



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 15 October 2020 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:30 P.M., 15 October 2020). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

CONTENTS

ANSWERS	5		
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	5	CABINET OFFICE	11
■ Bounce Back Loan Scheme: Worcestershire	5	■ Advertising: Coronavirus	11
■ Broadband: Yorkshire and the Humber	5	■ Borders: Northern Ireland	11
■ Carbon Dioxide: Storage	6	■ Dover Port	12
■ Coal: Carbon Emissions	6	DEFENCE	12
■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Pay	6	■ Armoured Fighting Vehicles: Expenditure	12
■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Staff	7	■ Ministry of Defence: Pay	13
■ Employment: West Yorkshire	7	DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	13
■ Enterprise Zones	8	■ Digital Technology: Coronavirus	13
■ Environment Protection: Worcestershire	8	■ Events Industry: Coronavirus	14
■ Insolvency: Redundancy Pay	8	■ Fairgrounds: Coronavirus	15
■ Mineworkers' Pension Scheme	9	■ Football: Coronavirus	15
■ Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry	9	■ Gambling: Children	16
■ State Aid (Revocations and Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020	10	■ Hospitality Industry: Coronavirus	16
■ Weddings: Coronavirus	10	■ Pornography: Internet	17
		■ Sports: Coronavirus	17
		■ Telephone Services: Fees and Charges	18
		EDUCATION	18
		■ Apprentices	18
		■ Apprentices: Finance	19

■ Apprentices: Taxation	19	HOME OFFICE	37
■ Children in Care	20	■ 101 Calls: Standards	37
■ Coronavirus Catch-up Premium	21	■ British Nationality: Assessments	37
■ Foster Care: Coronavirus	21	■ Cybercrime: Extortion	37
■ Lifetime Skills Guarantee: Children	22	■ Fire Resistant Materials	38
■ National Tutoring Programme	22	■ Home Office: Pay	38
■ Pre-school Education: Finance	23	■ Immigration	38
■ Remote Education: Coronavirus	24	■ Immigration: Northern Ireland	39
■ Schools: Coronavirus	25	■ Migrant Workers: Care Homes	39
■ Soft Drinks: Taxation	27	■ Shoplifting: Coronavirus	39
■ Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus	28	■ Visas: Applications	40
■ Training: Manufacturing Industries	29	■ Visas: Hong Kong	40
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	30	HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	41
■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	30	■ Buildings: Insulation	41
■ Bus Services: Air Pollution	30	■ Coal: Mining	43
■ Livestock: Exports	31	■ Community Development: Bus Services	43
FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	31	■ High Rise Flats: Insulation	44
■ Christianity: Oppression	31	■ High Streets Task Force	45
■ Sub-Saharan Africa: Famine	32	■ Leasehold	45
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	33	■ Local Government Finance: Oldham	46
■ Cerebral Palsy: Health Services	33	■ Mortgages	46
■ Cerebral Palsy: Medical Treatments	33	INTERNATIONAL TRADE	47
■ Coronavirus: Screening	34	■ Aluminium: Antidumping Duties	47
■ Health Professions: Labour Turnover	34	■ Department for International Trade: Written Questions	47
		■ Generalised System of Preferences	48
		■ Rules of Origin	48
		■ US Republican Party	49

JUSTICE	49	■ Fuels: Excise Duties	59
■ Open Prisons	49	■ Insurance: Prices	59
■ Prisoners' Release	50	■ Money	60
■ Sentencing	50	■ Money: Coronavirus	60
NORTHERN IRELAND	51	■ Mortgages: Coronavirus	61
■ Terrorism: Northern Ireland	51	■ Redundancy: Yorkshire and the Humber	61
TRANSPORT	52	■ Respite Care: Finance	62
■ Blue Badge Scheme: Airports	52	■ Small Businesses: Corporation Tax	62
■ Bus Services	52	■ Sole Traders: Coronavirus	63
■ Bus Services: Standards	53	WORK AND PENSIONS	63
■ Cycling and Walking: Expenditure	53	■ Children: Maintenance	63
■ Leeds Station: Coronavirus	53	■ Employment: Poverty	64
■ Motor Vehicles: Noise	53	■ Employment: Young People	64
■ Motorway Service Areas: Leasehold	54	■ Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit: Asbestosis and Diffuse Pleural Thickening	65
■ Taxis: Coronavirus	54	■ Kickstart Scheme	65
TREASURY	55	■ Personal Independence Payment: Medical Examinations	66
■ Beer: Excise Duties	55	■ Self-employed: Coronavirus	66
■ Building Societies: Shares	55	WRITTEN STATEMENTS	67
■ Buildings: Insulation	56	BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	67
■ Business and Unemployment: Oldham	56	■ Business Update	67
■ Business: Coronavirus	57	EDUCATION	68
■ Business: North East	57	■ Application System for Initial Teacher Training	68
■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	58	TREASURY	68
■ Customs Declaration Services Programme: Coronavirus	58	■ Annual Report under the Infrastructure (Financial Assistance) Act 2012	68
■ Financial Conduct Authority: Fees and Charges	58		
■ Financial Services Compensation Scheme	59		

Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ **Bounce Back Loan Scheme: Worcestershire****Sajid Javid:**[\[100931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate he has made of the number of loans provided through the Bounce Back Loan scheme to applicants in (a) Worcestershire and (b) Bromsgrove District.

Paul Scully:

A breakdown on the number of loans provided through the Bounce Back Loan scheme as of 7 August is in the table below.

REGION	LOANS OFFERED	VALUE OF LOANS OFFERED (£)
Bromsgrove	1743	54,503,426
Worcestershire (which includes Mid Worcestershire, Redditch, West Worcestershire, Worcester, Wyre Forest)	7208	204,972,174

■ **Broadband: Yorkshire and the Humber****Sir Greg Knight:**[\[101978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to ensure that there is sufficient universal broadband network coverage to enable smart meters to function effectively and continuously; and when the Government plans for such network coverage to be made available throughout Yorkshire; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Greg Knight:[\[101979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate he has made of the number of households in England that have insufficient broadband network coverage to support the functioning of smart meters.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

Second generation smart meters use a dedicated national smart metering communications network, which uses a variety of technologies to deliver connectivity to premises. These include cellular mobile technology plus wireless mesh radio, and long-range radio technology.

The Data Communications Company (DCC), which operates the national communications infrastructure for smart metering, is obligated under the conditions of its licence to provide communications coverage to at least 99.25% of premises across Great Britain by the end of 2020.

The DCC is required by licence conditions to assess opportunities to increase the overall level of coverage beyond its contractual requirements where it is practicable and cost proportionate.

■ Carbon Dioxide: Storage

Alan Brown:

[\[101040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will list the carbon dioxide storage licences granted by the Oil and Gas Authority.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Oil and Gas Authority has awarded the following carbon dioxide storage licences:

CS003 to Pale Blue Dot Energy (Acorn) Ltd in 2019;

CS004 to Eni UK Limited in 2020.

■ Coal: Carbon Emissions

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[101008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of increases in the domestic supply of coal on global carbon emissions.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

Domestic production of coal, alongside the amounts of coal imported in the UK, have been steadily declining in the last five years. This is evidenced by the figures published by the Department here: [DUKES table 2.4](#).

In order to tackle climate change and deliver a net zero economy by 2050, we need to further reduce our use of coal. We are among the first countries in the world to commit to closing all unabated coal power plants. We intend to do this by 2024.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Pay

Philip Davies:

[\[100328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the biggest pay rise given to someone in his Department was in (a) percentage and (b) cash terms in the last 12 months.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The biggest pay rise given to an employee of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in the last 12 months in percentage and cash terms was (a) 4.85%, and (b) £4,500.

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

Caroline Lucas:

[\[100928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many staff in his Department are working primarily on (a) fossil fuels, (b) renewables, (c) energy efficiency and (d) nuclear energy.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Department currently employs the following numbers of staff working primarily in these areas:

UPSTREAM OIL AND GAS POLICY	26 FTE
Downstream oil resilience	15 FTE
Gas policy	23 FTE
Coal policy (including staff working on the domestic & international transition away from coal)	6 FTE
Liabilities from the former nationalised coal industry	7.4 FTE
The Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning, based in Aberdeen	90.5 FTE
Renewable energy	104.6 FTE
Renewable heat	79 FTE
Energy efficiency	237 FTE
Nuclear energy	201.1 FTE

■ **Employment: West Yorkshire**

Jon Trickett:

[\[100290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect on local economies in West Yorkshire of young people moving to urban centres for work.

Paul Scully:

We are investing over £695m in towns and cities across Leeds city region to provide the infrastructure and business support needed to grow the economy and jobs. In addition, investment of £30m per year will be made until 2035 for transport schemes to improve the connection between local areas and urban centres. The spatial concentration of jobs in the area has shifted over the last decade, and local priorities

for investment are based on improving the local economy including increasing opportunities for work for young people.

■ Enterprise Zones

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[101982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the effectiveness of the operation of Enterprise Zones to help those zones that have been less successful.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Enterprise Zones programme has supported the design of the Freeports model. A consultation was run earlier in the year and the Government response has recently been published at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878352/Freeports_Consultation_Extension.pdf.

We are committed to continuing to work with local places to deliver economic growth across the country.

■ Environment Protection: Worcestershire

Sajid Javid: [\[100929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support the development of a greener economy in Worcestershire.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

Within the decade, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister is determined for the UK to be at the forefront of the green industrial revolution as we accelerate our progress towards net zero emissions by 2050. We have set out billions in support for our low-carbon economy including over £3 billion to transform energy efficiency in homes and public buildings.

The Government is determined to ensure that the benefits of the net zero transition are shared fairly in every region. BEIS has also funded a local energy hub in the Midlands, covering Worcestershire, to help local authorities and communities design and develop renewable energy projects. In the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership area, the hub is currently supporting 7 projects valued at over £15m.

■ Insolvency: Redundancy Pay

Jon Trickett: [\[100297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many business have submitted HR1 forms to the Insolvency Service's Redundancy Payments Service since April 2020.

Paul Scully:

Employers are required to file an HR1 Form with the Redundancy Payments Service where they are proposing to dismiss 20 or more employees at a single establishment. Between 1st April 2020 and 30th September 2020 HR1 forms were received from 4,112 businesses.

Mineworkers' Pension Scheme

Stephanie Peacock: [\[102148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Answer of 3 November 2016 to Question 51063 on the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme, whether the Government has made any direct payments to the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme under the guarantee arrangements since November 2016.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

No such payments have been made.

Stephanie Peacock: [\[102149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much is held in the investment reserve funds for the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

As at 30 September 2020, the Investment Reserve stood at £1,216m.

Stephanie Peacock: [\[102150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of how much the Government will receive from the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme in the financial year (a) 2018-19, (b) 2019-20 and (c) 2020-21.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

In 2018-19, the Government received £142.4m as its share of surplus and £475m from the Investment Reserve. In each of 2019-20 and 2020-21, the Government received £142.4m as its share of surplus. The presence of the Guarantee has given the Trustees the freedom to invest in a way that targets surpluses and, as a consequence, bonuses to members. Bonuses paid to date mean that the typical member's pension today is around 33% higher in real terms than it would otherwise have been.

Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[101984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his oral contribution on 5 October 2020, Official Report, col 616, what mechanisms are available to the Post Office Horizon IT inquiry 2020 to secure disclosure in the event that documents are withheld by relevant parties.

Paul Scully:

Sir Wyn Williams has 28 years' judicial experience, and the Government has full confidence in his ability to decide how to engage relevant parties. The Government, Post Office Limited and Fujitsu have already agreed to cooperate fully with the Inquiry, and Sir Wyn will keep the Government informed of what progress is being made.

■ State Aid (Revocations and Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020**Darren Jones:**[\[101050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the compliance of the State Aid (Revocations and Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 under powers conferred by section 8(1) and section 8C(1) and paragraph 21 of Schedule 7 to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, with the Government policy as set out in the White Paper on Legislating for the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union that the Act will not aim to make major changes in policy or to establish new legal frameworks in the UK beyond those that are necessary to ensure the law continues to function properly from day one.

Paul Scully:

The State Aid (Revocations and Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 are being made using the powers in the European Union (Withdrawal Act) 2018 (as amended). These powers include those intended to address failures of retained EU law to operate effectively or other deficiencies arising from the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union.

At the end of the transition period, the EU law on state aid which would otherwise be retained by the Withdrawal Act would contain fundamental deficiencies which would make it inoperable in the UK. In accordance with the requirements of the Withdrawal Act, the instrument is doing no more than is appropriate to address those deficiencies.

■ Weddings: Coronavirus**Esther McVey:**[\[100980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to provide tailored support to the wedding industry during the covid-19 outbreak.

Esther McVey:[\[100982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to provide specific support to the wedding industry during the covid-19 outbreak.

Paul Scully:

My Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer has laid out the Government's Winter Economy Plan. This includes measures to support all businesses, such as extending the current government-backed loan schemes and introducing the Pay as You Grow and Job Support Schemes. There are also specific measures to support the self-employed, such as the SEISS Grant Extension.

Esther McVey: [\[100981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the economic effect on the wedding industry of the further restrictions announced on 22 September 2020.

Paul Scully:

The Government has put in place a package of support to help employees and businesses through these exceptional times. These include business support grants for qualifying businesses, extended government-backed loans and the Job Support Scheme.

Esther McVey: [\[100985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, for what reason wedding venues that ensure table service, social distancing and prevent dancing are subject to different restrictions to restaurants.

Paul Scully:

Celebrations such as wedding receptions pose increased risks for transmission of COVID-19 as they involve people from multiple households meeting and spending extended periods of time together. They are by their nature events which bring people closely together. Wedding receptions and celebrations are one of the few exceptions to the gatherings limit of 6 people, which has applied from 14 September 2020.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Advertising: Coronavirus

Rachel Reeves: [\[101270\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much money the Government has spent on advertising that was subsequently withdrawn as part of its covid-19 response.

Penny Mordaunt:

Further to the answers given to PQ [40655](#) on 11 May 2020 and to PQ [46692](#) on 29 May 2020, no spend on advertising has been withdrawn.

■ Borders: Northern Ireland

Stephen Farry: [\[99785\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, for what reason meetings of the Joint Consultative Working Group in relation to the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol have not taken place.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Joint Consultative Working Group, established under Article 15 of the Northern Ireland Protocol, will meet once the Rules of Procedure have been agreed.

Once agreed, we will arrange a date for the first meeting.

■ **Dover Port**

Rachel Reeves: [\[101269\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, when the Port of Dover will receive the Government funding announced for preparations ahead of the end of the transition period.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the hon. Member to my answer to [PQ 95015](#) on 2 October 2020.

DEFENCE

■ **Armoured Fighting Vehicles: Expenditure**

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[101985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much money from the public purse has been spent on support costs for the (a) Husky, (b) Panther, (c) Foxhound, (d) Jackal, (e) Mastiff and (f) Ridgeback vehicles since 2010.

Jeremy Quin:

Support costs, including for post design services, spares support and maintenance activity, for the last three financial years (FY) are provided in the following table.

Records prior to that date are not held in a format that allows them to be easily retrieved and would incur disproportionate cost.

PLATFORM	FY17/18£MILLION (VAT INCL)	FY18/19 £MILLION (VAT INCL)	FY19/20£MILLION (VAT INCL)
Husky	2.687	3.745	2.798
Panther	3.350	3.280	1.868
Foxhound	8.016	11.346	12.187
Jackal (also includes Coyote)	6.594	3.983	6.698
Cougar platform (Mastiff, Ridgeback, Wolfhound)	10.104	5.578	5.146
Total DE&S Support Spend	30.751	27.931	28.696

Notes:

(a) Support costs exclude those for provision of infrastructure and training.

(b) It is not possible to separate Cougar platform support costs (Mastiff, Ridgeback and Wolfhound) as there is a high degree of commonality between these vehicles and they have a single financial support line. Jackal and Coyote also share a single support line.

■ Ministry of Defence: Pay

Philip Davies:

[\[100325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the biggest pay rise given to someone in his Department was in (a) percentage and (b) cash terms in the last 12 months.

Johnny Mercer:

The table below details the largest pay rises by percentage and cash terms in the last twelve months.

AREA OF DEPARTMENT	PERCENTAGE	COST
MOD Main	28%	£6,411
Defence Equipment & Support	2.25%	£4,500
Defence Electronic Components Agency	2.0%	£1,350
Defence Science & Technology Laboratory	2.3%	£1,780
UK Hydrographic Office	7.3%	£3,406

The figures in the table relate to annual pay rises and do not include pay rises awarded on promotion to grade. The highest recorded pay rise in the last twelve months in percentage and cash terms was made to Ministry of Defence Firefighters as a result of incremental progression.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Digital Technology: Coronavirus

Esther McVey:

[\[100987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to tackle the digital divide during the covid-19 outbreak.

Caroline Dinéage:

In March, the government agreed a set of voluntary commitments with telecommunications providers to support and protect vulnerable consumers and those who might become vulnerable as a result of Covid-19. This included a commitment to work with customers who are finding it difficult to pay their bills to ensure that they are treated fairly and appropriately supported. The Government also

brokered a deal with providers which have allowed half a million NHS staff to benefit from better connectivity, and also ensured that a number of websites, including the NHS website, are zero-rated.

My Department has been promoting the DevicesDotNow campaign, which is working with community organisations to distribute devices to vulnerable adults and help them get online. The aim is to enable elderly and vulnerable people, particularly those to who are shielding, to communicate with the outside world and get access to vital services. Over 11,000 devices have been distributed by community partners. Futuredotnow are working with their founding partners, government and industry to continue to collect devices and distribute them to the local community organisations so they are able to reach the most vulnerable during this time.

In August 2020, government introduced an entitlement to fully funded digital qualifications which mirror the existing legal entitlements for English and maths. Adults with no or low digital skills will have full funding to undertake improved digital skills qualifications, based on new national standards for essential digital skills, up to Level 1.

■ **Events Industry: Coronavirus**

Peter Kyle:

[\[102129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he plans to provide additional support to the business events industry as a result of the pause in the planned 1 October 2020 reopening of those events in England.

Nigel Huddleston:

We are aware that the events and exhibition industry, as well as other sectors, have been severely impacted by Government measures to control the spread of Covid-19.

Businesses can continue to access the Government's UK wide support package. This includes the Bounce Back Loans scheme, the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme and, until the end of October, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

On top of existing measures, the Chancellor has expanded the Job Support Scheme to provide temporary support to businesses whose premises have been legally required to close as a direct result of Covid-19 restrictions set by one or more of the four governments of the UK.

The government intends for the Chancellor's announcement to cover those directly employed by business conferences and exhibition centres which are unable to reopen. Further detail will be set out in due course.

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 facing the sector.

■ Fairgrounds: Coronavirus**Ben Bradley:**[\[100539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he has taken to support the fairs and showmen industry during the covid-19 outbreak.

Nigel Huddleston:

My Department has taken a number of steps to support the funfairs industry through Covid-19.

The industry has been able to access support such as the Job Retention Scheme, the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, the Bounce Back Loans scheme. We have also cut the rate of VAT applied on most tourism and hospitality-related activities, including admission to circuses and fairs, from 20% to 5% until March 2021. Travelling fairgrounds can also apply to the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund.

We recognise that Covid-19 has significantly impacted the culture sector and that these are extremely difficult times for organisations such as travelling funfairs. We have met with representatives of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain to assess how we can most effectively support the sector through this period.

■ Football: Coronavirus**Ian Mearns:**[\[100955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues to secure support for the Sport of Association Football and clubs at all levels of the game.

Nigel Huddleston:

Football clubs are the bedrock of our local communities and it is vital they are protected at all levels of the game. That is why we have provided unprecedented support to businesses through tax reliefs, cash grants and employee wage support, which many football clubs have benefited from. Sport England's Community Emergency Fund has also provided £210 million directly to support community sport clubs and exercise centres through this pandemic.

The government has also been consistently clear that it expects football to support itself through this time. The Premier League and English Football League were some of the first elite competitions to return "behind closed doors", which enabled vital broadcast revenue to flow into the sport to look after the wider football family, retained competitive integrity and brought joy to millions of sports fans. The government also ensured Project Restart was shared with everyone by getting Premier League football on the BBC for the first time ever.

The government recognises the implications for sports clubs of not being able to admit spectators to stadia from 1 October, and are working urgently on what we can do now to support them. The Department will continue to work with colleagues across Whitehall to support the sector.

■ Gambling: Children

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[101983]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of children identified as problem gamblers between (a) 2010 and (b) 2020.

Nigel Huddleston:

The Gambling Commission conducts an annual survey of children and young people that collects data about gambling participation. Since 2014, that survey has included screening questions adapted for use with adolescents to identify respondents who may be problem gamblers. Problem gambling rates for all available years are given in the accompanying table. No comparable data is available for the years 2010-2013.

The latest published data is from 2019 and gives a problem gambling rate of 1.7% amongst 11-16 year olds, which is steady from the previous year. Changes to the survey's methodology throughout its lifetime mean it is not possible to identify long-term trends. In 2017 the survey was extended to cover Scotland and the pool of respondents was widened to include 16 year olds, and in 2018 the survey moved online from paper-based questionnaires. Further detail about the survey and its findings can be found in its 2019 report, available at:

<https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/PDF/Young-People-Gambling-Report-2019.pdf>

Table: Rates of problem gambling amongst 11-15/16 year olds since 2014

YEAR	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Rate of problem gambling (%)	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.9	1.7	1.7

■ Hospitality Industry: Coronavirus

Sir David Evennett:

[100300]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made on the effect of government support to the hospitality sector on that sector.

Nigel Huddleston:

My Department is in regular contact with Her Majesty's Treasury to closely assess the impact of COVID-related support measures on the hospitality industry.

Hospitality businesses can continue to make use of the Government's comprehensive support package - including the various loan schemes, a significant

cut to VAT until the end of March, plus business rates relief for eligible hospitality, retail and leisure businesses.

When it launches in November, the Jobs Support Scheme (JSS) will help protect jobs within businesses facing lower demand due to COVID-19. We have also announced an expansion of the JSS to provide temporary support to businesses whose premises have been legally required to close as a direct result of Covid-19 restrictions

We continue to engage with stakeholders through the Visitor Economy Working Group to assess how we can most effectively support employers and employees within the hospitality sector.

■ **Pornography: Internet**

Carol Monaghan: [\[102106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what progress has been made on implementing Part 3 of the Digital Economy Act 2017.

Carol Monaghan: [\[102107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what progress has been made on implementing the relevant age-verification sections of the Digital Economy Act 2017.

Caroline Dinenage:

As we announced on 16 October last year, we will not be commencing Part 3 of the Digital Economy Act (DEA) 2017 and its provisions on age verification for online pornography as originally intended. Instead we will repeal Part 3 of the DEA and the online harms regime will include provisions to protect children from age-inappropriate content, including online pornography. Our Online Harms proposals will go further than the DEA's focus on online pornography on commercial adult sites and provide a higher level of protection for children.

■ **Sports: Coronavirus**

Colleen Fletcher: [\[102096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to support (a) amateur and (b) semi-professional sports clubs during the covid-19 outbreak.

Nigel Huddleston:

Government has provided unprecedented support to businesses through tax reliefs, cash grants and employee wage support, which many sport clubs have benefited from. Sport England's Community Emergency Fund has also provided £210 million directly to support community sport clubs and exercise centres through this pandemic

We have also supported elite sports to return to "behind closed doors" competition, which enabled vital broadcast revenue, retained competitive integrity and brought joy to millions of sports fans. The government also ensured Project Restart was shared with everyone by getting Premier League football on the BBC for the first time ever.

The government recognises the implications for sports clubs of not being able to admit spectators to stadia from 1 October, and are working urgently on what we can do now to support them. The Department will continue to work with colleagues across Whitehall to support the sector.

■ Telephone Services: Fees and Charges

Drew Hendry:

[\[102110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions his Department has had with (a) Ofcom and the (b) Phone-paid Services Authority on improving regulation of companies selling turn key premium phone line (i) services and (ii) software to third parties.

Matt Warman:

The Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA) is the UK regulator for content, goods and services that are charged to a phone bill. The PSA is reviewing and updating its Code of Practice - the regulatory framework that companies offering phone-paid services to UK consumers have to follow. The PSA will consult on a draft revised Code of Practice in 2021, which Ofcom has to approve before it can come into force. The PSA keeps DCMS and Ofcom informed of the progress of the review.

EDUCATION

■ Apprentices

Karin Smyth:

[\[100463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many new apprentices (a) aged under 25 and (b) aged over 25 were taken on in (i) August and (ii) September 2020 where the employer benefitted from the Government payment announced in its Plan for Jobs.

Karin Smyth:

[\[100464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many new apprentices in (a) SMEs and (b) large employers taken on in (i) August and (ii) September 2020 are in placements where the employer benefitted from the Government payment announced in its Plan for Jobs.

Gillian Keegan:

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. To help support employers to offer new apprenticeships, employers are now able to claim £2,000 for every new apprentice they hire under the age of 25, and £1,500 for those aged 25 and over until 31 January 2021. The new payment means it is a great time for employers to offer new apprenticeship opportunities and take advantage of existing flexibilities to train their apprentices in a way that suits their needs.

We are in the very early stages of monitoring the take-up of the new payment to employers, and its impact on apprenticeship starts. The first payment is made 90 days from the apprentice's start date and as such no payments have yet been made.

■ Apprentices: Finance

Karin Smyth:

[\[100469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Association of Education and Learning Providers on a stand-alone apprenticeships budget for SMEs.

Gillian Keegan:

In the 2020-21 financial year funding available for investment in apprenticeships in England is around £2.5 billion - double the amount spent in the 2010-11 financial year. The department wants to ensure that we grow the number of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) offering apprenticeships supported by funding, given that they are vital to the UK economy. We continue to work with smaller employers to give them the confidence and support to take on new apprentices.

We are also working with large employers to improve the transfer process, making it easier for them to find smaller employers to transfer levy funds to, thus helping them maximise the amount of funding they will be able to transfer.

We continue to listen to and work with the Association of Education and Learning Providers and other stakeholders on how best to support SMEs to make the most of apprenticeships.

■ Apprentices: Taxation

Sarah Champion:

[\[100414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will extend the clawback for the Apprenticeship Levy to 48 months from the existing 24 months to support companies that have been affected by the covid-19 outbreak.

Sarah Champion:

[\[100415\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to allow companies to spend the Apprenticeship Levy on (a) training equipment and (b) apprentices' salaries.

Gillian Keegan:

The apprenticeship levy underpins our reforms to raise apprenticeship quality and support employers to make a long-term, sustainable investment in the skills that they need to grow. Income from the levy is used to fund apprenticeships for all employers – both in employers who pay the levy and employers who do not. Funding from the levy is available to spend on apprenticeship training and assessment costs as outlined in the funding rules.

From the point at which funds enter an employer's account, they have 24 months to spend them. Unused funds only begin to expire on a rolling, month-by-month basis

24 months after they enter an employer's account. Levy-paying employers can transfer up to 25% of their annual funds to help support apprenticeship starts in their supply chain or to meet local skills needs.

The department believes that 24 months provides employers with a sufficient opportunity to make use of their levy funds. We currently have no plans to extend the expiry period for employers' levy fund or to review what these funds can be spent on. We continue to engage closely with businesses, listening to their views about apprenticeships and the operation of the levy so it continues to deliver the skilled workforce that employers need.

■ Children in Care

Rehman Chishti: [\[100353\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many looked after children were living in placements outside their local authority (a) from 1 April 2020 to 1 September 2020 and (b) in the same period in 2019.

Rehman Chishti: [\[100354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many looked after children were living in placements outside their local authority area from 1 April 2020 to 1 September 2020 by (a) foster care, (b) registered children's homes, (c) secure children's homes and (d) other placement provision.

Rehman Chishti: [\[100355\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many looked after children went missing from care placements in each month from 1 April to 1 September 2020; and how many missing episodes they had.

Rehman Chishti: [\[100356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many looked after children went missing from out of area care placements in each month from 1 April to 1 September 2020; and how many missing episodes each such child had.

Vicky Ford:

This information is currently not available.

The latest figures on children looked after in England and on children missing from care or placed in out of area placements relates to the year ending 31 March 2019 are published in the statistical release, 'Children Looked after in England including adoptions 2018-19', which is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2018-to-2019>.

Figures for the reporting year ending 31 March 2020 will be published later this year.

■ Coronavirus Catch-up Premium

Bill Esterson:

[\[102066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of how schools are using payments from the Coronavirus catch-up premium.

Nick Gibb:

The Government has announced a catch-up package worth £1 billion, including a 'Catch-Up Premium' worth a total of £650 million to support schools to make up for lost teaching time. Our expectation is that this funding will be spent on the additional activities required to support children and young people to catch up after a period of disruption to their education. To help schools make the best use of this funding, the Education Endowment Foundation has published a support guide for schools with evidence based approaches to catch up for all students and a further 'school planning guide: 2020-2021'. These are available at:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/guide-to-supporting-schools-planning/> and:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/national-tutoring-programme/covid-19-support-guide-for-schools/#nav-covid-19-support-guide-for-schools1>.

Schools are held accountable for the outcomes they achieve with all their funding and this will be no exception. The Department understands that each school will have different needs as a result of this outbreak and we trust school leaders to make the appropriate decisions for their students to ensure that this money is spent wisely.

■ Foster Care: Coronavirus

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[101986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to publish guidance for local authorities and foster carers on safe contact for foster children with their birth parents during the covid-19 outbreak.

Vicky Ford:

The department has already produced guidance for children's social care provision, which is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-childrens-social-care-services/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-local-authorities-on-childrens-social-care>.

The guidance on new local restrictions includes exemptions for arrangements where children do not live in the same household as both their parents or guardians, and is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-restrictions-areas-with-an-outbreak-of-coronavirus-covid-19>.

The department may review its guidance for children's social care provision based on any new information that could impact this area.

■ Lifetime Skills Guarantee: Children

Neil Gray:

[\[101283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Prime Minister's recent announcement of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee, whether he plans to extend the 30-hour childcare policy to single parents who have pre-school-aged children and are on universal credit and in training.

Vicky Ford:

Childcare policy is a devolved matter and, as such, the free early education entitlements funded by the Department for Education are available only in England.

The aim of the 30 hours free childcare entitlement is to help eligible working parents of 3- and 4-year-olds in England with the cost of childcare and to enable them to work. In order to be eligible for this, parents must earn the equivalent of working at least 16 hours a week at National Minimum or Living Wage, or be in receipt of an eligible income-replacement benefit, such as the Employment and Support Allowance. Students that work in addition to their studies and meet these requirements are eligible for 30 hours of free childcare a week. Students that do not work and are not in receipt of a qualifying benefit are not eligible. There are no current plans to change this policy.

Students in England are, however, eligible for other forms of childcare support. All 3- and 4-year-olds in England are entitled to 15 hours of free childcare a week, regardless of whether or not their parents are working. Two year olds from disadvantaged backgrounds are also eligible for 15 hours of free childcare a week.

Other assistance with childcare costs for students in England include the childcare grant for parents in higher education undertaking a full-time undergraduate course. The amount payable is based on 85% of actual childcare costs up to a maximum of £174.22 a week for one child or £298.69 a week for students with 2 or more children.

The government also offers a Parents' Learning Allowance for full-time undergraduate students with one or more dependent children. For the 2020-21 academic year students could receive up to £1,766 a year depending on household income.

For those in further education, Care to Learn provides childcare support and related travel costs to young parents aged under 20, so they can undertake education or training.

■ National Tutoring Programme

Bill Esterson:

[\[102064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the ability of schools to access the national tutoring programme.

Bill Esterson:

[102065]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of children who have accessed the National Tutoring Programme.

Nick Gibb:

The National Tutoring Programme (NTP) is an ambitious scheme that will provide additional, targeted support for those children and young people who need the most help to catch up.

Through the NTP programme for 5-16 year olds, schools will be able to access high quality, subsidised tuition from approved tuition partners. Schools in the most disadvantaged areas will be supported to employ in-house academic mentors to provide tuition to their pupils. The NTP has not gone live yet so the Department does not have figures on the number of pupils who have accessed it. It is expected that the first group of tutors will be supporting schools from November, with provision continuing into the spring term. Further information on the processes for delivering and accessing tuition support is set out here: <https://nationaltutoring.org.uk/faqs>.

NTP funding will also be used to provide additional targeted early language and literacy support for reception classes. The Department is inviting applications from all state-funded schools with a reception class, with priority given to those with a high proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The application deadline is 30 October 2020. Participating schools will begin delivering to children from January 2021.

The Department is also providing funding to support small group tuition for 16-19 year olds, in English, maths and other courses where education has been disrupted as a result of COVID-19. The 16-19 tuition fund is a one-off, ring-fenced grant available to school sixth forms, colleges and all other 16-19 providers.

■ Pre-school Education: Finance

Karin Smyth:

[100461]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the adequacy of the level of funding announced for early years' provision on (a) nurseries, (b) pre-schools and (c) childminders.

Karin Smyth:

[100462]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies on the introduction of the 30 hour childcare extended entitlement of the Childcare survey 2020, published by Coram.

Karin Smyth:

[100472]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 31 October 2019 to Question 6463 on Children: Day Care, what research the Government has carried out since 2018 to ensure that the evidence base on the costs of providing early years education is kept up to date.

Vicky Ford:

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, and ministers at the department, meet regularly with colleagues across government, including HM Treasury, to discuss the Department for Education's agenda. Future funding for the early years is being considered as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review process, alongside wider public expenditure.

The survey published by Coram is part of the evidence base available for consideration in the Spending Review and is one of several pieces of research on the provider market. We continue to monitor the market closely through a range of research projects which provide insight into various aspects of the childcare and provider market.

The department carries out its own regular research on the cost of delivering childcare. The 2018 provider finances report is published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/provider-finances-evidence-from-early-years-providers>.

The Department for Education is due to publish a 2019 provider finances report in the autumn.

The provider finances reports include data on the total cost and total income of delivering childcare, the variation in unit costs (an approximate measure of the average cost per child per hour for all children in the setting) and staff hourly pay, and patterns in parent-paid hourly fees for parents.

The 2019 Survey of Childcare and Early Years Providers includes information on the costs of providing childcare and is available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/845080/SCEYP_2019_Main_Report_Nov19.pdf.

■ Remote Education: Coronavirus**Fiona Bruce:****[102030]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what additional support he is providing to families educating children in non-school settings as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Nick Gibb:

The Department announced further remote education support on 1 October, which will be available over the coming months to schools or colleges seeking additional support. This can be found on the 'Get help with remote education' page:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>.

This support was announced alongside the Temporary Continuity Direction, which makes it clear that schools have a duty to provide remote education for school-age children in state-funded education who are unable to attend school due to COVID-19:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/remote-education-temporary-continuity-direction-explanatory-note>.

The purpose of the Temporary Continuity Direction is to ensure that there is no doubt about the roles and responsibilities within the system for providing remote education. This will come into effect from 22 October 2020. The Temporary Continuity Direction poses no additional expectations on the quality of remote education expected of schools beyond those set out in this guidance.

The support for schools includes 250,000 laptops and tablets for disadvantaged children and development resources for staff, including a good practice guide and school-led webinars. We are also investing £1.5 million of additional funding to expand the EdTech Demonstrator programme, which provides peer-to-peer support for schools and colleges.

This support package will include 80 grants of £1,000 to colleges across England, providing additional training and support for mentors and coaches specialising in assisting teachers with remote education.

The package is designed to help schools and colleges build on and deliver their existing plans in the event that individuals or groups of pupils are unable to attend school because of COVID-19 in line with guidance and the law. This adds to existing support, including resources available from Oak National Academy.

During the lockdown, most children were educated at home. This 'home-schooling' is not the same as elective home education (EHE), and children remained on their school roll and received a combination of support from schools, online learning resources such as Oak Academy, and other resources parents may have provided themselves. EHE is where a parent chooses not to send their child to school full-time but assumes responsibility for making sure their child otherwise receives a full-time education.

The Government supports the right of parents to educate children at home through EHE when they wish to do so and can provide a suitable education. EHE works well when it is a positive choice and carried out with a proper regard for the needs of the child.

For parents who wish to educate children at home by EHE, they must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility for their child's education, including bearing the cost of any public examinations, which would have to be entered via an external examinations centre. Some local authorities may provide financial or other assistance to home-educating families for public examinations, but this is discretionary.

■ Schools: Coronavirus

Bill Esterson:

[\[102063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what payments have been made to schools in (a) Sefton, (b) Merseyside and (c) the North West from the covid-19 exceptional costs fund; and when schools that have applied for that funding will receive a decision on their application.

Nick Gibb:

The first window for schools to claim funding back for exceptional costs due to COVID-19 closed on 21 July. The following payments against claims within the published scope of the fund have been arranged for schools in the named areas for those costs incurred between March to July 2020:

	PAID IN SEPTEMBER 2020	TO BE PAID IN NOVEMBER 2020	TOTAL
Sefton ¹	£289,962	£491,796	£781,758
Merseyside ²	£2,133,315	£2,953,468	£5,086,783
North West ³	£7,763,083	£8,738,090	£16,501,173

Schools also made claims for costs outside of the published scope of the fund and an assessment is currently being undertaken to determine which of these other costs can be reimbursed. We expect to write to schools in November to confirm the outcome of that assessment.

¹ SCHOOLS IN THE SEFTON LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA.

² Schools in the Liverpool, Knowsley, Wirral, St Helens, Sefton and Halton local authority areas.

³ Schools in the government office region of the North West.

Bill Esterson:[\[102067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on whether contact tracers are required to follow up cases of covid-19 reported in schools.

Nick Gibb:

Where a member of staff or child tests positive, contact tracers will ask the individual to provide details of their contacts.

Staff or the parents of children who test positive should inform their school immediately. The school will then take swift action to ask those who have been in close contact with the confirmed case to self-isolate. Schools can contact the dedicated Public Health England (PHE) advice service via the Department's own helpline for support on the latest public health advice.

PHE's advice service will work with the school to carry out a rapid risk assessment and make recommendations based on the latest public health advice. If, following triage, further expert advice is required, the adviser will escalate the call to the local health protection team.

■ Soft Drinks: Taxation

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[102089]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which organisations have been provided with funding as a result of the Soft Drinks Industry Levy; and how much each of those organisations received, in each year since its introduction.

Nick Gibb:

The Budget 2016 announced that the Department would receive funding of £575 million, linked to the revenue from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL), for a number of programmes.

Since September 2017, the funding has been used to double primary PE and Sport Premium, with SDIL revenue contributing an additional £160 million a year towards the total of £320 million. School-level allocations are available here:

<https://skillsfunding.service.gov.uk/single-funding-statement/latest/start>.

Allocations from previous years are available on The National Archives' website:

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/search/result/?q=pe+and+sport+premium>.

From the revenue generated from the SDIL, £100 million was used for the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund in the 2018-19 financial year. Allocations for each local authority and multi-academy trust, who were eligible to receive a direct allocation, were published in March 2018 and are available here:

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20190212204720/https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-allocations>.

Details of successful Healthy Pupils Capital Fund projects funded through the Condition Improvement Fund have been published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/condition-improvement-fund-2018-to-2019-outcome>.

Funding of nearly £22 million was allocated, between 2017 and 2019, to an Essential Life Skills (ELS) programme to enable disadvantaged children and young people living in some of the most deprived parts of the country to participate in regular extra-curricular activities. These activities will enable them to develop essential life skills and get the best start in life. The ELS programme targeted disadvantaged children and young people aged 5-18 across 12 opportunity areas. Areas received £7.95 million in the 2017-18 financial year and £13.8 million in the 2018-19 financial year.

Details of the grants are published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/essential-life-skills-grant-s31-grant-determination-and-letters>.

The Department is investing up to £35 million from the SDIL to fund the National Schools Breakfast Programme over 3 years from March 2018. Overall, this money will start or improve breakfast clubs in up to 2,450 schools in disadvantaged areas, making them more sustainable in the long run. The focus of these clubs has been to target the most disadvantaged areas of the country, including the Department's opportunity areas, to help make sure every child gets the best start in life.

The Department confirmed in July that children from more than 1,800 schools in England, who are currently part of our Breakfast Clubs programme, would be offered healthy breakfasts over the summer months:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-of-children-offered-nutritious-breakfasts-during-summer>.

■ Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus

Yasmin Qureshi:

[102026]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps is he taking to support children with special educational needs and disabilities as they return to school during the covid-19 outbreak.

Vicky Ford:

We appreciate that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have faced many challenges during the COVID-19 outbreak and some may find returning to school difficult. Therefore, we have put in place a number of measures to support their return to school.

We have published guidance to support schools with welcoming all pupils back and re-engaging pupils with learning. We are clear that schools should work closely with parents and carers to agree the best approach to support children and young people with SEND. The guidance for the full opening of special education settings is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>.

The guidance for the full opening of mainstream settings is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>.

In addition, the Whole School SEND consortium have run training sessions and developed resources for teachers supporting pupils with SEND to return to school after the long absence.

We are very aware of the negative impact that the COVID-19 outbreak is likely to have had on children and young people's mental health and are working to provide additional support in this area. We recently announced extra mental health support for pupils and teachers to respond to the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. This will include a programme to develop mental health and wellbeing expertise among school staff and a wider Public Health England-led package of support for young people, including online resources designed by health and education experts.

We have also announced a major investment in SEND education, including an additional £730 million into high needs next financial year, coming on top of the additional £780 million in the 2020-21 financial year, which means high needs budgets will have grown by over £1.5 billion, nearly a quarter, to £8 billion in just two years.

Furthermore, we are providing an additional £1 billion catch-up package to schools, which includes a 'catch-up premium' worth £650 million to support schools to make up for lost teaching time. This carries additional weighting for specialist settings, recognising the significantly higher per pupil costs they face.

■ Training: Manufacturing Industries

Sarah Champion: [\[100417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to consult with the manufacturing industries on support for skills that will be required in those industries in the next 10 years.

Sarah Champion: [\[100418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking with Cabinet colleagues to consult with (a) businesses and (b) local authorities on funding for employment skills needed in the future.

Gillian Keegan:

We want to make the skills systems more responsive to employer skill needs both locally and nationally and we have been working with employers in all sectors including manufacturing to jointly design and deliver policies and programmes to do this.

Labour market information is important to understand futures skills needs and to inform consultation and debate with business, providers, learners and local stakeholders. The department provides quantitative labour market and skills projections for the decade ahead in Working Futures 2017-27, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/labour-market-and-skills-projections-2017-to-2027>.

Working Futures helps to identify future skills needs and informs debates about how they should be met by providing detailed forecasts of employment by sector, occupation and geography including local areas. It is one of the main sources of data used by Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs).

SAPs will bring together employers, local authorities, universities, colleges and other training providers. These partners will work together to pool their knowledge and expertise and decide what skills are really needed across a sub-region. This will help ensure we match training to the jobs available in the local area.

The government is providing £2.5 billion (£3 billion when including Barnett funding for devolved administrations) for the National Skills Fund.

My right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, as part of his Lifetime Skills Guarantee, announced that for adults who do not currently have a level 3 qualification, we will be fully funding their first full level 3, focusing on the valuable courses that will help them get ahead in the labour market. The offer will be funded from the National Skills Fund and offered from April 2021.

The Prime Minister, also announced digital bootcamps to support local regions and employers to fill in-demand vacancies by providing valuable skills. Adults in the West Midlands, Greater Manchester and Lancashire, and Liverpool City Region can now register their interest to take part in the digital bootcamps. In early 2021 the digital bootcamps will also be available in Leeds City Region, Heart of the South West and Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. 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.

The government remains committed to consulting on aspects of the National Skills Fund to ensure that we develop a fund that helps adults learn valuable skills and prepare for the economy of the future. We are continuing to review the ongoing implications of the COVID-19 outbreak and we are considering the most appropriate time and approach we can take to launch the consultation, ensuring we have meaningful discussions with employers, providers and users.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[907597\]](#)

What steps he is taking to help ensure that zoos and aquariums affected by covid-19 can access the Zoos Support Fund.

Victoria Prentis:

The £14 million Zoos Support Fund ended and has been replaced by the £100 million Zoo Animals Fund. To make this fund even more accessible, we have expanded the eligibility criteria so that grant payments to zoos begin when they reach their final 12 weeks of financial reserves, rather than six weeks, and so that zoos can apply for funding at any time before reaching this 12 week point to help with their business planning. Defra officials have been engaging regularly with larger zoos to understand their concerns and will continue to do so.

■ **Bus Services: Air Pollution**

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[102047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Transport on the potential for the National Bus Strategy to deliver improved air quality and carbon emissions.

Rebecca Pow:

My department works closely with the Department for Transport through our shared Joint Air Quality Unit. As a result, officials in both departments have regular engagement to ensure evolving bus policy considers the potential impacts on air quality. The Joint Air Quality Unit also engages directly with the bus sector to understand how to reduce emissions from buses in those areas currently exceeding

legal NO₂ limits, particularly through the ongoing delivery of Government-funded retrofit schemes to fit technologies to buses to reduce their tailpipe emissions.

■ Livestock: Exports

Sir Mike Penning: [\[101997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 9 October 2020 to Question 97481, when he plans to launch the consultation on a ban on the export of live animals for slaughter.

Sir Mike Penning: [\[101998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 9 October 2020 to Question 97481 on Animals: Exports, how his Department defines excessively long journeys; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Mike Penning: [\[102700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 9 October 2020 to Question 97481 on Animals: Exports, if he will make it his policy to ban all exports of live animals for slaughter.

Victoria Prentis:

The Farm Animal Welfare Committee has reported to us on animal welfare issues concerning live exports and noted that animals should only be transported if absolutely necessary. We are carefully considering the report and recommendations in terms of what they mean for ending excessively long journeys. We intend to launch a consultation on how we deliver on our manifesto commitment later this year.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ Christianity: Oppression

Daisy Cooper: [\[102183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 pandemic on levels of Christian persecution.

Nigel Adams:

The UK remains deeply concerned by the severity and scale of violations and abuses of Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in many parts of the world. We are continuing to assess the impact of COVID-19 on members of all minority religious and belief communities, including Christians. We are concerned by the secondary effects of the pandemic including incidents of hate speech. Such incidents are unacceptable, and the UK will continue to refute these divisive and harmful claims. We are also concerned by the rise in conspiracy theories that certain faiths or beliefs are to blame for the pandemic, and reports that some Christian communities have been denied access to aid and information.

As part of our ongoing work to promote FoRB for all, we have issued a statement calling for states to ensure that any restrictions to the right to FoRB are necessary, proportionate and time-limited to protect public health. The Minister for Human Rights, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, also urged states to take steps to mitigate the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society, including religious and belief minorities, during the UK's closing statement at the 44th session of the UN Human Rights Council. The UK Government remains committed to implementing the recommendations from the Bishop of Truro's independent Review on persecuted Christians in full. Work is continuing to implement the recommendations in a way that will bring real improvements in the lives of those persecuted because of their faith, belief, or those of no religious belief. Defending the right to FoRB for all remains a priority for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

■ Sub-Saharan Africa: Famine

John McDonnell:

[\[100281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that food shortages and famine across Sub-Saharan Africa do not result in an increase in sexual exploitation of adolescent girls.

James Duddridge:

Sexual exploitation is completely unacceptable. That is why the UK is a vocal advocate for safeguarding against sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH). We remain firmly committed to raising safeguarding standards across the aid sector and we continue to have zero tolerance to any form of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

FCDO launched a new UK Strategy on Safeguarding Against SEAH last month that applies to all UK Official Development Assistance. Partners undergo our enhanced safeguarding due diligence to ensure they meet our high standards.

The current food security situation in sub-Saharan Africa places adolescent girls at increased risk of sexual exploitation. All humanitarian programmes, including those addressing chronic hunger and its broader underlying drivers, undertake a robust gender analysis of SEAH risks. This informs programme design, interventions and monitoring. The UK is also a leading donor on gender-responsive social protection. This protects and builds the resilience of poor and vulnerable families to reduce negative coping mechanisms such as exchanging sex for food or marrying daughters in exchange for assets or cash.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Cerebral Palsy: Health Services****Vicky Foxcroft:****[92844]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve the transition from specialist cerebral palsy services provided for children and young people to adult services.

Helen Whately:

No specific assessment has been made. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guideline 'Transition from children's to adults' services for young people using health or social care services', published February 2016, covers the period before, during and after a young person moves from children's to adults' services. Addressing both health and social care, it aims to make young people and their carers' experience of transitioning between services better by improving the way it's planned and carried out. The guideline is available at the following link:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng43>

This guideline is used by the Care Quality Commission to inform the inspection process. NICE updated its pathway on the topic in June 2020, bringing together all relevant guidance and quality standards for cerebral palsy. The pathway is available at the following link:

<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/cerebral-palsy>

The 'Cerebral palsy in under 25s: assessment and management' guideline was published by NICE in January 2017, and covers diagnosing, assessing and managing cerebral palsy in children and young people from birth up to their 25th birthday. The guideline is available at the following link:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng62>

■ Cerebral Palsy: Medical Treatments**Vicky Foxcroft:****[92841]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of mental health medication on the motor function of adults living with cerebral palsy.

Vicky Foxcroft:**[92842]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of medication used to manage motor function on the mental health of adults living with cerebral palsy.

Helen Whately:

No specific assessments have been made. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guideline 'Cerebral palsy in adults', published in January 2019, sets out best practice guidance for clinicians in considering the effects of medication for adults

living with cerebral palsy. It recommends that clinicians should consider the specific factors that might affect identifying, assessing and managing mental health problems and emotional difficulties in people with cerebral palsy. These include the adverse effects of medicines, including the effects of medicines used for managing mental health problems on motor function, or those used for managing motor function on mental health. This guidance is available at the following link:

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/NG119

■ Coronavirus: Screening

Munira Wilson: **[94561]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and which NHS hospital trusts in England have access to 90-minute tests for covid-19.

Munira Wilson: **[94564]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the timescale is for rolling out the 90-minute covid-19 tests across all NHS hospital trusts.

Munira Wilson: **[94565]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, by which month all NHS trusts in England will have a supply of 90-minute covid-19 tests.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 28 September 2020]: Rapid turnaround testing device deployment plans are in development. No further information is available at this stage.

■ Health Professions: Labour Turnover

Colleen Fletcher: **[96920]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of (a) doctor and (b) nurse retention in the NHS in the last ten years.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 5 October 2020]: NHS Digital publishes Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS) workforce statistics, including information on staff turnover. These include staff working in hospital trusts and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), but not staff working in primary care, local authorities or other providers.

The following table shows the annual numbers and rates (as at June each year) for leavers from the specified staff group, doctors, including staff who left the National Health Service.

HCHS DOCTORS (EXCLUDING JUNIOR DOCTORS)			
	Leavers	Leaver Rate	Stability Index
June 2010 to June 2011	4,415	8.3%	91.6%

HCHS DOCTORS (EXCLUDING JUNIOR DOCTORS)			
June 2011 to June 2012	4,630	8.6%	91.4%
June 2012 to June 2013	4,720	8.7%	91.3%
June 2013 to June 2014	4,189	7.6%	92.3%
June 2014 to June 2015	4,129	7.3%	92.6%
June 2015 to June 2016	4,313	7.4%	92.5%
June 2016 to June 2017	4,242	7.1%	92.8%
June 2017 to June 2018	4,431	7.2%	92.7%
June 2018 to June 2019	4,263	6.7%	93.2%
June 2019 to June 2020	4,272	6.5%	93.4%

Source: NHS Digital Workforce Statistics – Annual HCHS doctor and nurses and health visitor leavers from the staff group, in NHS trusts and CCGs in England, June to June each year, 2010 to 2020, headcount and rates. Excluding junior doctors.

The latest data shows that in the last year 4,272 doctors, 6.5%, (excluding junior doctors) who were part of the staff group were not at the year end. However, the latest NHS workforce data shows that the total number of doctors (including junior doctors) has increased overall by 26,604 full time equivalent (FTE) in the last 10 years and 9,283 FTE in the last year.

The following table shows the leaver rate, stability index, and number of nurses and health visitors who have left the NHS staff group as at June for each of the years specified.

NURSES AND HEALTH VISITORS			
	Leavers	Leaver Rate	Stability Index
June 2010 to June 2011	33,458	10.6%	89.4%

NURSES AND HEALTH VISITORS			
June 2011 to June 2012	36,846	11.9%	88.2%
June 2012 to June 2013	32,521	10.6%	89.4%
June 2013 to June 2014	33,243	10.8%	89.2%
June 2014 to June 2015	35,560	11.4%	88.6%
June 2015 to June 2016	37,068	11.8%	88.2%
June 2016 to June 2017	37,781	12.0%	88.0%
June 2017 to June 2018	36,998	11.7%	88.3%
June 2018 to June 2019	36,080	11.3%	88.6%
June 2019 to June 2020	33,733	10.2%	89.5%

Source: NHS Digital Workforce Statistics – Annual HCHS doctor and nurses and health visitor leavers from the staff group, in NHS trusts and CCGs in England, June to June each year, 2010 to 2020, headcount and rates.

The latest data shows that in the last year 33,733 nurses and health visitors left the staff group during the last year. The stability index for the last year indicates that 89.5% of nurses and health visitors remained in the staff group. The latest NHS workforce data shows that the number of nurses and health visitors has increased overall by 21,851 FTE in the last 10 years and by 13,825 FTE in the last year.

NHS England and NHS Improvement's Retention Programme supports local delivery and launched a large-scale pathfinder programme across three regions in September to explore further how staff can be empowered and supported to remain part of the workforce. This programme has an initial focus on nursing but will encompass the entire NHS workforce.

HOME OFFICE**■ 101 Calls: Standards****Mr Laurence Robertson:**[\[101950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce the answering time to calls on the 101 service; and if she will make a statement.

Kit Malthouse:

Law enforcement, including the handling of 101 calls is an operational matter for the police. It is for elected Police Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables to decide how best to manage their communications and response to the public based on their knowledge and experience of the communities they serve.

■ British Nationality: Assessments**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:**[\[102176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of the Life in the UK test for fostering the integration of migrants in UK society.

Kevin Foster:

The Life in the UK test is based on the Life in the UK handbook, "Life in the UK: a guide for new residents". The handbook is intended to help those seeking to live permanently in the UK to gain a basic understanding of the democratic principles underlying British society, and of aspects of British culture and traditions, and to understand some of the cultural and historical references which occur in everyday conversations.

The Home Office works with the handbook publisher and test provider to monitor test performance to ensure the test remains effective and to respond to feedback from candidates on their experience of studying for and taking the test.

■ Cybercrime: Extortion**John Spellar:**[\[100285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is her policy on the payment of ransoms both for (a) individuals and (b) in response to cyberattacks.

James Brokenshire:

The Government does not advise paying ransoms to criminals. The payment of a ransom to criminals is likely to encourage further criminal activity and does not guarantee a successful outcome.

The legal decision of whether or not to pay the ransom is ultimately a matter for the individuals or organisations concerned. We encourage victims of ransom demands to contact the authorities for support. An offence may arise from a possibility of money laundering or terrorist financing taking place as a result of a ransom payment.

■ Fire Resistant Materials

Janet Daby: [\[101313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what quantity of flame retardant is held by each fire service in England and Wales.

James Brokenshire:

The Home Office does not hold information on the quantity of flame retardant held by each fire and rescue service.

■ Home Office: Pay

Philip Davies: [\[100330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the biggest pay rise given to someone in her Department was in (a) percentage and (b) cash terms in the last 12 months.

James Brokenshire:

In the last 12 months the biggest percentage pay rise in the Home Office was 9% and the biggest pay rise in cash terms was £7,292.

■ Immigration

Sir John Hayes: [\[101953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of net migration to the UK from (a) EU member states and (b) the rest of the world in each of the first three years following the introduction of points based system for immigration.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office does not forecast future levels of net migration due to the considerable uncertainties involved. Quarterly historical net migration figures are published by the Office for National Statistics.

The department has published an Impact Assessment for the Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Bill which included an assessment of the potential number of skilled workers who may be eligible under the new points-based immigration system. This included illustrative scenarios for inflows of both EU and non-EU nationals over the next three years. Estimates were provided for all skilled workers and not split by new entrant and experienced workers.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/migrationstatisticsquarterlyreport/august2020#development-of-migration-statistics>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-bill-2020-overarching-documents>

■ Immigration: Northern Ireland

Stephen Farry: [\[101070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the EU Settlement Scheme Family Permit, whether a relevant person from Northern Ireland who has not been residing in the UK for the six months prior to making an application for that permit intends to return to Northern Ireland with their non-EEA family members is eligible for that permit.

Kevin Foster:

The relevant non-EEA national family members of a relevant person of Northern Ireland can apply for an EU Settlement Scheme Family Permit to accompany that person to, or join them in, the UK, where the relevant person of Northern Ireland holds status under the EU Settlement Scheme or (were they not a British citizen, where they are one) would be granted this status if they applied.

The potential eligibility for status under the scheme of the relevant person of Northern Ireland will require they have the requisite continuity of residence in the UK, which generally means they will not have been absent from the UK for more than six months.

■ Migrant Workers: Care Homes

David Mundell: [\[100311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will include senior careworkers in the Shortage Occupation List.

Kevin Foster:

The independent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) published its report on the Shortage Occupation List (SOL) on 29 September.

This can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-the-shortage-occupation-list-2020.

We are considering carefully its recommendations before commenting on whether specific occupations will be included in the SOL.

■ Shoplifting: Coronavirus

Mr Laurence Robertson: [\[101951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effect of the mandatory wearing of face coverings in shops on rates of shoplifting during the covid-19 outbreak; and if she will make a statement.

Kit Malthouse:

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) reported on its website on 30 September 2020 that provisional data from police forces in England and Wales showed a reduction in crime during the months of strict lockdown measures but that levels are now returning to pre-Covid-19 levels. This data showed a significant and sustained

drop in the recording of shoplifting compared to last year with the most recent iteration showing a 30% drop.

The NPCC do not report specifically on how mask coverings have affected these trends. Given the potential varied levels of compliance of the wearing of face coverings at retail locations a correlation between the levels of shoplifting and the wearing of face masks is unlikely to be identified in recorded crime at a national level.

■ Visas: Applications

Lloyd Russell-Moyle: [\[102151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applicants are waiting for an appointment with UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services as of 12 October 2020.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle: [\[102152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many appointments UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services are making available each week.

Kevin Foster:

We regularly review the number of customers who have made an application but are yet to book a UKVCAS appointment. The number is influenced by a range of factors and therefore is not a proxy for the number actually 'waiting' for an appointment. For example, our insight tells us some customers are unable to travel to a service point as they are shielding, others have chosen not to book/continue with their application due to a change in circumstances but have not yet withdrawn their application and some have deferred booking for other reasons.

During the summer months, following the COVID-19 closure on 27 March and subsequent reopening of UKVCAS service points from 1 June, UKVI invited customers to book in a managed way, following date order. However, since 23 September, customers have been able to book appointments immediately after making their application, thus returning to the pre-COVID-19 process.

The number of appointments added into the system is not constant as it depends on a number of factors. As of 10am on 13 October, this morning there were 12,032 appointments offered for w/c 19 October 2020.

■ Visas: Hong Kong

Sarah Champion: [\[100419\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of expanding the T5 visa scheme for Hong Kong residents by making it renewable after 24 months until they are eligible for settled status after five years.

Kevin Foster:

The Tier 5 Youth Mobility Scheme with Hong Kong is a reciprocal agreement currently capped at 24 months. In line with similar agreements with other territories it

is primarily a cultural exchange programme rather than a route to settlement and it only applies to those aged under 30.

Other immigration routes are available to Hong Kong residents which lead to settlement in the UK, plus we have already announced our intention to create a route to settlement for British National (Overseas) resident in Hong Kong and their dependents.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Buildings: Insulation

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[100361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether agreements are in place between hsi Department and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors stating that a building owner must produce a valid EWS1 form for the purposes of sale or remortgaging.

Christopher Pincher:

The External Wall System form (EWS1) and process is not a Government regulatory requirement. It was introduced by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) to assist in the valuation of high-rise residential buildings for mortgage purposes. Not all lenders request an EWS1 form and the Government does not support a blanket approach in EWS1 use for lower risk properties.

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[100362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will publish guidance clarifying whether all properties require an EWS1 form for the purposes of sale or remortgage.

Christopher Pincher:

The External Wall System form (EWS1) and process is not a Government regulatory requirement. The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) designed and implemented the EWS1 form in conjunction with mortgage lenders to assist with valuation. Use of the EWS1 form is determined by the lending policies of banks and building societies. RICS have issued guidance on the use of the EWS1 form.

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[100370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much funding has been allocated to the cladding remediation fund.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government has allocated £600 million for funding to remove unsafe Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding from high rise residential buildings. In addition to this, the Government is allocating £1 billion for the Building Safety Fund in 2020/21 to support the remediation of other types of unsafe cladding systems ('non-ACM') on high rise residential buildings.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[100372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of using compulsory purchase orders on freeholders who refuse to engage in the removal of combustible cladding.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government's focus has been to ensure that remediation of unsafe cladding happens as quickly as possible. We engage with local enforcement authorities, including local authorities and fire and rescue services, on the routes they assess would be most effective to ensure resident safety and support them to take action where remediation is yet to start on site. While we would not rule out any option, to date we have focussed on funding, provision of construction support and enforcement powers to increase the pace of remediation.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[100963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether it is Government policy to require mortgage lenders to obtain a valid EWS1 form from applications to satisfy lending criteria.

Christopher Pincher:

The External Wall System process (EWS1) is designed and implemented by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) in conjunction with mortgage lenders to assist with valuation of high-rise residential buildings. The use of the EWS1 form is determined by the lending policies of banks and building societies, although not all lenders require one. It is not a Government policy or regulatory requirement.

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[100964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent estimate the Department has made of the number of commercial fire engineers who are employed in advising mortgage providers and industry on high rise and complex building safety.

Christopher Pincher:

As indicated in my answer to Question UIN 75346 on 24 July 2020, the Department does not hold data on the number of commercial fire engineers. The Institution of Fire Engineers has informed MHCLG that there are around 291 chartered fire engineers who can carry out an EWS1 survey. Nonetheless, the Department is aware that there are challenges around availability of professionals to undertake fire safety assessments, including those who are employed in advising mortgage providers and industry on high rise and complex building safety. We are working with professional bodies to increase the number of skilled professionals who can undertake external wall assessments where one is required.

Andy Slaughter: [\[101994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when he plans to publish the outcome of the review of the ban on the use of combustible materials in and on the external walls of buildings.

Sarah Jones:

[\[102154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when he plans to publish his Department's response to the Review of the ban on the use of combustible materials in and on the external walls of buildings, which closed for consultation on 25 May 2020.

Christopher Pincher:

I refer the Hon Member to the answer I gave to Question UIN 100277 on 12 October 2020.

■ **Coal: Mining**

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[101006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the letter he received from Professor Paul Ekins and colleagues on the climate impact of approving new coal mines.

Christopher Pincher:

The Department has noted the letter from Professor Ekins relating to coal and climate change.

The National Planning Policy Framework approach to coal extraction proposals is that planning permission should not be granted unless it is environmentally acceptable, or its likely effects are clearly outweighed by national, local or community benefits (taking all relevant matters into account, including any residual environmental effects).

We are currently consulting on a reform of the planning system which recognises that the planning system has a role to play in the efforts to combat climate change. There is an opportunity for Professor Ekins to engage in that consultation process and I would welcome his views on how our proposed planning system should address the concerns he raises.

■ **Community Development: Bus Services**

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[102050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Transport on the role of the National Bus Strategy in the creation of stronger communities.

Luke Hall:

My Department has been engaging and coordinating with the Department for Transport on the implementation and delivery of the National Bus Strategy as an integral part of helping to build stronger local communities.

The strategy will focus on the needs of passengers and encourage more people to use the bus network. It will set out how national and local government, as well as the private sector, will come together to meet the needs of local communities. Local authorities have a vital role to play in ensuring local bus services meet local

communities' specific needs, with buses that can get closer to where people live, at a time convenient for them. Both Departments have also been working to help guide delivery to support better connected communities.

■ High Rise Flats: Insulation

Dr Matthew Offord:

[100367]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the £1 billion fund announced for the removal of dangerous cladding from high rise buildings, on 26 May 2020, whether the fund will cover the cost of removal for unsafe flammable materials other than Grenfell-type cladding.

Christopher Pincher:

Government has provided £600 million of financial support to remove Grenfell type unsafe Aluminium Composite Material cladding from high rise residential buildings. The £1 billion the Government is providing through the Building Safety Fund is in addition to that, aimed at removing other types of unsafe cladding from high rise residential buildings. More details on what materials are covered by the Building Safety Fund can be found in the Prospectus at: www.gov.uk/guidance/remediation-of-non-acm-buildings#prospectus---outlining-eligibility-for-the-fund.

Dr Matthew Offord:

[100371]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the amount of funding required to remove all serious fire-related safety defects in high-risk residential buildings.

Christopher Pincher:

Estimates of the cost of remediation work to bring high-rise residential buildings up to existing standards are set out in section 11 of the [Impact Assessment](#) for the draft Building Safety Bill.

Dr Matthew Offord:

[100373]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing a target date for the completion of the removal of combustible cladding by freehold owners of residential properties over 18 metres.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government has been clear in its expectation that all owners of high rise residential buildings with Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding complete remedial works by the end of 2021. For other types of unsafe cladding, the Government is making £1 billion available to fund the removal of unsafe non-ACM cladding in 2020/21. In addition, the application guidance clearly states that applicants must be in a position to evidence that remediation works will commence onsite prior to 31st March 2021 and, once funding is granted, must subsequently ensure that remedial works are delivered at pace.

■ High Streets Task Force

Anne Marie Morris:

[\[102082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will publish the list of experts appointed by the High Streets Task Force.

Kelly Tolhurst:

This Government is providing support to local leadership with a High Streets Task Force that will give high streets and town centres the expert advice they need to adapt and thrive.

Through the Task Force local authorities in England will receive free expert advice to help them evolve their town centres and respond to the impact of COVID-19.

These high streets experts have been recruited from the Design Council, Landscape Institute, Institute of Place Management and Royal Town Planning Institute. They will work with places, bringing insight into town centre change and how to work with communities to build capacity for that change.

The High Streets Task Force will publish the full list of experts on the register in due course

■ Leasehold

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[100365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what support or guidance is available to leaseholders on their rights with regard to leases on residential properties.

Christopher Pincher:

Leaseholders can seek free initial advice via the Leasehold Advisory Service, the specialist body funded by the Department to provide assistance to leaseholders. Further information on the rights of leaseholders and other leasehold matters can be provided through the website (<https://www.lease-advice.org/>), via a telephone appointment with one of LEASE's advisers (020 7832 2500), or by email (info@lease-advice.org).

There are other specialist advisers who leaseholders might want to consult including:

- [Leasehold Knowledge Partnership](#) (LKP) – an independent registered charity providing help for leaseholders on leasehold issues, including cladding. LKP also acts as secretariat to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Leasehold and Commonhold Reform.
- [Association of Leasehold Enfranchisement Practitioners](#) (ALEP) – an association of professionals who specialise in lease extensions, freehold acquisitions and leasehold enfranchisement.
- specialist legal firms

There are also a number of other organisations or groups who leaseholders may want to consult including:

- other leaseholders or residents' groups in their building
- their managing agent, management company or landlord
- [Citizen's Advice](#)
- [First Tier Property Tribunal](#)

■ Local Government Finance: Oldham

Jim McMahon:

[102141]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the effect of the response to the covid-19 outbreak on the (a) (i) direct and (ii) indirect costs, (b) income and (c) other liabilities of Oldham council; and how much additional funding his Department has allocated to that local authority (A) for its covid-19 response and (B) to mitigate the effects of the outbreak.

Luke Hall:

We are providing local authorities with an unprecedented package of support, including over £4.8 billion in funding for spending pressures, comprising of £3.7 billion of un-ringfenced grants and over £1.1 billion for the Infection Control Fund.

Oldham has received £16.64 million from the three rounds of unringfenced grants. Oldham has received £4.6 million from the Infection Control Fund.

In total, over £28 billion has been committed to local areas to support councils, businesses and communities across government. This comprehensive package of support includes direct financial support and cashflow measures for councils, bus and tram services, support for the homeless and both grants and rates reliefs for businesses, as well as several other grants.

In addition the Prime Minister has announced a further £1 billion of funding for local authorities, details of which will be announced shortly.

We will continue to monitor the impact of Covid-19 on local government and are taking steps to address and support individuals and local authorities.

■ Mortgages

Dr Matthew Offord:

[100363]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will work with mortgage lenders and providers to ensure that sources of evidence other than the EWS1 form are available to provide accurate valuation information for property owners.

Christopher Pincher:

The Building Safety Minister is pressing lenders to accept other forms of evidence on building safety to support their valuations. The EWS1 process should only be used

where there is clear need, and where no reasonable assurances or regulatory evidence exists to support valuations.

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[100364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when officials of his Department last met mortgage providers; and whether the use of the EWS1 form was raised at that meeting.

Christopher Pincher:

My Departmental officials formally met with mortgage providers in September and the use of EWS1 forms was discussed. In addition, officials have held a number ad-hoc bilateral meetings with mortgage lenders on the use of EWS1 form.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Aluminium: Antidumping Duties

Jane Stevenson:

[\[102167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what her policy is on the anti-dumping duty applied to aluminium extrusions after the end of the transition period.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

HM Government's priority is to provide continuity for industry wherever possible by ensuring British industry retains appropriate trade remedy protection after the transition period.

This is why HM Government has laid legislation to allow the Trade Remedies Investigations Directorate (TRID), to undertake new investigations into goods that the European Commission is already investigating. This will help us to protect businesses where the investigations do not conclude before the end of the transition period, such as aluminium extrusions. This minimises the possibility of a gap in protection for British businesses, where an ongoing Commission investigation has resulted in the application of provisional measures that then cease to apply in the United Kingdom after 31st December. British producers can contact TRID in confidence to discuss applying for an investigation.

■ Department for International Trade: Written Questions

Emily Thornberry:

[\[102005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, when she plans to provide an Answer to Question 90067 tabled by the hon. Member for Islington South and Finsbury on 15 September 2020.

Greg Hands:

This question was answered on 13 October 2020.

■ Generalised System of Preferences

Emily Thornberry: [\[101253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether countries accessing trade preferences under the least developed countries framework, general framework or enhanced framework will be required to effectively implement the 15 core human and labour rights UN/ILO conventions as set out in Annex VIII, Part A of Regulation (EU) No 978/2012.

Emily Thornberry: [\[101254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether countries accessing trade preferences under the enhanced framework will be required to implement the 27 international conventions as set out in Annex VIII, Parts A and B of Regulation (EU) No 978/2012.

Greg Hands:

At the end of the Transition Period, the UK will create its Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP), which will replicate the three levels of market access and the ability to temporarily withdraw trade preferences as provided by the EU Generalised Scheme of Preferences

Under the UK GSP, trade preferences may be suspended, varied, or withdrawn if countries engage in serious and systematic violations of the human rights and labour rights contained in conventions specified in Annex VIII, Part A of Regulation (EU) No 978/2012, or in the circumstances set out in Chapter V, Article 19 1. (a) – (e) of Regulation (EU) No 978/2012.

Enhanced Framework countries will be required to ratify and effectively implement all 27 international conventions, as is currently set out under Annex VIII, Parts A & B of Regulation (EU) No 978/2012.

■ Rules of Origin

Jane Stevenson: [\[102168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what her policy is on rules of origin for exports to the EU after the end of the transition period; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

Rules of Origin commitments exist in all Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), and my Hon. Friend will understand that on Hon United Kingdom-EU discussions on Rules of Origin provisions after the end of the transition period are ongoing.

Nonetheless, as these discussions progress, we remain committed to working with businesses and traders to make sure that the United Kingdom-EU FTA reflects our interests and priorities as far as is possible, including modern Rules of Origin that are clear, simple and facilitate trade.

■ US Republican Party

Emily Thornberry: [\[102003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which (a) Republican Senators, (b) Republican Congresspeople and (c) other representatives of the Republican Party she met to discuss international trade on her visit to the US in August 2020.

Emily Thornberry: [\[102004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which (a) Democratic Senators and (b) Democratic Congresspeople, and (c) other representatives of the Democratic Party she met with to discuss international trade on her visit to the US in August 2020.

Greg Hands:

Information relating to meetings held by the Secretary of State will be published in line with the usual Transparency requirements, and will be available on gov.uk upon publication.

JUSTICE

■ Open Prisons

Sarah Champion: [\[102088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, which agency makes the decision to transfer an offender to an open prison; what consultation takes place with (a) other agencies and (b) victims prior to that decision; and what risk assessments are undertaken on the effect of that transfer.

Lucy Frazer:

The decision as to whether to transfer a prisoner to open conditions is a categorisation one for the Secretary of State, taken by officials under approved delegated authority on his behalf. Access to open prison conditions is not a right or an automatic progression but is based on a detailed assessment of risk.

In the case of indeterminate sentence prisoners, the decision to approve a prisoner for transfer to open conditions is generally taken in response to a recommendation from the independent Parole Board. Before making such a recommendation, the Parole Board will undertake a full and thorough risk assessment. As part of the risk assessment, the Parole Board will consider a number of detailed reports prepared by qualified probation and prison staff, who will in their reports in turn take account of any other agencies involved in the case under the statutory Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements.

As there is such a comprehensive assessment of the prisoner's risk, officials will accept a recommendation from the Parole Board, except where the recommendation goes against the recommendations of the report writers without explaining why or is based on inaccurate information. A recommendation may also be rejected if the

Secretary of State considers that there is not a wholly persuasive case for transferring the prisoner to open conditions at the current time.

In the case of determinate sentenced prisoners, only those prisoners who are assessed as low risk and are within three years of their earliest date of release may generally be considered for open conditions. Prisoners are assessed at the appropriate time by the prison in which they are located.

Victims who have elected to receive the Probation Victim Contact Scheme are entitled to be told when a prisoner is being considered for open conditions and the outcome.

This ensures that, once a prisoner is in an open prison, victims may make requests about licence conditions if the offender is considered for release on temporary licence.

■ Prisoners' Release

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[99572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) young adult, (b) other female and (c) other male prison leavers were released without an address to go to in (i) each region of England and (ii) Wales from 1 August 2020 to 31 August 2020.

Lucy Frazer:

The data from 1 August 2020 to 31 August 2020 is provided in the attached. Please note that data for the period after 31 March 2020 is released ahead of publication in recognition of the public interest in making this information available as it relates the period of the operation of the additional accommodation support scheme.

The Scheme, which provided extra funding that allowed us to directly source housing for offenders ended on 31 August. From 1 September, offenders with an accommodation need will be offered the Through the Gate support.

We recognise that accommodation is a key priority as it is often the first step in an individual's resettlement journey. We continue to work with councils and charities to secure suitable accommodation, while investigating long-term solutions to prevent homelessness and help offenders turn their backs on crime.

Attachments:

1. Table [PQ 99572_v2.xlsx]

■ Sentencing

Sarah Champion:

[\[102087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how victims are notified that their offender's sentence is being reconsidered; and whether the victim has a right to consultation on that sentence.

Alex Chalk:

Under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (the Code), police Witness Care Units must inform victims if there is an appeal against the offender's sentence. Whilst sentencing is a matter for the courts, in determining an appeal against a sentence, the court will always take into account any Victim Personal Statement (which explains the impact the offence had on the victim) that was provided to the sentencing court.

Also, under the Code victims of serious violent and sexual offences where the offender receives a custodial sentence of 12 months or more are eligible to join the Victim Contact Scheme. Victims who do so will be provided with information about key stages in the offender's sentence, including, for those cases where release falls to the Parole Board (the Board), the timing of the Parole review, and if the offender is released, or moved to open conditions.

In eligible cases, where the Board directs an offender be released, victims may request that the Secretary of State (SoS) apply to the Board for reconsideration of release. Such a request must be made within 21-calendar days of the issuing of the Board's decision. The SoS will only apply to the Board where there is evidence that the decision taken was either irrational or procedurally unfair.

Anybody who submits a request to the SoS will be provided with a full response from the Public Protection Casework Section (PPCS) of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service regardless of the outcome.

NORTHERN IRELAND**■ Terrorism: Northern Ireland****Simon Hoare:**[\[102123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with reference to Written Ministerial Statement HCWS168 on Addressing Northern Ireland Legacy Issues, published on 18 March 2020, on what dates (a) Ministers and (b) officials in his Department have met representatives of the Irish Government to discuss legacy issues since 18 March 2020.

Mr Robin Walker:

Ministers and officials regularly meet with counterparts in the Irish Government to discuss a range of issues, including legacy.

The Secretary of State and officials from the Northern Ireland Office last met with the Irish Government's Minister for Foreign Affairs and his officials on 8th October 2020.

The UK Government remains committed to making progress on legacy issues, and engaging with the Irish Government, as well as the Northern Ireland parties and key stakeholders, on the way forward as quickly as possible.

Simon Hoare:[\[102124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with reference to Written Ministerial Statement HCWS168 on Addressing Northern Ireland Legacy Issues, published on 18

March 2020, which community organisations (a) Ministers and (b) officials in his Department have met with to discuss legacy issues since 18 March 2020.

Mr Robin Walker:

Since March, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and officials from the Northern Ireland Office have met with various community groups, including victim support groups, religious leaders and groups from across academia and civic society.

Despite the challenging circumstances presented by the ongoing Covid-19 situation, engagement continued throughout the summer months and continues to take place.

The UK Government remains committed to making progress on legacy issues, and recognises the importance of working with all parts of the community in Northern Ireland as part of this process.

TRANSPORT

■ Blue Badge Scheme: Airports

Rachael Maskell:

[\[102115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to exempt blue badge holders from parking fines at airports.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Most airports in the UK are managed and operated as private businesses, and parking arrangements are subject to contractual agreements between airport operators and car parking companies covered by consumer laws. When drivers pay for private parking, they enter into a contract with the provider and are protected by a range of laws aimed at ensuring fairness for consumers.

The government has recently consulted on measures to improve the regulation of the private parking sector. These include a new single Code of Practice for private operators, proposals for a “one-stop-shop” for parking appeals, and an Appeals Charter for motorists to turn to if they receive what they perceive to be an unfair parking charge. Under the proposals, motorists could be able to appeal their parking charge and see it reduced to a maximum of £20, or cancelled entirely if they have a valid ticket, permit or Blue Badge but failed to display it correctly.

■ Bus Services

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[102046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the National Bus Strategy; and when those discussions took place.

Rachel Maclean:

The Department will be working closely with colleagues from across Government on the National Bus Strategy, which is currently under development and which we are aiming to publish by the end of the year.

■ Bus Services: Standards**Lilian Greenwood:** [\[102049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies on the National Bus Strategy of the National Audit Office report entitled, Improving local bus services in England outside London, published on 2 October 2020.

Rachel Maclean:

We will be considering a wide range of evidence, including the National Audit Office report, as we continue to develop the National Bus Strategy which we are aiming to publish by the end of this year.

■ Cycling and Walking: Expenditure**Sarah Olney:** [\[102147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much of the £2 billion active travel fund announced on 9 May 2020 has been spent in each local authority.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

£225 million has been allocated to local authorities via the Emergency Active Travel Fund in 2020-21. £42 million was provided to local authorities in tranche 1, and most authorities have now spent these funds on scheme delivery. The Department intends to announce tranche 2 allocations shortly. Final allocations for tranche 1 and indicative allocations for tranche 2 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-active-travel-fund-local-transport-authority-allocations/emergency-active-travel-fund-total-indicative-allocations> Decisions on allocating the remainder of the £2 billion, due to be spent during this parliament, are subject to the Spending Review.

■ Leeds Station: Coronavirus**Richard Burgon:** [\[102119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on the number of Northern Trains staff employed at the Leeds City Station travel shop who have tested positive for covid-19.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department does not hold specific information on rail operator employees.

■ Motor Vehicles: Noise**Sir Desmond Swayne:** [\[101940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to introduce traffic cameras with detectors to identify and record modified exhaust systems which amplify engine sound levels.

Rachel Maclean:

The Department's initial trials of a prototype acoustic camera have concluded and the results will be published shortly. The outcome of the trials is currently being considered, including what further development would be required to enable the technology to be used for more targeted and efficient enforcement.

It is too early in the development of the device to provide a plan for its introduction, but we are optimistic that it will provide an effective enforcement tool in the future.

Motorway Service Areas: Leasehold**Karl McCartney:**[\[100970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of renewing or extending the leases at state-owned motorway service areas to leverage private sector investment in (a) electric vehicle charging infrastructure, (b) HGV parking and (c) site improvements.

Rachel Maclean:

Ministers are considering which approach, as the current leases begin to expire from 2030, would secure best value for the taxpayer and enhance the experience for future road users. Following initial discussions with the operators, Ministers have requested that the operators work with officials to help understand how the timelines for each option could affect the timing and opportunities for any investment in the sites.

At the March 2020 Budget, the Government announced the Rapid Charging Fund was announced as part of a £500 million commitment for EV charging infrastructure.

It will be available to fund a portion of costs at strategic sites across the strategic road network where upgrading connections to meet future demand for high powered chargepoints would be prohibitively expensive and uncommercial. Timing and process for delivery of this funding will be confirmed in due course.

The Government will be working with the operators of MSAs to ensure that charging provision is in place ahead of customer demand. The aim is to help support early adoption of electric vehicles and remove range anxiety concerns for drivers on long journeys.

Taxis: Coronavirus**Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[102002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 7 October 2020 to Question 98677 on Taxis: Protective Clothing, which organisation is responsible for ensuring that operators carry out those risk assessments; and what the penalty is in the event that operators do not complete those risk assessments to an adequate standard.

Rachel Maclean:

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is the enforcing authority responsible for ensuring taxi operators carry out risk assessments covering work activities away from

the taxi office. The duty to carry out assessments is a legal requirement and if not completed, HSE can take enforcement action to require operators to comply. This includes the option of issuing an Improvement Notice which stipulates what is required in a given timeframe. Non-compliance with an Improvement Notice is an offence and carries potential financial penalties and / or imprisonment.

The HSE takes a proportionate approach to enforcement in line with their publicly available [enforcement policy statement](#).

TREASURY

■ Beer: Excise Duties

Grahame Morris:

[\[102036\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the the Answer of 6 October 2020 to Question 98211 on Beer: Excise Duties, whether HMRC has advised any small breweries that they can make in-year adjustments to the 2020-21 year's production for the purpose of Small Brewers Relief.

Kemi Badenoch:

UK law does not allow for in-year adjustments to be made to the current year's production for the purposes of Small Brewers Relief (SBR) after beer has been finished. This policy is explained in Public Notice 226 and no breweries should be making such an adjustment.

Patrick Grady:

[\[102105\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on small, independent breweries of the proposal to convert Small Brewers Relief from a percentage formula to a cash basis measurement.

Kemi Badenoch:

The proposal to convert Small Brewers Relief (SBR) to a cash basis would affect small breweries entitled to SBR, but would only have an impact if there are future changes to the value of the relief. The Treasury will consult further on Small Brewers Relief later this Autumn.

■ Building Societies: Shares

Gareth Thomas:

[\[100280\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the level of risk involved for purchasers in the sale of redeemable shares by building societies; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

HM Treasury has not made any specific assessment of the level of risk involved for purchasers in the sale of redeemable shares by building societies. When making an investment decision, consumers should make sure they are aware of the risks and seek advice where appropriate.

The Government wants to make sure we have a strong and safe financial system which is why HM Treasury continues to work with the Financial Conduct Authority to protect consumers, including by ensuring that they have the necessary information to weigh up the risks and rewards of any decision they make.

■ Buildings: Insulation

Hywel Williams:

[\[101980\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much the Welsh Government has received in Barnett consequentials as a result of the £1.6 billion allocated to cladding remediation in England.

Steve Barclay:

At Spring Budget 2020, £1 billion of additional funding was allocated to cladding remediation in England through the creation of the Building Safety Fund. This generated a Barnett consequential of around £59 million for the Welsh Government. The remaining £600m was funded through existing MHCLG budgets as set at the 2015 Spending Review. The Welsh Government has therefore already received the Barnett consequentials associated with this funding.

HM Treasury's Block Grant Transparency publication sets out the breakdown of changes in the devolved administrations' block grants, including all Barnett consequentials, since the 2015 Spending Review.

This is available on the gov.uk website here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/block-grant-transparency-july-2020

■ Business and Unemployment: Oldham

Jim McMahon:

[\[102140\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the correlation between local lockdown restrictions and (a) business survival rates and (b) unemployment in Oldham since 1 March 2020.

John Glen:

No assessment can be made on the correlation between local lockdown restrictions and business survival or unemployment rates since 1 March 2020, as business count and unemployment data at a local authority level will not be published until 2021.

The government recognises that every region and community will be feeling the impact of this crisis and remains committed to helping the unemployed return to work and supporting those most vulnerable to job losses. We will continue to work closely with local areas to make sure that individuals and businesses are directed to the right support during this difficult period.

■ Business: Coronavirus**Sarah Olney:**[\[102145\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to support businesses whose trade has been adversely affected by the rule of six covid-19 restriction.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government has had to take the difficult step of introducing restrictions on businesses and individuals to bring the virus under control. This includes the rule of six, which limits the number of people that can meet in indoor and outdoor settings in parts of England under a medium Covid Alert level. The Government has set out a comprehensive plan for jobs and businesses, totalling £190bn, to support those whose trade and livelihoods have been disrupted by Covid restrictions. Most recently, the Chancellor announced a further package of measures in the Winter Economy Plan, including the Job Support Scheme, which will protect employees working reduced hours, and the extension of business loan schemes. All eligible businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors will also pay no business rates in England for 12 months from 1 April 2020. Many businesses that reopened over the summer have continued trading in Covid-secure ways since the rule of six was announced, supporting our recovery and helping to keep our towns and cities vibrant.

■ Business: North East**Kate Osborne:**[\[102191\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will provide additional financial support to businesses that have had to (a) partially close and (b) fully close as a result of local covid-19 lockdown restrictions in the North East.

Kemi Badenoch:

In order to protect jobs and businesses across the UK, the Chancellor recently announced an expansion to the Job Support Scheme for businesses legally required to temporarily close their premises as a direct result of Coronavirus restrictions. The Government will provide employers with a grant for employees unable to work, covering two thirds of their usual wages and subject to a cap. Support will be available to eligible businesses from 1 November for 6 months, with a review in January.

In addition, the Chancellor recently announced changes to the Local Restrictions Support Grant Scheme which provides grants to businesses which are forced to fully close due to local or national restrictions. Grant funding available has increased to £3,000 per month, and 80% of all Retail, Hospitality, and Leisure businesses in England will have their assumed rents covered in full as a result.

For employers that remain partially open but are subject to lower demand over the winter due to Covid-19, employers can access the other element of the Job Support Scheme that supports part-time working. The Government will pay a third of hours not worked up to a cap, with the employer contributing a third. This will ensure

employees can earn a minimum of 77% of their normal wages, where the Government contribution has not been capped.

Employers using the Job Support Scheme will also be able to claim the Job Retention Bonus (JRB) for each employee that meets the eligibility criteria of the JRB. This is worth £1,000 per employee and is paid to the employer. Under the Job Support Scheme and the Job Retention Bonus, an employer could receive over 60% of the wage costs of their employees if they are retained until February. The steps the government is setting out will help to protect jobs, support businesses through uncertain times, and help them prepare for recovery.

■ **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme**

Drew Hendry:

[\[102112\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 17 September 2020 to Question 91671, what estimate his Department has made of the amount of monies voluntarily returned within the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme since 17 September.

Jesse Norman:

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grants have been returned to HMRC where the employer no longer needs the grant, or has realised they have made an error, and have followed the guidance on putting things right. Between 17 September and 13 October 2020, a total of £27,933,329 has been returned to HMRC voluntarily, via payment and adjustment to claims. This is in addition to the £215,756,121 that had been returned in the period up to 15 September 2020.

■ **Customs Declaration Services Programme: Coronavirus**

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[101981\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the transfer of businesses to the Customs Declaration Service model.

Jesse Norman:

The Government is committed to delivering an operating customs model by December 2020 as set out in the Withdrawal Agreement, with the introduction of customs controls over a period from 1 January 2021.

The Government keeps its delivery plans for the Customs Declaration Service under continuous review, alongside input from software developers, Community Systems Providers and Express Operators, in order to ensure that any impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic are considered.

■ **Financial Conduct Authority: Fees and Charges**

Charlotte Nichols:

[\[101067\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will launch a review into Financial Conduct Authority regulator fees.

John Glen:

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) are responsible for setting the regulatory fees for industry and recently consulted on their fees for 2020-21. A response to the consultation can be found on the FCA's website. The FCA operates independently within the statutory framework agreed by Parliament. The Government therefore has no role in the FCA's budgeting or setting of their fees.

Financial Services Compensation Scheme**Anne Marie Morris:**[\[102085\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will raise the FSCS compensation rate of £85,000 at the end of the transition period.

John Glen:

The Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) is responsible for setting the UK's deposit protection limit. The current limit of £85,000 has been in place since 2017 and protects more than 97% of eligible depositors' accounts.

There are currently no plans for the coverage level to change. However, from the end of the transition period the PRA will be required to review the limit at least once every five years and may adjust the limit following such a review, subject to HM Treasury approval.

Fuels: Excise Duties**Sarah Olney:**[\[102146\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential annual income stream to the Treasury from fuel duty for each year between 2020 and 2030.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) publishes revenue forecasts for all Government taxes. The most recent forecast covers the financial years 2020-21 to 2024-25. For Fuel Duty, revenue is forecast to be £27.5 billion in 2020-21, £28.1 billion in 2021-22, £30.5 billion in 2022-23, £31.2 billion in 2023-24 and £31.7 billion in 2024-25. These figures can be found in Table 3.3 on <https://obr.uk/efo/economic-and-fiscal-outlook-march-2020/>.

The OBR has not published forecasted tax revenues beyond 2024-25.

Insurance: Prices**John Spellar:**[\[100287\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to respond to the Financial Conduct Authority's report, General insurance pricing practices: Final report, published in September 2020.

John Glen:

Consumers should be able to get a fair deal when purchasing insurance. The FCA has set out proposals to deliver this in its report on General Insurance Pricing Practices. We are engaging with the regulator and the sector on next steps and will be interested in the outcome of the FCA's consultation due in early 2021.

Money**John Spellar:**[\[100286\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his Department's policy is on the right of customers to pay in cash.

John Glen:

The Government recognises that cash remains important to millions of people across the UK, which is why it has committed to legislate to protect access to cash and to ensure that the UK's cash infrastructure is sustainable long term.

The Government remains closely engaged with the financial regulators, including through the Treasury-chaired Joint Authorities Cash Strategy Group, to monitor and assess risks around cash relating to COVID-19. In order to help control the virus, all businesses and individuals are encouraged to follow the latest Government advice. To work safely during COVID-19, retailers have been recommended to minimise contact around transactions, for example, considering using contactless payments. However, it remains the individual retailer's choice as to whether to accept or decline any form of payment, including cash or card.

Money: Coronavirus**David Mundell:**[\[100901\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish a timetable for bringing forward legislative proposals to protect people's access to cash.

David Mundell:[\[100902\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what information the Government holds on the number of retailers no longer accepting cash due to the covid-19 outbreak; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure that people can continue to use cash to pay for goods and services for as long as is needed.

David Mundell:[\[100903\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether cash is a safe payment method to use and should continue to be accepted by retailers during the covid-19 outbreak.

John Glen:

The Government recognises that cash remains important to millions of people across the UK, which is why it has committed to legislate to protect access to cash and to ensure that the UK's cash infrastructure is sustainable in the long term. Government is working at pace, engaging with industry and the regulators – the Financial Conduct Authority, Payment Systems Regulator, and Bank of England – whilst designing

legislation. To inform the development of this legislation, today (15 October) the Government published a Call for Evidence seeking views on the key considerations associated with cash access, including deposit and withdrawal facilities, cash acceptance, and regulatory oversight of the cash system.

The Government also remains closely engaged with the financial regulators, including through the Treasury-chaired Joint Authorities Cash Strategy Group, to monitor and assess risks around cash relating to COVID-19. In order to help control the virus, all businesses and individuals are encouraged to follow the latest Government advice. To work safely during COVID-19, retailers have been recommended to minimise contact around transactions, for example, considering using contactless payments. However, it remains the individual retailer's choice as to whether to accept or decline any form of payment, including cash or card.

■ **Mortgages: Coronavirus**

Daisy Cooper:

[\[102182\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the protection from adverse entries on credit reference agency files for people who have taken mortgage holidays to beyond 31 October 2020.

John Glen:

Following the Coronavirus outbreak, the Government worked quickly with lenders and financial regulators to give people access to payment holidays on their mortgages. This gives customers a much-needed respite period, where no repayments on these products are due. It was necessary to bring this temporary measure in, in order to give customers time to smooth out their finances that may have taken a hit by the pandemic. We were clear from the start, that anyone taking one of these payment holidays should not suffer a worsening arrears status.

The FCA published guidance on mortgage payment holidays on 14 September setting out that firms should continue to provide support through tailored forbearance options for those borrowers that are facing ongoing financial difficulties. This could include granting new mortgage payment holidays. As part of this guidance any forbearance granted beyond 31 October will be reflected on the consumer's credit file in the usual manner. As borrowers still requiring assistance after 31 October could be in serious financial distress the FCA believe it is right that lenders are able to understand their financial position in order to lend responsibly.

■ **Redundancy: Yorkshire and the Humber**

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[101961\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of the number of employees that will potentially be made redundant after the end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme in (a) Huddersfield, (b) Kirklees and (c) Yorkshire.

Mr Barry Sheerman:[\[101962\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps is he taking to ensure that employees retain their jobs after the end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Steve Barclay:

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is just one element of a comprehensive package of support for businesses and it was always intended to be a temporary scheme.

As set out in the Winter Economy Plan, the Government is adjusting support as the COVID-19 situation evolves. We introduced the Job Support Scheme on 24 September, and its expansion on 9 October, to help support businesses who are either suffering from reduced demand over the winter months, or whose premises have been legally required to close. This is alongside the Job Retention Bonus, which will encourage firms to keep on furloughed workers after the closure of the CJRS.

Where firms make the decision that they cannot retain all of their staff, the Government is ensuring that those looking for work are supported through the measures announced in the Plan for Jobs, including significantly increasing help offered through Jobcentres and providing individualised advice through the National Careers Service. The Government has also launched the Kickstart Scheme, a £2bn fund to create hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people. Temporary welfare measures announced in March remain available too.

■ Respite Care: Finance**Steve McCabe:**[\[101952\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will allocate additional resources to local authorities in the Comprehensive Spending Review to enable them to fund short respite breaks for children who need palliative care.

Steve Barclay:

The Chancellor has announced that the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) will be published this Autumn. Funding for local authorities for children's care and other services will be set out as part of CSR. The Government recognises the importance of providing support for children and families undergoing palliative care and will continue to engage with Councils to understand their pressures and assess the need for further support.

■ Small Businesses: Corporation Tax**Alex Cunningham:**[\[102069\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to provide a Corporation Tax payment break or exemption to small businesses for the next 12 months.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has established an unprecedented package of support for businesses to help them get through the pandemic, including support for businesses

in difficulty with their Corporation Tax (CT) payments. HMRC have scaled up their Time to Pay service where any taxpayer with outstanding debts to HMRC may be able to agree tailored plans to defer certain tax payments owed, including CT, and repay them over an agreed period of time.

■ **Sole Traders: Coronavirus**

Anne Marie Morris:

[\[102081\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to support sole employees of limited companies who are unable to access support with lost earnings.

Jesse Norman:

Those not eligible for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), such as sole employees of limited companies, may still be eligible for other elements of the unprecedented financial support provided by the Government. The Government has temporarily increased the Universal Credit standard allowance for 2020-21 by £20 per week and relaxed the Minimum Income Floor, so that where self-employed claimants' earnings have significantly fallen, their Universal Credit award will have increased to reflect their lower earnings. They may also have access to Bounce Back loans, tax deferrals, rental support, mortgage holidays, and other business support grants, with a new extended deadline of 30 November.

In addition to this, up to half a million businesses which deferred their VAT bills will also be given more breathing space through the New Payment Scheme. This gives them the option to spread their payments over the financial year 2021-2022. In addition, all 11 million UK self-assessment taxpayers will be able to benefit from the recently enhanced Time to Pay 'self-service' facility to form a 12-month, interest-free payment arrangement for up to £30,000 of self-assessment debt.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ **Children: Maintenance**

Martyn Day:

[\[102874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will increase support for separated families who use the Child Maintenance Service during the covid-19 outbreak.

Mims Davies:

The Government has been clear in its commitment to support both paying and receiving parents in this difficult time.

To help reduce the short-term financial pressure that will be experienced by many paying parents, the time period for reconsidering a maintenance liability on the basis of a change in income was reduced from 12 weeks to 2 weeks and in response to a drop in income, the CMS had advised the paying parent to reduce their payments and then retrospectively amended the calculation for the period of low income.

In order to ensure that receiving parents do not lose out in the long run, we are updating cases with notified changes. Where payments have been missed the Service is taking action to re-establish compliance and collect any unpaid amounts that may have accrued.

■ Employment: Poverty

Colleen Fletcher: **[102090]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of people in employment that are living in poverty.

Will Quince:

National Statistics on the number and percentage of children in low income are published annually in the "Households Below Average Income" publication.

Latest statistics for the number of people living in working families which are in absolute low income, before housing costs can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-199495-to-201819>.

■ Employment: Young People

Cat Smith: **[100440]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans she has to ensure that the Government's Opportunity Guarantee, announced by the Prime Minister on 30th June, reaches young people in the North West of England.

Mims Davies:

The Chancellor's Plan for Jobs announcement in July outlined a comprehensive package of support for young people. The Kickstart programme was launched on 2 September and our new Youth Offer will provide a guaranteed foundation of support for 18-24 year olds in the Intensive Work Search Regime of Universal Credit.

A key part of the Youth Offer will be the national introduction of Youth Hubs, which will be co-located and co-delivered with local partners. Two Youth Hubs are now open in the North West of England and (subject to local COVID-19 restrictions) we expect a further four to open by the end of October. We are also introducing two demonstrator Youth Hubs where we can test our approach and share good practice with other areas.

We will build on the learning from these demonstrator sites with further expansion and additional Youth Hubs planned. In addition, all our Work Coaches – including those in the North West – will continue to signpost young people to the most appropriate local or national provision and ensure that no young person falls through the cracks.

■ Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit: Asbestosis and Diffuse Pleural Thickening**Ian Lavery:** [\[100390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many industrial injuries disablement benefit applications have been received for (a) asbestosis, (b) diffuse pleural thickening since January 2020.

Justin Tomlinson:

The number of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) applications that have been received for (a) asbestosis, (b) diffuse pleural thickening since January 2020 is;

Pneumoconiosis including Asbestosis and Silicosis – 1018 (we are unable to break this figure down to just asbestosis claims)

Diffuse Pleural Thickening – 417

We have also had the following Special Rules claims which are also associated with asbestos exposure:

Diffuse Mesothelioma – 1518

Cancer of the lung with evidence of Asbestosis – 122

Cancer of the lung – 157

Ian Lavery: [\[100395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many assessments for industrial injuries disabled benefits have been suspended due to the covid-19 outbreak in respect of (a) asbestosis and (b) diffuse pleural thickening.

Justin Tomlinson:

The number of Pneumoconiosis including Asbestosis and Silicosis category cases that are currently awaiting a medical assessment is 865 (we are unable to break this figure down to just asbestosis claims).

The number of Diffuse Pleural Thickening category cases that are currently awaiting a medical assessment is 347.

■ Kickstart Scheme**Cat Smith:** [\[100444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Kickstart scheme will include childcare provision to ensure that young parents are able to participate in that scheme.

Mims Davies:

Kickstart scheme funding does not include covering the costs of childcare. Universal Credit allows for up to 85% of childcare costs to be claimed back, and young people with dependent children considering a Kickstart opportunity should speak with their Work Coach for further information.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Medical Examinations**Colleen Fletcher:**[\[102092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether all personal independence payment assessors have undertaken training on understanding the (a) nature and (b) effect on people of fluctuating medical conditions.

Justin Tomlinson:

We understand the challenges associated with fluctuating conditions and have enhanced the training that Health Professionals receive to ensure that advice in this area is comprehensive. All Health Professionals receive training in disability analysis which includes a functional evaluation as to how medical conditions and the long-term medical treatment of those conditions affect an individual.

It is recognised that, over time, most conditions fluctuate to some degree and so it is essential for the assessment to accurately reflect the impact of variations in an individual's level of impairment. Health Professionals carrying out assessments are directed to take a view of an individual's ability over a longer period of time in order to establish a more coherent picture of the disabling effects of an individual's health condition.

■ Self-employed: Coronavirus**Jon Trickett:**[\[100291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support the Government is providing to self-employed people who are ineligible for the £500 support payment and have to self-isolate due to having covid-19 symptoms.

Mims Davies:

We have relaxed the application of the Minimum Income Floor (MIF) for all self-employed UC claimants affected by the impact of COVID-19. This means that that a drop in earnings due to sickness or self-isolation, or as a result of the impact of the outbreak, will now be reflected in a claimant's award. It ensures that the self-employed are supported by the benefit system so that they can follow the Public Health England guidance on social distancing and self-isolation.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Business Update

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Alok Sharma): **[\[HCWS517\]](#)**

I wish to inform the House of the laying of the Government response to the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) 2020 report on Reducing UK Emissions.

While Covid-19 has presented immense challenges for businesses and governments, the need for action on climate change has not diminished. The Government has been clear that we owe it to future generations to build back better and support the creation of a fairer, greener, and more resilient global economy.

The UK has already taken huge strides in bringing forward ambitious net zero policies across all sectors of the economy. We have reduced emissions faster than any other G7 nation since 1990, and in 2019, we became the first major economy to legislate to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

We welcome the CCC's report and are pleased that the Committee has recognised the progress we have made over the last year in establishing an appropriate policy framework to deliver our net zero ambitions.

Our response sets out the progress and the further actions we will take to deliver net zero and meet our carbon budgets. We provide specific responses to each of the CCC's recommendations outlining how each government department intends to put clean growth and net zero at the heart of the economic recovery.

We will publish a comprehensive net zero strategy ahead of COP26 setting out the UK's plan to work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2050. This will outline our vision for transitioning to a net zero economy, making the most of new growth and employment opportunities across the UK. This will build on the tens of billions of pounds that this Government has already committed to tackling climate change.

Just since March, we have announced over £3 billion to reduce emissions from the UK's buildings; £250 million for an emergency active travel fund as part of a £2 billion package for cycling and walking within plans to boost greener, active transport; £191 million into a Sustainable Innovation Fund; and £100 million into research, development and demonstration of direct air capture technologies, alongside £350 million into cutting emissions in heavy industry.

On 6 October, the Prime Minister announced that £160 million will be made available to increase our offshore wind capacity in order to meet the Government's updated ambition of generating 40GW through offshore wind by 2030. This is an increase from the previous 30GW target, which means that offshore wind could produce enough electricity to power every home in the country by 2030.

Our response also includes a new commitment to develop and publish a new cross-government Biomass Strategy by 2022.

The significant challenges of tackling climate change will require collaboration across government, business and civil society. We would like to reiterate our thanks to the CCC for their report and we are also grateful to the Devolved Administrations for their input in outlining the actions being taken across the United Kingdom to achieve net zero.

2021 marks a hugely significant year for both domestic and global climate action. Through our COP26 and G7 presidencies, the UK will drive international cooperation in the year ahead and we will continue to press countries for more ambition to reduce emissions, build resilience, and support each other.

We will continue to work closely with the CCC, businesses, and others, to unite in delivering our ambitious economic strategy for the UK to build back better and transition to Net Zero by 2050.

EDUCATION

■ Application System for Initial Teacher Training

The Minister of State for School Standards (Nick Gibb): [\[HCWS515\]](#)

Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy, published in January 2019, committed to a range of measures to help great people become teachers. One such measure is the introduction of a new application system for initial teacher training in England. This system will be easier to use and designed to better meet the needs of potential trainees. The new service will also support universities and schools delivering teacher training in making accurate decisions on whether their applicants are right for their courses.

During the October 2019 admissions cycle, this digital service was piloted by a number of School Centred Initial Teacher Training providers and schools across England, and has been designed and improved based on feedback from candidates, universities and schools delivering teacher training.

I confirm that from October 2020 the pilot will be extended to selected universities that deliver initial teacher training courses in England.

The new service will fully replace the existing UCAS Teacher Training service for postgraduate applications in England from the October 2021 admissions cycle.

TREASURY

■ Annual Report under the Infrastructure (Financial Assistance) Act 2012

The Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury (Kemi Badenoch): [\[HCWS516\]](#)

The Annual Report to Parliament under the Infrastructure (Financial Assistance) Act 2012 for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 has today been laid before Parliament.

The report is prepared in line with the requirements set out in the Infrastructure (Financial Assistance) Act 2012 that the government reports annually to Parliament on the financial assistance given under the act.

Copies are available in the Vote Office and the Printed Paper Office.