevent flooding along the River Severn in winter 2020-21.

Rebecca Pow:

Over the winter of 2019/20 the River Severn catchment saw some of the highest river levels ever recorded. While, unfortunately, around 1,600 properties were flooded across the West Midlands, Environment Agency (EA) flood risk management assets prevented over 14,500 properties from flooding.

Since the winter floods, the EA has been delivering its recovery programme. This is to ensure that all flood assets that were affected by significant flooding are inspected and repaired where necessary.

In the 2020 budget, the Government announced a national £120 million package to repair flood risk management assets damaged as a result of the winter floods. For the Severn corridor's assets the Environment Agency secured £4.2 million, covering 18 projects. Ahead of this winter, EA flood risk management assets in Shrewsbury have been fully inspected. Repair work to these assets is currently ongoing. However, throughout this process the defences will remain fully operational and will function as intended, including both demountable and temporary defences at a number of locations such as Shrewsbury and Ironbridge.

As well as this asset repair work, and despite the challenges of Covid-19, the Environment Agency is continuing to deliver its annual routine maintenance programme for the River Severn. This helps to ensure any blockages or debris that may cause an increase in flood risk have been managed.

■ River Severn: Floods**Daniel Kawczynski:**[\[97518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the risk of flooding along the River Severn.

Rebecca Pow:

The Environment Agency's River Severn river modelling and flood mapping is currently being updated to incorporate the latest available data. The £250,000 grant-in-aid investment will deliver a completed model by the end of 2021.

This new flood model will not only provide an update to the flood risk mapping but also deliver evidence to support the flood warning service, potential future flood schemes, and ensure safe development within the catchment. It is already being used to support delivery of the ambitions of the River Severn Partnership.

■ Sharks: Animal Products**Mr Virendra Sharma:**[\[98681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of banning the import of shark fins into the UK.

Victoria Prentis:

The UK has a strong track record in marine conservation and places great importance on ensuring that appropriate protection and management is in place for all shark species.

The UK Government is strongly opposed to shark finning, the practice of removing the fins of a shark and discarding the body at sea. The UK has already banned the act of shark finning and has enforced a Fins Naturally Attached policy in order to combat illegal finning of sharks in UK and EU waters. This means that shark fins from sharks fished in UK and EU waters can only be retained and utilised provided they are still attached to the shark when landed at port by fishing vessels.

Following the end of the Transition Period we will explore options consistent with World Trade Organization rules to address the importation of shark fins from other areas, to support efforts to end illegal shark finning practices globally.

■ Sustainable Development: Coronavirus**Rachael Maskell:**[\[98246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he has taken to ensure an environmentally sustainable economic recovery from the covid-19 outbreak.

Rebecca Pow:

We will rebuild our economy and society from the coronavirus pandemic in a way that is cleaner, greener and more resilient. We have just launched a £40 million Green Recovery Challenge Fund, bringing forward funding to help charities and environmental organisations start work on projects across England to restore nature and tackle climate change; and the £3 billion green investment package that could help support around 140,000 green jobs and upgrade buildings to help reduce emissions.

Our landmark Environment, Fisheries and Agriculture Bills will also underpin green recovery. Our legislative agenda will protect and recover our precious natural environment and diverse ecosystems. This is in line with our 25 Year Environment Plan and our commitments to leave the environment in a better state than we inherited it and to deliver the most ambitious environmental programme of any country on earth.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**■ Developing Countries: Death****Alexander Stafford:**[\[99159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps his Department is taking to help end preventable deaths of mothers, new-born babies and children in the developing world by 2030.

Wendy Morton:

The UK is a leading player in global health. We are committed to ending the preventable deaths of mothers, newborns and children by 2030. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office works with other countries, global health partners and through international forums on key global health issues, such as achieving Universal Health Coverage.

For example, we used our diplomatic expertise to host the Global Vaccine Summit, bringing together world leaders and representatives from more than 62 countries. The Summit raised a historic \$8.8 billion for GAVI, which will immunise children and save lives.

■ Developing Countries: Education and Health**Alexander Stafford:**[\[99160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what plans he has to use the UK's G7 Presidency to help deliver a global commitment to strengthening health and education systems.

Wendy Morton:

Strengthening global health and education systems is a priority for the Government. As the Prime Minister made clear to the UN General Assembly, the UK will use our G7 Presidency to create a new global approach to health security, based on his five-point plan. The Government has also been clear that girls' education is a top priority. To achieve this, we are strengthening global education systems amongst other interventions. The UK's G7 Presidency presents a unique opportunity to advance both of these agendas. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is working closely with other government departments to define the objectives for the UK's G7 Presidency in 2021. These will be shared in due course.

■ Iran: Foreign Relations**Tulip Siddiq:**[\[97667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when he last spoke to his Iranian counterpart.

James Cleverly:

The Foreign Secretary speaks regularly with Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif. The Foreign Secretary and his officials take every opportunity to discuss with Iran a wide range of issues, including nuclear non-compliance, regional stability and security, the release of our dual-nationals and Iranian human rights violations.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Bereavement Counselling: Coronavirus****Sarah Owen:**[\[98772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what representations the Government has received from specialist bereavement organisations on the need for a bereavement support policy in the event of additional local and national lockdowns.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 7 October 2020]: The Government is taking a cross-Government approach to address bereavement support and help ensure that families and friends of those deceased get the support they need – particularly during this difficult time.

We are engaging with a range of specialist bereavement organisations to assess the increased the need for support as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sarah Owen:[\[98773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions the Government is having with specialist bereavement organisations on the formal and informal support that bereaved people need (a) during and (b) after the covid-19 outbreak.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 7 October 2020]: The Government is taking a cross-Government approach to address bereavement support and help ensure that families and friends of those deceased get the support they need – particularly during this difficult time. We are engaging with a range of specialist bereavement organisations to assess the increased need for support as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In May, the Government awarded £4.2 million to mental health charities and charities providing bereavement support. This funding is part of an overall £750 million package for the voluntary sector announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in April.

■ Cancer: Coronavirus**Grahame Morris:**[\[81804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the report by the Teenage Cancer Trust entitled Cancer x Coronavirus: The Impact on young people.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 3 September 2020]: The NHS Long Term Plan includes a number of commitments for improving the outcomes and experience of children, teenagers and young adults with cancer.

The revised service specifications outline how NHS England plans to deliver these commitments which includes implementing networked care, simplifying pathways and

transitions between services, ensuring that every patient has access to specialist care and by increasing participation in clinical research.

It is expected that each network will agree the configuration of services within the first 12 months of publication.

■ Cancer: Young People

Bambos Charalambous: [\[82269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the report by the Teenage Cancer Trust entitled Cancer x Coronavirus: The Impact on young people.

Jim Shannon: [\[83807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of the (a) implications for his policies of the Teenage Cancer Trust report entitled Cancer x Coronavirus: The Impact on young people and (b) effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the health of young people with cancer; and if he will make a statement.

Jo Churchill:

The NHS Long Term Plan includes a number of commitments for improving the outcomes and experience of children, teenagers and young adults with cancer.

The revised service specifications outline how NHS England plans to deliver these commitments which includes implementing networked care, simplifying pathways and transitions between services, ensuring that every patient has access to specialist care and by increasing participation in clinical research.

It is expected that each network will agree the configuration of services within the first 12 months of publication.

■ Care Homes: Coronavirus

Helen Hayes: [\[91677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, why care home providers are not required to participate in the weekly covid-19 testing regime; and what plans he has to review this situation.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 22 September 2020]: Protecting care home residents and staff is a top priority for the Government and this includes increasing access to testing. All care homes are able to access regular retesting kits by registering on the care portal.

A letter was issued on 11 September by the Department's Director of Adult Social Care Delivery to all care providers, local authority Chief Executives and Directors of Adult Social Care which advises care homes that have not yet registered for repeat testing to do so. The letter is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-infection-rises-letter-to-care-providers-from-director-of-adult-social-care-delivery/covid-19-infection-rises-letter-to-care-providers-from-director-of-adult-social-care-delivery>

In addition, the National Testing Team is proactively contacting care homes who have not been carrying out repeat testing.

■ Cerebral Palsy: Health Services

Vicky Foxcroft: [\[92843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to reduce the barriers adults living with cerebral palsy face in accessing national health screening programmes.

Jo Churchill:

NHS England and NHS Improvement are continuously investing in initiatives to help ensure equality of access to screening for those with disabilities, including cerebral palsy. For example, general practices are required to ensure that their premises sufficiently meet the reasonable needs of its patients. This involves making any reasonable adjustments necessary or making alternative arrangements such as referral to a specialist screening provider or undertaking the procedures in another setting that is more suitable. Guidance also states that patients should be given an opportunity to express a preference in order to access a setting most appropriate to their needs.

■ Coronavirus Act 2020

Abena Opong-Asare: [\[95759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment the Government has made of the effectiveness of the enforcement of restrictions under the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 30 September 2020]: As per section 97(1)(b) of the Coronavirus Act 2020, the Secretary of State will make a statement in the two month report about whether he considers the current status of non-devolved provisions to be appropriate. The first such statement was published on 29 May and this and subsequent reports can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-act-two-monthly-reports>

An analysis of the provisions was published on 23 September, to inform the debate held on 30 September, and is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-act-analysis>

Sir Christopher Chope: [\[98145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to his oral contribution of 30 September 2020, Official Report, column 392, what discussions he has with

Cabinet colleagues on the length of the debate on the extension of the provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 6 October 2020]: The time allocated to debate the extension of the temporary provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 is set down in the Standing Orders of the House of Commons.

■ **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[96108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the evidential basis is for having an attendance limit of 15 people for weddings and 30 people for funerals and no attendance limit for worship services if social distancing measures are applied.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

Funeral and weddings are one-off events and the Government recognises that it is important for life to continue with some degree of normality while we tackle the spread of the virus. It is important that these life events are able to continue which is why they have a limited exemption to the 'rule of six'.

Although places of worship can have more than 30 people – people should only attend in groups of six or one household/support bubble and should not interact with others.

Chi Onwurah:

[\[96891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has in place to enable people to identify quickly the steps that they need to take to (a) protect themselves and (b) follow the law on covid-19 in their locality; and if he will make an assessment of the merits of adopting the local lockdown look up tool developed by Matthew Somerville.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 5 October 2020]: We are delivering a tailored campaign approach to local areas on the 'watchlist'. Activities include messaging on key protective behaviours – social distancing, hand washing, and use of face coverings, as well as testing and isolation for those who have symptoms. This will allow people to protect themselves and follow the law.

We are always looking at ways of making information easily accessible to individuals, including publishing information on local restrictions on GOV.UK.

Sir Christopher Chope:

[\[98144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to his oral contribution of 30 September 2020, Official Report, column 392, what assessment he has made of the (a) effectiveness of and (b) adequacy of time available for parliamentary scrutiny of (i) primary and (ii) secondary legislation on restrictions during the covid-19 outbreak.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 6 October 2020]: This Government has provided regular updates to the House of Commons on a wide range of matters related to COVID-19 and will continue to do so. There is nothing further to add to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care's announcement to the House of Commons of 30 September, Official Report, column 388.

■ Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups**Theresa Villiers:**[\[90064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, as part of preparations in the NHS for winter 2020-21, what steps he has taken in response to the conclusion of Public Health England that BAME communities are at greater risk of harm from covid-19.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 21 September 2020]: The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP) leads the cross-Government activity responding to the conclusion of Public Health England that black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities are at greater risk of harm from COVID-19. The Department continues to support the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities on this work. We are also working with other Government departments, local authority public health systems and experts such as the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies producing reactive and proactive guidance and measures to protect BAME and other vulnerable communities from COVID-19.

■ Coronavirus: Intensive Care**Dr Dan Poulter:**[\[96838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential need to provide legal protection to doctors during the covid-19 outbreak in the event that doctors are required to make decisions about whether to withhold or withdraw critical care support from one patient in order to sustain the life of another.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

The Government's focus throughout this period has been to support the National Health Service and NHS staff to respond effectively to the pandemic.

During the outbreak, existing indemnity arrangements will continue to cover clinical negligence liabilities arising from the vast majority of NHS services. In the case of medical staff working in NHS trusts, indemnity cover will be provided by the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST). To ensure that indemnity is not a barrier for healthcare staff working as part of the NHS response to COVID-19, we have ensured that they will be covered under the indemnity provision of the Coronavirus Act 2020 in the unlikely event that they are involved in the novel delivery of NHS services that fall outside the scope of CNST.

■ Emergencies

Justin Madders: [\[82039\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many serious incidents have been reported in each of the last 10 years.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 3 September 2020]: The attached table, which has been provided by NHS England and NHS Improvement, shows the number of serious incidents that were reported on the Strategic Executive Information System for each year from January 2011 to August 2020. The data for the most recent 12 month period may change as a result of investigation findings indicating an incident initially reported as a serious incident does not meet the definition of a serious incident under the Serious Incident Framework.

Attachments:

1. PQ82039 Annex [PQ82039 Annex v2.docx]

■ Influenza: Vaccination

Alex Norris: [\[91703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the administering capacity of flu vaccine doses for winter 2020-21.

Alex Norris: [\[91704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reduce the effect of covid-19 on flu vaccination programmes ahead of winter 2020-21.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 22 September 2020]: NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with local areas to ensure that regional teams have plans in place to deliver the flu vaccination programme this winter. Additional trained workforce is being made available to local providers to help them vaccinate more eligible people.

New models of delivery have been developed and blueprints shared with regional commissioning teams to encourage innovative thinking such as mobile, and mass vaccination models to allow for increases in uptake safely whilst observing social distancing and personal protective equipment requirements.

Olivia Blake: [\[92947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to covid-19 social distancing measures, whether annual school flu vaccination programmes are planned to proceed in 2020.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 24 September 2020]: The flu vaccination programme delivered to school aged children will continue this season. Advice on this is included in the Annual Flu Letter Update 2020/21 published on 5 August, and available at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907149/Letter_annualflu_2020_to_2021_update.pdf

■ Licensed Premises: Coronavirus

Daisy Cooper:

[95753]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the evidence that informed the decision that all licensed premises should operate on a table service only basis in order to reduce the risk of transmission of covid-19 in those settings.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 30 September 2020]: The Government receives a range of inputs in order to make all of its decisions relating to COVID-19 restrictions - including monitoring the impact of restrictions in local areas via the Joint Biosecurity Centre and monitoring international experience.

Table service only will help reduce the likelihood of people in hospitality venues coming into close contact with others they would not normally meet - for example, if queuing at the bar and waiting to collect orders.

The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies will continue to publish minutes from its meetings and the supporting scientific papers on GOV.UK, as has been the case since the start of the pandemic.

■ Marriage: Coronavirus

Matt Western:

[96169]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what scientific evidence underpins the public health decision to limit the number of guests in attendance at humanist wedding ceremonies to six guests, whilst permitting 15 guests at wedding ceremonies of other beliefs and religious denominations.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 1 October 2020]: Humanist wedding ceremonies can take place at this time with 15 people present, as well as for the legal solemnisation of the marriage.

We understand the unique significance that weddings hold in people's lives but, by their nature they are events that bring families and friends together. For this reason, only up to 15 people can attend a wedding. We will keep this under review.

■ Maternity Services

Rachael Maskell:

[97643]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps he has taken to ensure that a woman can be accompanied to (a) maternity appointments, (b) antenatal classes and (c) the birth of their child.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 5 October 2020]: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, women have been able to have one birth partner of their choice with them during labour and childbirth as long as their birth partner is well and does not have COVID-19 symptoms. The National Health Service is making arrangements to ensure that women are supported and cared for safely through pregnancy, birth and the period afterwards during this pandemic.

A new 'Framework to assist NHS trusts to reintroduce access for partners, visitors and other supporters of pregnant women in English maternity services' was published on 8 September 2020.

■ Mental Health Services: Autism**Nadia Whittome:**[\[95262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the level of availability of specialist mental health support services for autistic people.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

Under the NHS Long Term Plan, the Government is investing at least £2.3 billion of extra funding a year in mental health services by 2023/24 to support adults and children, including autistic people. Through the pandemic, we have provided £9.2 million of additional funding for mental health charities to support adults and children struggling with their mental wellbeing during this time. We have also provided a further £6 million to support various charities, including those working with people with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs.

We are revisiting the work to refresh the autism strategy, working closely with the Department for Education and other Government departments. As part of this work and as a key priority, we will consider what further action can be taken to support people to maintain good mental health.

■ Mental Health: Students**Liz Twist:**[\[96991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the effect on student mental health of covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 5 October 2020]: We recognise that there is the potential for an increase in demand for mental health services amongst students as a result of COVID-19.

We are working with the Department for Education, the National Health Service, Public Health England and others to gather evidence and assess the potential longer-term mental health impacts of COVID-19, including on students.

■ MMR Vaccine

Emily Thornberry:

[\[90085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the size of the stockpiles of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine that are available for prescription or purchase in the UK as of 15 September 2020.

Jo Churchill:

At September 2020, the volume of measles, mumps and rubella vaccines held in stockpile by Public Health England (PHE) for the national immunisation programme in the United Kingdom is forecast as sufficient to maintain the programme for around seven months. PHE receives deliveries of vaccine every month and maintains the stockpile permanently around this level.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[90086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Government last made an assessment of stockpiling of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine that may need to be undertaken in preparation for (a) a second wave of the covid-19 pandemic; and (b) the end of the transition period, and if he will publish that assessment.

Jo Churchill:

Significant stockpiles of vaccines for the United Kingdom's national immunisation programmes, including measles, mumps and rubella, are managed on an ongoing basis to ensure that the supply of vaccines into the National Health Service is not interrupted by any supply chain failures that may occur due to a variety of risks. Currently Public Health England's managed stockpile for the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine is forecast as sufficient to maintain the programme for around seven months.

■ NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme 2020

Helen Hayes:

[\[92845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the deaths of care home staff, how many applications have been made by relatives of care home staff to the NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance scheme; how many of those applications have been processed; what the total amount of money paid out in respect of those applications has been; and how many of those applications have been rejected.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 24 September 2020]: The Government launched the NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance scheme on 20 May 2020. The scheme is non-contributory and pays a £60,000 lump sum where staff who had been recently working where personal care is provided to individuals who have contracted COVID-19 die as a result of the virus.

As of 16 September 2020, the scheme administrator has received 57 claims to the scheme from the families of staff who had been working in care homes. Of these 57 claims, 21 have been paid and 30 have been agreed for payment subject to receiving

probate. Five claims require further information and one is in the process of being considered.

As of 16 September 2020, a total of £1,260,000 has been paid to the families of care home staff under the scheme. Where a case is accepted, the payment is always £60,000. To date no claims have been rejected.

■ NHS: Negligence

Nicola Richards:

[95767]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 23 September 2020 to Question 91196 on NHS: negligence, what the steps the Government has taken to ensure that the claims and court process take into account the context of NHS staff working during the covid-19 outbreak.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

We are committed to ensuring National Health Service staff have the support and resources they need to respond to the pandemic.

On 2 April, changes were announced to rules of court which gives guidance to judges to take into account the effect of COVID-19 when considering applications for extensions of time and adjournments in current cases. More information is available at the following link:

<https://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/civil/rules/practice-direction-51za-extension-of-time-limits-and-clarification-of-practice-direction-51y-coronavirus>

■ NHS: Voluntary Work

Steve Reed:

[91652]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many tasks have been undertaken by volunteers through the NHS Volunteer Responders programme in each month since it was set up, up to and including September 2020.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 22 September 2020]: As of 20 September 2020, NHS Volunteer Responders have undertaken 861,192 tasks since the start of the programme, which went fully live on 7 April 2020.

The following table sets out the number of completed tasks by month from March to September 2020.

MONTH 2020	COMPLETED TASKS
March	1
April	80,362
May	171,521
June	176,532

MONTH 2020	COMPLETED TASKS
July	181,797
August	162,879
September (up until and including 20 September)	88,100
Total	861,192

■ Nursing and Midwifery Council: Fees and Charges

Alex Sobel: [\[90224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to pay the Nursing and Midwifery Council's annual registration fees for nurses working during the covid-19 outbreak .

Helen Whately:

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is the independent regulator of nurses and midwives in the United Kingdom, and nursing associates in England. The NMC's regulatory activities are primarily funded by annual registration fees, currently set at £120 per year. There are no current plans to subsidise the annual registration fee for existing registrants.

The Department has been working closely with the NMC to support the response to the COVID-19 outbreak. On 30 March the NMC set up a temporary register to increase the number of nurses and midwives available to respond to the pandemic. There is no registration fee for nurses and midwives who are on the temporary register.

■ Pregnancy: Ethnic Groups

Justin Madders: [\[97597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to MBRRACE's report of 2018 entitled Saving lives, improving mothers' care, what steps the Government has taken to tackle health inequalities among Black (a) pregnant women and (b) mothers in the last two years.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 5 October 2020]: Work to reduce health inequalities around maternal mortality rates is being led by Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent OBE, Chief Midwifery Officer. This includes understanding why mortality rates are higher, considering evidence about what will reduce mortality rates and taking action.

The NHS Long Term Plan outlines plans to reduce health inequalities and address unwarranted variation in maternity care. Targeted and enhanced continuity of carer

can significantly improve outcomes for women. The Long Term Plan sets out that 75% of black women will receive continuity of carer from midwives by 2024.

■ Remembrance Day: Coronavirus

Holly Mumby-Croft: [\[97760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on taking steps to mitigate covid-19 risks in advance of 2020 Remembrance Sunday events taking place.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

My Rt hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has discussed a range of issues during Cabinet meetings in the context of managing the coronavirus pandemic, including mass events.

HOME OFFICE

■ Criminal Records: Databases

Allan Dorans: [\[99117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether access to the (a) European Criminal Records Information system and (b) Schengen Information system for (i) Police Scotland and (ii) the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service will be maintained after the transition period.

James Brokenshire:

We continue to discuss with the EU an agreement on law enforcement and criminal justice cooperation in criminal matters. The agreement should equip operational partners on both sides with the capabilities that help protect citizens and bring criminals to justice promoting the security of all our citizens. As set out in the UK's *Approach to Negotiations*, we have proposed this should include capabilities similar to those provided by the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS) and by SIS II.

Our focus is on reaching an agreement with the EU and we will continue to work hard to achieve it. We are also working closely with the police, other law enforcement and criminal justice agencies in the UK, as well as the devolved administrations, to ensure we are ready for a range of possible outcomes at the end of the year.

■ Members: Correspondence

Gareth Thomas: [\[98863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the correspondence of 26 August 2020 from the hon. Member for Harrow West which requested an urgent response regarding Mrs Patel ref: GT41801 application no: 4519819315.

Kevin Foster:

A reply was sent to the Hon. Member's correspondence on 6 October 2020.

Missing Persons: Children**Peter Kyle:**[\[99052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many missing children incidents were reported at each risk level (a) in each quarter since March 2019 and (b) since 23 March 2020.

Victoria Atkins:

Annual missing persons statistics, including how many children are reported missing, are published by the National Crime Agency's Missing Person's Unit. The latest report is for 2018-19 and is available at <https://www.missingpersons.police.uk/en-gb/resources/downloads/missing-persons-statistical-bulletins>. The Home Office does not hold data on missing children incidents.

The Government recognises the importance of accurate and timely data on both current and historic missing incidents. We are working with the national policing lead for Missing Persons and the NCA's UK Missing Persons Unit through the Home Office National Law Enforcement Data Programme (NLEDP) to deliver a National Register for Missing Persons (NRMP). The NRMP will provide a snapshot of live missing incidents across police forces in England and Wales.

Passports**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[98947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the waiting time is for an applicant to HM Passport Office to receive a passport.

Kevin Foster:

In the week ending 4 October 2020, the median average processing time for passport applications was six working days.

Please note the processing time does not include the time taken to deliver the passport to the customer.

Slavery: Coronavirus**Peter Kyle:**[\[99054\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the reasons for the increase in modern slavery referrals for children during the first three months of the covid-19 outbreak.

Victoria Atkins:

The Home Office published the Q2 2020 NRM statistics in September. This data shows a small increase in the number of victims exploited as a child referred into the NRM (1231 to 1274 referrals).

The data tables, which are published alongside the statistical bulletin, break down child referrals by a number of different characteristics which show that children exploited in the UK appear to be driving the increase in referrals. Newly published data in the same publication also shows a rise in county lines flagged cases.

■ Slavery: Prisoners

Andy Slaughter: [\[98905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people in prison have been identified (a) provisionally and (b) conclusively by her Department as victims of modern slavery through the National Referral Mechanism.

Victoria Atkins:

The Single Competent Authority (SCA) operates the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), which is a civil process for the identification and support of victims of modern slavery. The SCA does not hold real-time or reportable data on the number of individuals that have been identified as potential or confirmed victims of modern slavery whilst in prison.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

■ House of Commons: Twitter

Andrew Gwynne: [\[98904\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for Perth and North Perthshire, representing the House of Commons Commission, what discussions the Commission has had on (a) the decision that the House Twitter account is no longer to cover Divisions, (b) other changes to that account and (c) the compatibility of those changes with (i) the objective in the Strategy for the House of Commons Service 2016-21 of involving and inspiring the public and (ii) other objectives in that strategy.

Pete Wishart:

The Commission has not discussed this matter. The priority of the House Service is to provide the results of divisions as speedily as possible while maintaining its impartiality and not becoming part of the commentary. The House has recently invested in a number of new ways of keeping the public updated on Parliamentary business and division results, including further development of Parliament Live TV and UK Parliament Now, and the House of Commons Twitter account regularly links to these to keep followers updated.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Housing: Insulation**

Mike Amesbury: [\[98281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when the data collection exercise on residential buildings between 11 and 18 metres commenced.

Mike Amesbury: [\[98282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what his planned timescale is for the data collection exercise on residential buildings between 11 and 18 metres.

Mike Amesbury: [\[98283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department is making an assessment of the prevalence of combustible insulation as well as cladding in its data collection exercise on residential buildings between 11 and 18 metres.

Mike Amesbury: [\[98284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department is making an assessment of the the Euroclass reaction to fire classification of external wall system materials in its data collection exercise on residential buildings between 11 and 18 metres.

Mike Amesbury: [\[98285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the data collection exercise on residential buildings between 11 and 18 metres will include an assessment of external wall system materials on (a) schools, (b) hospitals, (d) care homes and (e) hotels of that height.

Mike Amesbury: [\[98287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of resources in local government to carry out the data collection exercise on buildings between 11 and 18 metres.

Christopher Pincher:

We have started a pilot data collection project for 11 to 18 metres buildings to produce a prevalence estimate and to inform the design of a wider national 11 to 18 metres data collection exercise. This work will provide information on how local authorities, other building owners and external partners can work together to collect this data, and the resource implications for this. Development of this work, its scope (including the Euroclass classification) and coverage is currently in design. Further details on this work will be provided in due course.

■ Religious Buildings: Coronavirus**Anne Marie Morris:** [\[97581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, for what reason places of worship are not allowed to serve food and drink while businesses are allowed to do so during the covid-19 outbreak.

Luke Hall:

In a place of worship, where food or drink are essential to the act of worship, they can be served and consumed. If it is necessary to handle food or drink as a part of a faith practice, those giving and receiving these items should wash their hands thoroughly before and after consumption, or wear gloves

If a place of worship provides hospitality spaces, such as cafes, these are permitted to open but should be limited to table-service, social distancing should be observed, and with minimal staff and customer contact in line with the [hospitality guidance](#).

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ Arms Trade: Saudi Arabia****Emily Thornberry:** [\[99545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 1 July 2015 air-strike on an apartment building in Saada was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 18 April 2015 air-strike on an Oxfam warehouse in Saada was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 12 June 2015 air-strike on housing in Sanaa Old City was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 27 August 2016 air-strike on a market in Shara'ab Al-Rawnah was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 20 December 2017 air-strike on a sports facility in Sa'ada was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 26 December 2017 air-strike on a farm in Al-Tuhayat was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 30 December 2017 air-strike on a farm in Al-Khawkhah was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 23 January 2018 air-strike on vehicles in Monabbih was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 15 January 2017 air-strike on a wake in Arisha was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be

one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 2 April 2018 air-strike on a house in al-Hali was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 9 April 2018 air-strike on a house in Dimnat Khadir was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 9 April 2018 air-strike on a workshop in Saada was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 10 May 2018 air-strike on a house and shop near Sanaa was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Emily Thornberry: [\[99559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 11 September 2020 to Question 86598, whether the 5 June 2018 air-strike near a Norwegian Refugee Centre guesthouse in Hadda was among the 310 incidents assessed as credible (a) to which her Department's International Humanitarian Law analysis was applied and (b) which was determined to be one of the small number of incidents assessed to be a possible violation of international humanitarian law.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

I refer the Rt Hon. Lady to the answer I gave on 11th September (UIN: 84666).

■ Ceramics: Trade Agreements**Jonathan Gullis:** [\[98294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits for the ceramics industry of free trade agreements with countries other than the US, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

The British ceramics industry is world-renowned and will be able to more easily access new markets around the globe, through our future Free Trade Agreements. The impacts and benefits of Britain's new trade deals, including those she will be rolling over, will be outlined in the Scoping Assessments, Parliamentary Reports and future Impact Assessments that will be published by HM Government.

■ Tradeshow Access Programme: Coronavirus**Daisy Cooper:** [\[99125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she will extend the tradeshow access programme funding to domestic events during the covid-19 pandemic.

Graham Stuart:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 29 September 2020 to Question UIN: 93683.

JUSTICE**■ Advisory Board on Female Offenders****Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[98196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when the Advisory Board on Female Offenders last met; and what was discussed at that meeting.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[98197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent representations his Department has received from (a) the Advisory Board on Female Offenders and (b) members of that Board in relation to the adequacy of funding levels for the implementation of the Female Offender Strategy.

Lucy Frazer:

The last meeting of the Advisory Board on Female Offenders (ABFO) was held on 30 June 2020. The agenda items covered comprised: a standing up-date on delivery of the Female Offender Strategy to date; the impact of Covid 19 on HMPPS and measures taken; plans for the first Residential Women's Centre in Wales; and the National Concordat on Female Offenders. Wider discussion included reference to the following topics: meeting the needs of minority ethnic and foreign national women; funding for the strategy; and women and remand. HM Government's commitment to delivering the aims of the strategy was confirmed.

We have received the following formal representations from ABFO members recently relating to funding for the FO Strategy: - The Prison Reform Trust's ABFO representative raised the issue at the last meeting of the ABFO on 30 June 2020

- The Women in Prison ABFO representative submitted a written representation on 24 September
- Women in Prison together with 20 other women's sector organisations submitted a co-signed letter on 7 June and 29 September relating to funding.

■ **Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015**

Mr David Lammy: [\[97451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the reforms made by Part 4 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015.

Chris Philp:

We continue to keep the provisions of the legislation under review. The Independent Review of Administrative Law (IRAL) was announced on 31st July; the independent Panel of experts is examining whether there is a need to reform judicial review.

■ **Evictions: Coronavirus**

Jon Trickett: [\[97458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will introduce a temporary ban on evictions in areas subject to local covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

Chris Philp:

The Government is clear that evictions should not be carried out in areas that are subject to a local lockdown that includes a restriction on gatherings in homes. This position has been set out in HMCTS' operational guidance for County Court bailiffs and the High Court Enforcement Officers' Association has confirmed to the Lord Chancellor that its members will also adhere to this approach.

■ **National Probation Service for England and Wales**

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[98186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans he has to improve (a) service user and (b) ex-service user (i) engagement, (ii) involvement and (iii) employment in the reintegrated National Probation Service.

Lucy Frazer:

We recognise the importance of engaging current and former service users in order to help shape a better probation system, and have sought their views on their experiences of probation and on key elements of the new model through surveys and focus groups. This engagement is ongoing and will continue as the new model is implemented so that we can learn lessons and further refine the approach to service delivery.

The National Probation Service will maximise opportunities for current and former service users to secure paid and unpaid roles within the organisation, particularly through the development of peer-led work, including peer mentoring schemes, which have played a key role in helping service users find routes into employment.

HMPPS is also developing a national Service User Involvement Plan, including service user involvement standards of excellence, which will set out our overarching commitments to service user involvement and support the sharing of good practice, and will establish a commitment to regular consultation and engagement opportunities for current and former service users at national, regional and local levels.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[98193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of creating statutory accountability bodies with community representation similar to Independent Monitoring Boards for the reintegrated National Probation Service.

Lucy Frazer:

There are no plans at present to create any additional, statutory mechanisms with regard to probation accountability. The new arrangements for probation announced in June 2020 will create a service with strong regional leadership that can work in partnership with other regionally and locally-based services. These services, in criminal justice and other allied services like health, have their own local and national oversight mechanisms. The Director General of the National Probation Service, the Chief Probation Officer and the regional directors are held to account by Ministers and, ultimately, Parliament

■ **National Probation Service for England and Wales: Electronic Tagging**

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[98194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of creating capacity in the National Probation Service for insourcing electronic monitoring.

Lucy Frazer:

Electronic monitoring (EM) is an effective criminal justice tool helping the police and probation keep the public safe by monitoring the movements of offenders and those on bail, restricting their liberty while ensuring they can remain in work or education.

EM has always been delivered using a contracted infrastructure and there are no current plans to move away from that model. Probation play a vital role in maximising the effectiveness of EM and obtaining the best outcomes for those who are tagged, which is why senior level sponsorship of EM within probation regions has been built into the new probation unified model.

As the sentencing white paper published recently demonstrates, this Government is committed to expanding the use of EM. For example, we intend to legislate to impose satellite enabled tagging on offenders released from custody who have committed

burglary and theft offences. And the roll out of alcohol tags to monitor Alcohol Abstinence and Monitoring Requirements to help to break patterns of alcohol-induced offending will shortly begin in Wales.

■ National Probation Service for England and Wales: Staff

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[98188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the adequacy of the (a) National Probation Service bands structure and (b) scope for progression above band 4 without moving to a management position.

Lucy Frazer:

We want to ensure that we are delivering a fair and enduring reward package for NPS staff. We are continuing our engagement with our recognised NPS Trade Unions to progress our collaborative work on pay modernisation in 2020/21 and onwards, and to develop proposals focused on improving the overall reward offer available to staff. This will involve looking at the current pay structure and whether it is working to deliver these aims as envisaged in the Probation Workforce Strategy released in July 2020.

The Probation Workforce Programme is looking to develop clear and transparent career pathways and development opportunities for probation staff. A key objective is to develop progression routes that provide varied experiences and opportunities which are suited to different career aspirations, including where appropriate, opportunities to join specialist teams and to work in a variety of areas across the business.

■ Offenders: Females

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[98199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent progress his Department has made on the publication of a national concordat on female offenders.

Lucy Frazer:

In the Female Offender Strategy, published in June 2018, we committed to publish a National Concordat on Female Offenders. We are grateful to members of the Advisory Board on Female Offenders who provided many helpful comments and constructive feedback on our working draft. Publication has been delayed because of the pandemic but we now plan to publish in the next couple of months.

The Concordat will set out how national organisations as well as local partners and services should be working together in partnership to identify and respond to the often multiple and complex needs of women who are in contact with, or at risk of coming into contact with, the criminal justice system.

■ Pre-sentence Reports

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[98201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an estimate of the average time taken to compile a pre-sentence report for (a) young people, (b) adult women and (c) adult men.

Chris Philp:

Pre-sentence reports (PSRs) are compiled by staff at Court and, under the Criminal Justice Act 2003, the judiciary have discretion to decide whether or not a PSR is requested by the Court.

The adjournment period for PSRs is set by the Court and time frames may vary for a number of reasons. Standard Delivery Reports are used for high complexity cases that courts are advised can be produced in 15 working days in order to obtain additional information. Short Format Reports can be delivered in two ways: as an Oral Delivery for non-complex matters where all necessary information is available on the day of sentence; or as a Written Delivery with a short adjournment for up to 5 working days for medium complexity cases.

The National Probation Service have a performance measure on PSR timeliness, that is assessed against the adjournment date set by the court. For the period 2019/20 the NPS delivered 99.8% of its PSRs on time.

The information requested for adult men and women for 2019/20 is provided below.

Mode and Median number of days taken to prepare report - Adult male, 2019/20

		AVERAGE NUMBER OF WORKING DAYS	NUMBER OF REPORTS
Mode	Median		
Oral	1	1	46,160
Fast Delivery Report	1	14	43,079
Standard Delivery Report	19	21	3,427
All	1	4	92,666

Mode and Median number of days taken to prepare report - Adult female, 2019/20

	REPORT TYPE	AVERAGE NUMBER OF WORKING DAYS	NUMBER OF REPORTS
Mode	Median		
Oral Report	1	1	9,955
Fast Delivery Report	1	14	7,143
Standard Delivery Report	13	19	188
All	1	1	17,286

Values represent the Median number of working days for the delivery of a PSR. The Median value has been selected to avoid a small number of outliers having a disproportionate impact; these outliers may represent inaccurate recording of PSR dates or may represent unusual circumstances at court.

We do not hold any data for the time taken to prepare pre-sentence reports for young people because the responsibility to do so lies with Youth Offending Teams, managed by Local Authorities.

■ Prisoners: Coronavirus

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[98200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter from National Chair of Independent Monitoring Boards dated 22 September 2020 to the Chair of the Justice Select Committee, whether there is central HM Prison and Probation Service guidance that education staff may not seek to engage prisoners individually on wings in order to remotivate their interest in education following its suspension during covid-19 restrictions.

Lucy Frazer:

The Exceptional Delivery Model (EDM) directs staff responsible for education, provider staff, key workers and prison staff, such as the Learning and Skills Manager, to engage with learners. Decisions about how current and potential learners are engaged and motivated to engage is a local decision taken with reference to local Safe Systems of Work. These are in place to minimise the number of people entering wings in order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infections being introduced.

Under this guidance provider staff are able to access wings as a means of enabling in cell learning and facilitating one to one activities.

■ Prisons

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[98195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how he plans to consult HM Inspectorates of (a) prisons and (b) probation during the design and contracting process for new prisons.

Lucy Frazer:

The expectations and standards of HMI Prisons and Probation informed both the design and planned operation of the new prisons at Wellingborough – to be known as HMP Five Wells - and Glen Parva. We will continue to involve both inspectorates as we take forward plans to create an additional 10,000 prison places as part of our investment of up to £2.5 billion to transform the prison estate and reduce reoffending.

■ Probation

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[98185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what responsibilities and powers Assistant or Deputy Chief Probation Officers in England and Wales will have in relation to the creation and maintenance of local links between (a) National Probation Service staff and services, (b) other public sector bodies and (c) voluntary sector organisations at lower levels than the probation area they work within.

Lucy Frazer:

In the Unified Model for probation we are implementing from June 2021, there are a number of roles reporting into Regional Probation Directors (including those at the Assistant Chief Officers (ACO) grade) who will have responsibilities for the creation and maintenance of local links with a range of stakeholders.

Heads of Probation Delivery Units, who manage a defined geographical boundary within an NPS Region where probation services are delivered, will have a responsibility to lead NPS engagement in local strategic partnerships and ensuring appropriate representation within wider partnership frameworks. This includes attendance at Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs), Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Safeguarding Children Boards, Youth Offending Partnership Boards and Safeguarding Adult Boards. The number and geographical boundaries of these Probation Delivery Unit structure have been reviewed and revised in anticipation of the transfer of CRC cases and staff and a key factor has been how to improve alignment with the local partnership landscape, such as police force area and local authority boundaries, and offer clear local leadership.

We are creating a new Head of Community Integration role in each region to oversee the commissioning and contract management of resettlement and rehabilitative interventions. They will be supported by new Commissioning and Partnerships teams who will work with the Heads of Probation Delivery Unit and others to strengthen relationships with local partners and lead the development of effective local service user pathways by working closely with suppliers and partners. This includes identifying and pursuing opportunities for co-commissioning of new services with

partners such as Police and Crime Commissioners, local authorities and health authorities.

Relationships with contracted suppliers, including voluntary sector organisations, will be primarily managed through contract management activity delivered by local teams embedded within the new regional NPS structure. In relation to suppliers commissioned through the Dynamic Framework, we will encourage close dialogue between the NPS and suppliers during the mobilisation and transition period with the aim of promoting strong working relationships which enable effective delivery and take-up of these new services.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[98189\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when the next version of the Target Operating Model for the Future of Probation Services in England and Wales will be published.

Lucy Frazer:

The next version of the Target Operating Model for the Future of Probation Services in England and Wales is due to be published in early 2021 and is currently being drafted and refined through engagement with a range of stakeholders (including staff and service users).

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[98191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what lessons were learned from the (a) structures, (b) governance, (c) partnerships and (d) operations of the previous probation trusts that will be incorporated into the next version of the Target Operating Model for the Future of Probation Services in England and Wales.

Lucy Frazer:

The design of the Unified Model for Probation is informed by the experience of both current arrangements under Transforming Rehabilitation and the previous system of Probation Trusts. Lessons learned from the Probation Trusts model include the importance of consistent operating models across different regions, the value of central support for service commissioning and the need for visible and empowered regional leadership to drive partnership working.

■ Probation: Contracts

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[98192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of accommodation volume within new probation contracts.

Lucy Frazer:

To establish volumes for new contracts being procured via the Probation Services Dynamic Framework, including accommodation services, we have drawn on existing data from probation services about offenders' needs together with an assessment of future demand and needs. Final indicative contract values and volumes were shared with potential bidders ahead of the launch of the competition for accommodation services.

■ Probation: Coronavirus**Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[98190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what lessons were learned from the operation of probation services in England and Wales under Exceptional Delivery Models during the covid-19 outbreak that will be incorporated into the next version of the Target Operating Model for the Future of Probation Services in England and Wales.

Lucy Frazer:

We are drawing on a number of lessons learned from the Exceptional Delivery Models (EDMs) established in response to COVID-19 in developing the Target Operating Model (TOM) for the future of Probation Services in England and Wales. For example, we are exploring the potential for using a blended approach to contact between Probation Practitioners and offenders, which retains an appropriate number of face-to-face meetings but also offers the possibility of additional engagement via remote channels. Similarly, the Homelessness Prevention Taskforces established in response to COVID-19 have resulted in significant operational benefits, and we are looking at how to continue these Taskforces in the long-term and to reflect this in regional structures. In the meantime, we are working to ensure that probation's current operating model continues to be robust and responsive to impacts across the Criminal Justice System during the continuing pandemic, and continuing to incorporate learning into current practice as this emerges.

■ Probation: Staff**Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[98183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress his Department has made on plans for a professional register of qualified probation staff.

Lucy Frazer:

In July 2020, we published the Probation Workforce Strategy, committing to developing a professional register framework for probation qualified practitioners by 2021/22 that will safeguard standards of practice and increase public confidence in Probation services.

The Probation Workforce Programme is currently prioritising recruitment, learning and development, pay and COVID recovery. However work to support the delivery of the register is progressing, including the design of a post-qualification curriculum and learning and development offer, which would also serve as the Continuous Professional Development requirement for registered professionals to maintain their registration and fitness to practice.

Ms Lyn Brown:[\[98184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing a professional register of qualified probation staff in meeting the goals of the Probation Workforce Strategy.

Lucy Frazer:

We set out in the Probation Workforce Strategy that establishing a professional register is a key deliverable for the Probation Workforce Programme. A professional register and framework will play a vital role in our objective of supporting and developing our people, whilst providing assurance that staff are adhering to practice standards. This will provide both a clear framework to safeguard practice and pathways for continuous professional development for our staff.

Ms Lyn Brown:[\[98187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the need to improve partnership working culture and skills within the probation workforce.

Lucy Frazer:

We set out our vision for our future probation workforce in our Probation Workforce Strategy published this summer.

This includes, working in partnership with other providers and agencies as part of successful delivery of Sentence Management; having an open learning culture with easy access to high-quality, practical learning resources; and developing a cultural vision for the organisation which will be captured in a Probation Culture Code.

We are keen to capitalise and build on existing relationships so that Probation Practitioners can work with other local partners, including health and related partners, to strengthen rehabilitation, social inclusion and improved outcomes, including on release from custody. Our future model of commissioning, the 'Dynamic Framework', will ensure all potential providers, regardless of sector, can play their part in delivering transformation probation services.

■ Residential Women's Centres**Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[98198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent progress has been made on the (a) identification and (b) delivery of five residential women's centre sites across England and Wales as part of the implementation of the Female Offender Strategy.

Lucy Frazer:

The Female Offender Strategy (2018) committed to develop a residential women's centre (RWC) pilot in at least five sites across England and Wales, and on 5 May 2020 we announced that the first RWC will be located in Wales. A Prior Information Notice was published in June 2020 to make potential bidders aware of the pilot and we are receiving expressions of interest from organisations in England and in Wales.

Since the residential women's centre pilot was announced, we have been consulting extensively with the Welsh Government, stakeholders, partners and providers in England and Wales to inform the scoping, design and delivery of the pilot. We will continue to do so as we refine the delivery model, which will offer a robust alternative to custody, providing safe accommodation and intensive rehabilitative support as part of a community sentence.

We are currently considering a range of data and evidence, in order to identify the best locations in England and Wales for the RWCs. We will work with Welsh Government and delivery partners in England and Wales to ensure locations selected meet the needs of local women.

TRANSPORT

■ Aviation

Tom Tugendhat:

[\[97638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to implement the Airspace Modernisation strategy; and if he will make a statement.

Robert Courts:

Airspace modernisation is vital to the future of aviation, to delivering net zero and create opportunities for airports to manage the noise impact on local communities. It is a critical infrastructure programme of national importance that will support the aviation sector's recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, in light of the pandemic, we recognise that the timescales in which airspace modernisation will take place will change. We are working with the CAA to review the Airspace Modernisation Strategy, to consider the recommendations from ACOG's recent report 'Remobilising the Airspace Change Programme', and will advise stakeholders of our preferred approach later in the Autumn.

■ Package Holidays: Coronavirus

Gareth Johnson:

[\[98207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with (a) Cabinet colleagues and (b) international counterparts on the viability of establishing covid-tested, resort based package holidays with British holiday companies.

Robert Courts:

We are committed to tackling this virus while enabling a sustainable and responsible return to international travel, and keep our approach to border measures under regular review to ensure that they remain effective and practical. To that effect, the Transport Secretary discusses a range of topics relating to COVID-19 with Cabinet colleagues and international counterparts.

On 7 October 2020, the Government announced the new Global Travel Taskforce, to support the travel industry and support the safe recovery of international travel. The Taskforce will accelerate work to inform proposals on a future testing regime, and develop options for how this could be introduced.

■ Parking: Pedestrian Areas**Rachael Maskell:**[\[98244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that people who do not have internet access are able to participate in the consultation on pavement parking.

Rachel Maclean:

The Covid-19 pandemic has posed many challenges. The majority of departmental staff are working from home for the foreseeable future to help control the spread of the virus. This means that the very large volume of physical post to the Department cannot be sorted and distributed in the normal way. We are therefore seeking to encourage all replies to the consultation by online survey, or by email where this is an easier solution. We sincerely hope that the majority of people wishing to respond will have some access to the internet, such as from a library or with help from friends or family.

I am pleased to report that despite the unusual circumstances, we have already received a large response to the consultation from members of the public, and we expect to receive responses from a range of organisations representing many of the people for whom pavement parking is a particular problem.

TREASURY**■ Boats: EU Countries****James Wild:**[\[97731\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if HM Revenue and Customs will publish guidance on whether recreational boaters will be liable to pay (a) VAT and (b) import duty in the event that their boat is outside the UK on 31 December 2020 and subsequently brought back to the UK.

Jesse Norman:

HMRC will publish updated guidance before the end of transition period on customs and VAT provisions pertaining to recreational boaters. The guidance will include conditions under which customs and VAT relief can be applied for boats outside the UK on 31 December 2020 and subsequently brought back to the UK.

■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme**Daniel Kawczynski:**[\[97516\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps an employee can take when they have not been paid furlough by their employer, when that employer has received the Government payment under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Jesse Norman:

The scheme rules make it clear that no grant is payable if the employer is not going to abide by the requirement to pay the furloughed employee 80% of their usual

monthly wage (up to a cap of £2,500). HMRC have powers to check and recover any amounts claimed where the employee has not been paid enough.

If workers are concerned they are not receiving this, they should report their employer to HMRC via the online fraud reporting tool on the Government's website, or use HMRC's telephone-based fraud hotline. HMRC will continue to monitor claim data, compare against records of earnings and review reports to their fraud hotline.

The Government retains the right to audit retrospectively all aspects of the scheme with scope to claw back fraudulent claims.

Rachael Maskell:

[98253]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he plans to take to prevent people who are currently on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and will not benefit from the Job Support Scheme from being made redundant.

Jesse Norman:

The Job Support Scheme (JSS) is designed to protect jobs in businesses that are facing lower demand over the winter months due to COVID-19, to help their employees remain attached to the workforce.

It is widely recognised that some firms will be affected by coronavirus for longer than others, and the Government will seek to support these firms appropriately.

To provide additional support for firms to keep employees as economic demand returns, the Government is introducing the Job Retention Bonus, a one-off payment of £1,000 to employers for each employee who was ever furloughed, has been continuously employed until 31 January 2021 and is still employed by the same employer as of 31 January 2021.

Where firms make the decision that they cannot retain all of their staff over the longer run, the Government is ensuring that those looking for work are supported through:

- A package of measures in the Plan for Jobs that helps people find work by significantly increasing help offered through Jobcentres and providing individualised advice through the National Careers Service. The Government has also launched the Kickstart Scheme, a £2 billion fund to create hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people.
- Temporary welfare measures announced in March including: £20 per week increase to the UC 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 UC and Housing Benefit claimants. These changes will benefit new and existing claimants.

■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Estate Agents**Neil Coyle:**[\[97587\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether (a) Mainstay and (b) other property management providers have received funding through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Jesse Norman:

The Government is not able to provide information on organisations that have used the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS).

Owing to HMRC's duty of confidentiality, HMRC cannot publish identifying information that relates to one of their functions.

The CJRS is one of HMRC's functions and publishing a list of organisations would provide identifying information.

■ Employment: Coronavirus**Robert Halfon:**[\[97551\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department plans to introduce support for people who are ineligible for existing covid-19 support schemes.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has prioritised helping the greatest number of people as quickly as possible, including self-employed individuals, businesses of all sizes and the unemployed. The Government's package of support to date totals over £190bn, with the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme alone having supported the wages of people in 9.6 million jobs. As the restrictions have changed, support has also evolved. The Government recognises it is not possible to preserve every job or business indefinitely, and will focus on targeting support as effectively as possible. Most recently, the Government announced a package of measures in the Winter Economy Plan, including the Job Support Scheme, that will continue to protect jobs and businesses through the uncertain months ahead.

■ Revenue and Customs Digital Technology Services: Employment Agencies**Sir Mike Penning:**[\[97483\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish the names of (a) suppliers, (b) agencies and (c) partners including staff procured via preferred suppliers such as (i) Crown Commercial Services Frameworks and (ii) Experis Ltd including staff engaged through Manpower Group and Elan Group prior to acquisition by RCDTS from July 2015 to date; and will he make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

In accordance with departmental retention policy, and in preparation to ensure compliance with the 2017 reforms to the off-payroll working rules, HMRC only holds a complete central record of departmental engagements from 2016 to present.

Since 2018, HMRC's contingent labour staff have been provided through Alexander Mann Solutions, who are supported by over 300 specialist recruitment agencies classified by their role category capability. Prior to this date, contingent labour was provided via Capita on a similar framework.

HMRC have a contractual relationship with the service provider rather than any individual agency.

Sir Mike Penning:

[\[97490\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish the names of umbrella companies to which payments were made by (a) suppliers, (b) agencies and (c) partners engaged by RCDTS in each year since July 2015 to date; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

In accordance with retention policy and in preparation to ensure compliance with the 2017 reforms to the off-payroll working rules, RCDTS only holds a complete central record of engagements from 2016 to present.

The majority of RCDTS's contracts are for contingent labour via an agency, and RCDTS uses the Crown Commercial Service's framework contracts for this. These contractors form a flexible complement to RCDTS's workforce, sourced through an employment agency.

With contingent labour there is always at least one agency between RCDTS and the individual contractor, although in practice this contract can be further sub-contracted, meaning there are multiple agencies between RCDTS and the contractor themselves.

RCDTS would hold a contractual relationship with either the recruitment agency or service provider rather than any umbrella company and are not involved in the payment arrangements of individual contractors.

■ Revenue and Customs: Agency Workers

Sir Mike Penning:

[\[97485\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the cost to HMRC is of staff engaged by suppliers (a) Crown Commercial Services Frameworks and (b) Experis Ltd, alongside and in addition to any other known suppliers; and if will publish details of the engagement contracts of those other suppliers for each year from December 2010 to date; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

In accordance with departmental retention policy, and in preparation to ensure compliance with the 2017 reforms to the off-payroll working rules, HMRC only hold a complete central record of departmental engagements from 2016 to present.

HMRC's contingent labour staff are provided through Alexander Mann Solutions, who are supported by over 300 specialist recruitment agencies classified by their role category capability. Prior to this arrangement, contingent labour was provided via Capita on a similar framework. The outline of this spend is below.

<i>YEAR</i>	<i>SUPPLIER</i>	<i>INVOICE SPEND</i>
2017-2018	CAPITA BUSINESS SERVICES LTD	£13,801,000
2018-2019	ALEXANDER MANN SOLUTIONS	£18,290,000
2019-2020	ALEXANDER MANN SOLUTIONS	£36,360,000
2020-2021	ALEXANDER MANN SOLUTIONS	£24,030,000

■ Revenue and Customs: Employment Agencies

Sir Mike Penning:

[\[97482\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish the (a) names of suppliers, (b) agencies and (c) partners including staff procured via preferred suppliers such as (i) Crown Commercial Services Frameworks and (ii) Experis Ltd including staff engaged through Manpower Group and Elan Group prior to acquisition by HMRC from December 2010 to date; and will he make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

In accordance with departmental retention policy, and in preparation to ensure compliance with the 2017 reforms to the off-payroll working rules, HMRC only hold a complete central record of departmental engagements from 2016 to present.

Since 2018, HMRC's contingent labour staff are provided through Alexander Mann Solutions, who are supported by over 300 specialist recruitment agencies classified by their role category capability. Prior to this date, contingent labour was provided via Capita on a similar framework.

HMRC has a contractual relationship with the service provider rather than with any individual agency.

Sir Mike Penning:

[\[97489\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if will publish the names of umbrella companies to which payments were made by (a) suppliers, (b) agencies and (c) partners engaged by HMRC in each year since December 2010 to date; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

In accordance with departmental retention policy and in preparation to ensure compliance with the 2017 reforms to the off-payroll working rules, HMRC only hold a complete central record of departmental engagements from 2016 to present.

The majority of HMRC's contracts are for contingent labour via an agency, and HMRC use the Crown Commercial Service's framework contracts for this. These

contractors form a flexible complement to HMRC's workforce, sourced through an employment agency.

With contingent labour there is always at least one agency between HMRC and the individual contractor, although in practice this contract can be further sub-contracted, meaning there are multiple agencies between the department and the contractor themselves.

HMRC would hold a contractual relationship with either the recruitment agency or service provider rather than any umbrella company and are not involved in the payment arrangements of individual contractors.

■ Self-employment Income Support Scheme: Ellesmere Port and Neston

Justin Madders: [\[97599\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people in Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency have received a payment via the self-employed income support scheme.

Jesse Norman:

By 31 July 2020, 2,600 individuals in the Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency had claimed the first grant for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme.

By 31 August 2020, 2,100 individuals in the Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency had claimed the second grant for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme.

This information is available from statistical publications released on 21 August and 18 September 2020 respectively.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Jobcentres: Coronavirus

Catherine West: [\[97676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many (a) suspected and (b) confirmed cases of covid-19 have been reported among officials working in job centres in each month since June 2020.

Catherine West: [\[97677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in which job centres have (a) suspected and (b) confirmed cases of covid-19 been reported among officials in each month since June 2020.

Mims Davies:

We do not hold the information in the format requested. Our records do not differentiate between those who self-isolate because they themselves have a suspected case of COVID-19 or because a family member is exhibiting symptoms.

Any confirmed cases in a DWP office are dealt with by appropriate level of cleaning, up to a deep clean, regardless of whether this is as a result of a member of staff testing positive, or a contractor, agency worker or customer.

Catherine West: [\[97678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many (a) suspected and (b) confirmed cases of covid-19 have been reported among security guards working in job centres in each month since June 2020.

Catherine West: [\[97679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in which job centres have (a) suspected and (b) confirmed cases of covid-19 been reported among security guards in each month since June 2020.

Mims Davies:

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19 reported by G4S for their security officers, with the respective jobcentre between 1 June 2020 and 30 September 2020.

There were six confirmed cases and 40 suspected cases (46 in total) recorded for the specified timeframe (indicated in Table 2) across England, Scotland and Wales.

Any confirmed cases in a DWP office are dealt with by appropriate level of cleaning, up to a deep clean, regardless of whether this is as a result of a member of staff testing positive, or a contractor, agency worker or customer.

Table 1 – Reported suspected and confirmed Covid-19 cases by G4S for their security officers by jobcentre from June 2020. Please note G4S are a contracted supplier to the Department, these are not DWP staff.

DATE	SITE	STATUS
01/06/2020	DWP LONDON KINGS CROSS	SUSPECTED
02/06/2020	DWP BLACKWOOD VISION HOUSE	CONFIRMED
08/06/2020	DWP NORTHAMPTON FRANCES HOUSE	SUSPECTED
10/06/2020	DWP FAREHAM NEW CIVIC CENTRE	SUSPECTED
15/06/2020	DWP BELPER KING STREET	SUSPECTED
19/06/2020	DWP LEICESTER CHARLES STREET	SUSPECTED
22/06/2020	DWP SLOUGH UPTON LODGE	SUSPECTED
22/06/2020	DWP ACCRINGTON OAKBANK HOUSE	SUSPECTED

DATE	SITE	STATUS
01/06/2020	DWP LONDON KINGS CROSS	SUSPECTED
26/06/2020	DWP DIDCOT THE BROADWAY	SUSPECTED
06/07/2020	DWP LONDON POPLAR DODD STREET	SUSPECTED
22/07/2020	DWP HULL BRITANNIA HOUSE	SUSPECTED
30/07/2020	DWP CRAWLEY GRESHAM HOUSE	SUSPECTED
31/07/2020	DWP BRADFORD LEEDS ROAD	SUSPECTED
09/08/2020	DWP DERBY HOLBORN HOUSE	SUSPECTED
11/08/2020	DWP BARNSELY COOPER HOUSE	SUSPECTED
17/08/2020	DWP BEDFORD WYVERN HOUSE	SUSPECTED
20/08/2020	DWP BLYTH BRIDGE HOUSE	SUSPECTED
21/08/2020	DWP TONBRIDGE BRADFORD STREET	SUSPECTED
24/08/2020	DWP DEREHAM ELIZABETH HOUSE	SUSPECTED
26/08/2020	DWP LEEDS SOUTHERN HOUSE	SUSPECTED
01/09/2020	DWP HEMSWORTH LOW HALL	CONFIRMED
02/09/2020	DWP CUMBERNAULD SOUTH MUIRHEAD	SUSPECTED
04/09/2020	DWP GLASGOW BENALDER STREET	SUSPECTED
08/09/2020	DWP CHESTER LE STREET	SUSPECTED

DATE	SITE	STATUS
01/06/2020	DWP LONDON KINGS CROSS	SUSPECTED
	STATION RD	
09/09/2020	DWP WORCESTER VINE HOUSE	SUSPECTED
10/09/2020	DWP SOUTHEND TYLERS HOUSE	SUSPECTED
14/09/2020	DWP READING ADELPHI HOUSE	SUSPECTED
15/09/2020	DWP DONCASTER CROSSGATE HOUSE	SUSPECTED
16/09/2020	DWP ROTHERHAM CHANTRY HOUSE	SUSPECTED
16/09/2020	DWP PLYMOUTH OLD TREE COURT	SUSPECTED
17/09/2020	DWP HONITON HIGH STREET	SUSPECTED
17/09/2020	DWP SOLIHULL NEW ROAD	SUSPECTED
20/09/2020	DWP BLACKBURN ORCHARD HOUSE	CONFIRMED
20/09/2020	DWP HALIFAX CROSSFIELD HOUSE	SUSPECTED
21/09/2020	DWP NOTTINGHAM PEARSON BUILDINGS	SUSPECTED
22/09/2020	DWP BEVERLEY CROSSKILL HOUSE	SUSPECTED
24/09/2020	DWP BIRMINGHAM SOHO ROAD	CONFIRMED
24/09/2020	DWP ESTON HADRIAN HOUSE	SUSPECTED
24/09/2020	DWP ESTON HADRIAN HOUSE	SUSPECTED

DATE	SITE	STATUS
01/06/2020	DWP LONDON KINGS CROSS	SUSPECTED
24/09/2020	DWP ESTON HADRIAN HOUSE	SUSPECTED
25/09/2020	DWP BLAYDON ST CUTHBERTS WAY	SUSPECTED
26/09/2020	DWP LETCHWORTH PEOPLES HOUSE	SUSPECTED
28/09/2020	DWP BIRMINGHAM YARDLEY	SUSPECTED
28/09/2020	DWP ESTON HADRIAN HOUSE	CONFIRMED
29/09/2020	DWP GLASGOW SHETTLESTON ROAD	CONFIRMED
29/09/2020	DWP GLASGOW SHETTLESTON ROAD	SUSPECTED

Table 2 – Number of suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19 reported by G4S for their security officers working in jobcentres across England, Scotland and Wales.

MONTH	TOTAL CASES		
	REPORTED	SUSPECTED CASE	CONFIRMED CASE
JUNE	9	8	1
JULY	4	4	0
AUGUST	7	7	0
SEPTEMBER	26	21	5
TOTALS	46	40	6