



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 23 October 2020 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:40 P.M., 23 October 2020). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

#### ■ Crime: Victims

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[104759\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, with reference to the HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate's report entitled Charging Inspection 2020, published in September 2020, what steps he is taking to improve communication to victims about the Victims' Right to Review scheme.

**Michael Ellis:**

The CPS Victims' Right to Review (VRR) scheme provides an important safeguard for victims. Following a request for a review, a new prosecutor not previously involved in the original decision will conduct a review of the case. If they decide that the original decision was wrong that decision will be overturned and proceedings reinstituted, where possible.

The HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate's 'Charging Inspection 2020' report notes that in 84.7% of the cases where there was a decision to take no further action that qualified for the VRR scheme, there was enough information for the police to explain the decision to the victim.

The CPS are actively engaged in the development of the revised Victims' Code which sets out victims' rights to receive services from Criminal Justice agencies, including information about the VRR scheme. The CPS is committed to delivering its responsibilities under the Code to ensure that victims have the information they need to exercise their right to review CPS decisions.

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[104760\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, with reference to the HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate's report entitled Charging Inspection 2020, published in September 2020, what steps she is taking to improve the timings for communications in respect of (a) Victim Communication and Liaison letters being issued and (b) those victims who are entitled to an enhanced service.

**Michael Ellis:**

The CPS offers an enhanced service to victims of rape or serious sexual offences and the bereaved families of homicide victims. This includes writing to victims or relatives within one day informing them of a decision not to charge a case.

I note that the recent Charging Inspection found 75% of appropriate VCL letters were sent within set enhanced service timescales. The CPS is committed to delivering an excellent service to victims, including working with the Ministry of Justice on revisions to the Victims' Code, and continues to consider ways to further improve communication with victims, including timeliness.

## ■ Exploitation: Young People

**Peter Kyle:**

[\[105463\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, with reference to page 8 of the 2020 UK annual report on Modern Slavery, how many prosecutors dealing with high-volume drug crime in the Youth Courts have received face-to-face training on recognising the signs of criminal exploitation.

**Peter Kyle:**

[\[105464\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, with reference to page 8 of the 2020 UK annual report on modern slavery, what plans she has to roll out face-to-face training on recognising the signs of criminal exploitation to prosecutors dealing with other types of crime in the Youth Courts.

**Michael Ellis:**

The CPS recognises that the exploitation, grooming, and trafficking of children and young people is abhorrent and it takes great care to ensure the right people are prosecuted for the right offences.

Face to face training on the circumstances in which a prosecution would not be appropriate has been delivered to in excess of 330 prosecutors dealing with high volume drug crime in Youth and Magistrates' Courts in the last three years. This includes training on section 45 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

The CPS also delivers a face-to-face Youth Specialist course which includes training on how to recognise the signs of exploitation and slavery and has been delivered to in excess of 300 prosecutors this year. Both courses have been adapted for delivery via videoconference during the Covid-19 crisis.

## BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

### ■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

[\[106210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to Secretary of State for Health and Social Care's oral contribution of 19 October 2020, Official Report, column 785 on vaccine production schedules, what the respective (a) starting dates were and (b) planned end dates are for the current trials of the (i) AstraZeneca, (ii) Imperial College and (iii) Novavax vaccines; and if he will list any factors, other than adverse reactions by subjects receiving these vaccines on an experimental basis, which may delay the completion of the trials beyond the planned end dates.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The AstraZeneca and University of Oxford vaccine started clinical trials in April 2020 and is currently in phase 2/3. The Imperial College London vaccine started clinical trials in June 2020 and is currently in phase 1/2. The Novavax vaccine clinical trials

started in May 2020 and is currently in phase 3. The end date of each trial is dependent on the clinical results and the data.

Government is working closely with vaccine developers to monitor progress of clinical trials.

## ■ **Electric Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries**

**Colleen Fletcher:**

**[106368]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to make the UK a world leader in electric car manufacturing.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The Government has a long-standing programme of support to maintain the competitiveness of the UK automotive sector. The Government and industry have committed around £1 billion over 10 years to 2023 through the Advanced Propulsion Centre. We have also committed £318 million to the Faraday Battery Challenge and £80 million towards the 'Driving the Electric Revolution Challenge'.

In addition, we have announced up to £1 billion through the Automotive Transformation Fund to develop UK supply chains for the large-scale production of Electric Vehicles (EVs) and for further research and development (R&D). An initial £10 million of funding will enable the first wave of innovative R&D projects to scale-up manufacturing of the latest technology in batteries, motors, electronics, and fuel cells. The Government is also encouraging industry to put forward investment proposals for gigafactories and to support supply chains to mass manufacture cutting-edge batteries for the next generation of EVs, as well as for other strategic EV technologies.

The UK is a global leader in the development and manufacture of EVs with various manufacturers already producing EVs in the UK. In 2019, the UK was the third largest market for Ultra Low Emission Vehicles in Europe and there are currently over 300,000 ultra-low emission vehicles registered in the UK. We are determined to ensure that the UK continues to be one of the most competitive locations in the world for the automotive sector and will continue to work closely with the automotive industry to ensure success.

## ■ **Electricity Interconnectors: Portsmouth**

**Stephen Morgan:**

**[106472]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of compulsory purchases in the Portsmouth area by Aquind Interconnector on (a) the wellbeing of local homeowners and (b) public confidence in (i) local democracy and (ii) Portsmouth city council.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The Planning Inspectorate is currently examining the application for development consent for the proposed Aquind Interconnector project. The application seeks authorisation for the compulsory acquisition of land and rights over land in connection



with the project and those matters will be considered during the examination of the application.

The Planning Inspectorate's report on the development consent application for the Aquind Interconnector, including any compulsory acquisition matters that have been raised, will be carefully considered once it is submitted to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

## ■ **Energy Companies Obligation**

**Sarah Olney:**

**[106446]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the statement that the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) has value but is not sufficient in the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee's report, Energy efficiency: building towards net zero, Twenty-First Report of Session 2017–19, HC 1730, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of widening the scope of the ECO.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The costs of the Energy Company Obligation are ultimately borne by domestic energy customers. Government needs to balance the costs to bill payers alongside the low income and vulnerable households whose homes are upgraded. ECO will work alongside other regulatory policy and direct funding to decarbonise buildings in the transition to net zero.

## ■ **Fuel Poverty**

**Sarah Olney:**

**[106445]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of district heating systems for reducing the number of fuel poor households as part of his Department's Fuel Poverty Strategy.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

District heating systems, or heat networks, have the potential to reduce consumer bills and therefore may contribute to reducing fuel poverty. We will consider the role and potential impact of heat networks as part of our planned update to the Fuel Poverty Strategy for England.

## ■ **Green Homes Grant Scheme: Park Homes**

**Sir Christopher Chope:**

**[106216]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many installers have accreditation to carry out insulation on park homes for the purposes of the Green Homes Grant 2020; if he will ensure that park home owners are informed of the identity of certified installers; and if he will make a statement.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

As of 15:00 on 20 October, there were 2 businesses which are TrustMark registered and certified to install insulation measures in park homes under the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme.

We are working with trade and certification bodies to support the accreditation of installers as quickly as possible. BEIS has launched a £6.9 million skills competition to provide training opportunities for the energy efficiency and low carbon heating supply chains to deliver works and scale up to meet additional consumer demand.

Park homeowners are able to search for suitably certified installers to insulate their properties on the Simple Energy Advice website.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Finance****Sarah Olney:**[\[106443\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential contribution of community energy to meeting the fourth and fifth greenhouse gas emissions budgets under the Climate Change Act 2008.

**Kwasi Kwarteng:**

The Government is building on its Clean Growth Strategy and has already made significant progress towards meeting the UK's net zero target. We have met our first and second carbon budgets that were established under the Climate Change Act 2008, and we are on track for the third.

As a Government, we have supported community energy through the £10m Rural Community Energy Fund, and through extensions for community groups under the Feed in Tariffs to ensure that communities can develop renewable energy projects. We are also working closely with Community Energy England on the Community Energy Hub and in creating a regional network of support for communities getting involved directly in reducing their carbon footprint. This includes developing a new tool for parish councils, as well as the SCATTER tool for local authorities.

Our forthcoming sector strategies on energy, heat and buildings and the environment, and our wider plans to deliver a green economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic, will contain further proposals to support us in meeting carbon budgets 4 and 5. Two cabinet committees, chaired by my Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister and my Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, have also been established to turbo-charge the net zero transition and co-ordinate action across Government.

**Nuclear Power: Finance****Dr Alan Whitehead:**[\[104009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish the results of his Department's June 2019 consultation on a Regulated Asset Base model for new nuclear projects.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The Government is looking at options for the financing of new nuclear projects. In 2019, we consulted on a Regulated Asset Base as a possible funding model that could improve value for money and reduce the cost of capital of future nuclear projects. We will respond in due course.

**■ Remote Working: Conditions of Employment****Sir Mark Hendrick:****[104056]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has to publish guidance on worker's rights for people working from home.

**Paul Scully:**

ACAS has produced comprehensive guidance on the key employer considerations for when people are working at home during the pandemic. This covers health and safety and insurance – the link to the relevant section of the ACAS site can be found here <https://www.acas.org.uk/working-from-home>.

There is also a legal framework in place that grants all employees with 26 weeks' continuous service with their employer the statutory Right to Request Flexible Working, where employees can request a change to their hours, working patterns or to work from home. There is supporting guidance currently available online which explains both eligibility and the process for making a request to work flexibly on GOV.UK – this can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working>. In addition, there is the ACAS Code of Practice on making and responding to flexible working requests, which can be found here <https://www.acas.org.uk/acas-code-of-practice-on-flexible-working-requests>.

**Sir Mark Hendrick:****[104057]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to ensure people who work remotely are not being required to accept a loss in (a) pay, (b) job stability, and (c) opportunities for promotion.

**Paul Scully:**

ACAS has produced comprehensive guidance on the key employment issues for when people are working at home during the pandemic. This covers practical issues such as pay and insurance, as well as offering training on managing people who work remotely – the link to the relevant section of the ACAS site can be found here <https://www.acas.org.uk/working-from-home>.

There is also a legal framework in place that grants all employees with 26 weeks' continuous service with their employer the statutory Right to Request Flexible Working, where employees can request a change to their hours, working patterns or to work from home. There is supporting guidance currently available online which explains both eligibility and the process for making a request to work flexibly on GOV.UK – this can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working>.

Employers should not dismiss or treat staff unfairly because they have made a flexible working request or intend to make a flexible working request, which can include working remotely. To treat staff unfairly means to cause them detriment such that they are worse off than they were previously. Examples of unfair treatment include employers reducing the hours of staff, overlooking individuals for promotions or development opportunities, and saying no to training requests without good reason.

If an employee feels they have experienced detriment because of a flexible working request, they may qualify to make a claim to an employment tribunal.

## ■ Research and Universities: Equality

**Chi Onwurah:**

**[106337]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he takes to assess the effectiveness of UK research bodies and university departments in working to and achieving gender diversity.

**Amanda Solloway:**

Government recognises the importance of having a research system that values and recognises all and is committed to addressing under-representation and inequalities including those around gender, disability and ethnicity. UKRI publishes comprehensive annual data on success rates for grant applications, fellowships and PhD starts for these characteristics and has taken positive steps to increase diversity in the peer review processes and advisory groups that decide on these.

## ■ STEM Subjects: Recruitment

**Chi Onwurah:**

**[106336]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he his Department will publish a long-term strategy for encouraging people from under represented groups to pursue career in STEM.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The Research and Development Roadmap published by BEIS this summer set out the UK's vision and ambition for science, research and innovation. To realise this ambition we need to ensure all people, regardless of background, have the opportunity to study STEM subjects and aspire to careers in science and engineering. The forthcoming People and Culture Strategy for Research will set out how Government will support the sector in developing a research culture that is welcoming to those from under-represented groups.

**CABINET OFFICE****■ UK Trade with EU: Northern Ireland**

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105581\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment his Department has made of the extent of legal impediments to trade in the event that the UK and EU do not agree a deal on their future relationship by the end of the transition period.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105582\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government plans to take to avoid legal impediments to trade between (a) Northern Ireland, (b) Great Britain and (c) the EU in the of the UK and EU not agreeing a deal on their future relationship by the end of the transition period.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105583\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how he plans to (a) communicate and (b) implement free trade agreement arrangements to businesses in Northern Ireland after the transition period.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105584\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he has taken to ensure that the (a) reputation and (b) integrity of Northern Ireland produce is protected within legislation relating to unfettered access after the transition period.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105585\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what progress his Department has made on ensuring exit summary declarations for goods travelling from Northern Ireland to Great Britain are not needed after the transition period.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105586\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans the Government has for processes for checking goods outside of ports in Northern Ireland after the transition period.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105587\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that Northern Ireland (a) businesses and (b) consumers do not experience (i) increased prices for and (ii) reduced choice of goods after the transition period.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105588\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, when he plans to publish full guidance to (a) business and (b) third parties on the movement of goods from Great Britain into Northern Ireland.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105589\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what (a) training and (b) financial support he plans to make available to businesses in Northern Ireland to help them prepare for arrangements after the transition period ends.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105590\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will publish detailed, practical guidance for Northern Ireland businesses operating in the UK VAT area but complying with EU rules.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105595\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he plans to take to ensure that the imposition of new costs on Northern Ireland firms does not put them at a competitive disadvantage relative to the rest of Great Britain after 31 December 2020.

**Claire Hanna:** [\[105596\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he plans to take to ensure that Northern Ireland businesses that use the port of Dublin to access Great Britain markets are not subject to delays and customs procedures at the end of the transition period.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

I refer the Hon Member to the [statement by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on 19 October](#), the approach outlined in the Government's [Command Paper in May](#), and the [guidance published on 7 August](#) regarding the operation of the Northern Ireland protocol, as well as my answers to PQs [here](#), and the updated Border Operating Model for Great Britain and the EU, available on [gov.uk](#).

Further to my answer to PQs [here](#), the Government has launched a Trader Support Service to provide end-to-end support to traders, backed by £200 million in funding. I urge businesses to sign up to the scheme with a link available on [gov.uk](#) at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trader-support-service>.

We are also considering further measures of support as regards agrifood trade, as set out in the August guidance.

Regarding costs and burdens on businesses, the UK Government continues to work closely with the Northern Ireland Executive.

Northern Ireland produce will enjoy unfettered access to the rest of the UK following the end of the Transition Period.

The Government has committed to publishing further detailed information and guidance as soon as possible when relevant details are resolved, including where matters depend on discussions in the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee. This includes on the question of VAT and excise.

The question of Exit Summary Declarations for goods movement from Northern Ireland to Great Britain is subject to discussion at the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee.

The Government has set out its approach to ensuring how the requirements of the Protocol are conducted. This will include market surveillance for industrial goods.

The Government has an extensive communications campaign in place regarding the need for businesses to prepare for the end of the transition period, and this covers businesses in Northern Ireland.

## DEFENCE

### ■ Armed Forces Covenant

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[106378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when (a) Ministers and (b) officials in his Department last met, in person or virtually, with representatives of the each of the devolved Administrations to discuss the development and implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant.

**Johnny Mercer:**

Ministry of Defence (MOD) Ministers, officials and military officers regularly meet, and correspond, with representatives of the Devolved Administrations to discuss a range of issues.

I met with my counterparts in the Scottish and Welsh Governments in May this year to discuss proposals to strengthen the Covenant in law. The Chief of Defence People met with Ministers from the Welsh Government earlier in October. Officials met with counterparts from the Devolved Administrations on 14 October at a virtual conference hosted by the MOD to discuss the Covenant.

### ■ Army: Pay

**Mr Richard Holden:**

[\[104201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will publish (a) a template service personnel payslip and (b) an example payslip for a soldier at the rank of private with three years' service.

**Johnny Mercer:**

I will write to the hon. Member, and will include the requested examples.

### ■ Aviation: Training

**James Gray:**

[\[104674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the contract for UK Light Aircraft Flying Training 2 was first tendered.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The contract was awarded in 2009. Information relating to the first tendering of the contract is not held electronically and can be provided only, if at all, at disproportionate cost.

**James Gray:**[\[104676\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the value of the Light Aircraft Flying Training 2 contract is.

**James Gray:**[\[105282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the value is of his Department's contract with Babcock for light aircraft flying training.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The whole life costs for the Light Aircraft Flying Training 2, through to March 2022, have been assessed as approximately £263 million.

**James Gray:**[\[104681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the number of careers in aviation that will be created by Project TELUM.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The number of careers in aviation required to fulfil the Project TELUM requirements will be a matter for the successful bidder for the contract.

**James Gray:**[\[105283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has for a tender for a new contract for the UK Light Aircraft Flying 3 project TELUM; and if he will make a statement.

**James Gray:**[\[105285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his timescale is for the (a) procurement process and (b) contract award for the UK Light Aircraft Flying 3 project TELUM.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The TELUM Prior Information Notice (PIN) seeking expressions of interest was issued to industry on 7 October 2020. Project TELUM is still in its early stages and it is still under development. It is, therefore, too early to state when the new contract will be awarded.

**James Gray:**[\[105284\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his Department's contract with Babcock for light aircraft flying training was subject to oversight by the Single Source Regulations Office.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Light Aircraft Flying Training 2 contract was awarded to VT Aerospace Ltd, (subsequently taken over by Babcock International) in 2009 following a competitive



tender exercise. The Single Source Regulations did not apply at that time as they did not come into force until the Defence Reform Act 2014.

In December 2019, the contract was transitioned to a Qualifying Defence Contract and is now subject to Single Source Regulations and oversight by the Single Source Regulations Office.

## ■ Integrated Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy Review

**Matt Western:**

[\[104165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

I have been working very closely across Government on my Department's contribution to the Integrated Review, including with the Prime Minister and my colleagues in the National Security Council.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Children: Crime

**Peter Kyle:**

[\[105468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 16 October 2020 to Question 102886 on Crime: Children, what plans she has to make an assessment of the effectiveness of data sharing between local authorities relating to child criminal exploitation.

**Vicky Ford:**

The department has no specific plans to review the effectiveness of data sharing between local authorities relating to child criminal exploitation.

As I set out in the answer I gave on 16 October 2020 to [102886](#), there is a robust statutory framework in place that requires effective sharing of information between practitioners, local organisations and agencies to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children. Ofsted inspect the effectiveness of local authority children's services and arrangements. Guidance on the framework for inspecting local authority children's services is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services-from-2018/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services#introduction>.

### ■ Children: Missing Persons

**Peter Kyle:**

[\[105470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that information gathered during independent return home interviews is shared with (a) local

authority children's services, (b) police and (c) voluntary services, to allow those parties to prepare adequate action plans.

**Vicky Ford:**

The department's statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or from care is clear that information-sharing between professionals and local agencies is essential in identifying patterns of behaviour for individual children, and for wider groups of children, at risk of harm. This guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care>.

The collaboration between professionals and local agencies includes effective scrutiny and sharing of information from return interviews between local authorities, police forces, the voluntary sector and health and education settings. This ensures that the welfare concerns of individual children and wider 'hotspots' of risks, such as sexual and criminal exploitation, are identified, tackled and disrupted effectively.

The statutory guidance also makes clear that these local safeguarding partners should ensure that a local Runaway and Missing From Home and Care protocol is completed and reviewed regularly. A crucial part of this partnership join-up is the analysis of information and intelligence captured during return interviews.

As part of Ofsted's inspections of children's services, they consider how well children and young people are helped and protected and will challenge poor practice.

■ **Coronavirus Catch-up Premium: Harrow West**

**Gareth Thomas:** [104020]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much covid-19-related financial support Pinner Park School in Harrow has (a) applied for and (b) received from his Department; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:** [104021]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much covid-19-related financial support Hatch End High School in Harrow has (a) applied for and (b) received from his Department; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:** [104024]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding each primary school in Harrow West constituency has (a) applied for and (b) received as part of the universal catch-up premium; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:** [104025]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding each secondary school in Harrow West constituency has (a) applied for and (b) received as part of the universal catch-up premium for schools; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[104026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding each primary school in Harrow West constituency has (a) applied for and (b) received as part of the National Tutoring Programme; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[104027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding each secondary school in Harrow West constituency has (a) applied for and (b) received as part of the National Tutoring Programme; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[104028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding each primary school in Harrow West constituency has (a) applied for and (b) received as part of the additional funding for unavoidable costs incurred between March and July due to the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[104029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding each secondary school in Harrow West constituency has (a) applied for and (b) received as part of the additional funding to schools to cover unavoidable costs incurred between March and July due to the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

**Nick Gibb:**

The attached table shows the claims submitted and payments made for COVID-19 related funding to date for Hatch End High School and primary and secondary schools in Harrow West constituency. The funding shown is from the COVID-19 exceptional costs schools fund and the COVID-19 catch-up premium.

The exceptional costs schools fund first claims window closed on 21 July for costs incurred between March to July 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak that could not be met from their budgets. The payment values in the table relate to those costs claimed within the published scope of the fund (additional cleaning costs arising from confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19, additional premises costs related to opening during the Easter and summer half term holidays and free school meals costs incurred outside of the national voucher scheme). Where the claimed figure is higher than the payment, a claim will have been made which includes costs outside of the published scope of the fund. These claims are in the process of being assessed and we will inform schools of the outcome of this part of their claim later in the autumn term.

The COVID-19 catch-up premium does not operate on an application or claim basis but is a formulaic grant automatically paid to all eligible schools. The values represented in the attached table are the initial payments based on a proportion of an interim allocation calculated using the published rates and school census data from October 2019. The final allocations will be re-calculated once the October 2020 school census data is available and a further payment made in early 2021. The remaining allocation will be paid in a final instalment later in 2021.

There is no data in the attached table relating to the National Tutoring Programme (NTP). The NTP is not yet live and so we do not have any information about participants. We expect our first group of tutors to be working with schools from November, with provision ramping up into the spring term. The Department will announce a list of approved Tuition Partners in November. Schools will be able to approach these partners to access subsidised tuition. At the same time, will also be appointing our first wave of academic mentors, matching suitable candidates to schools that have expressed an interest in working with a mentor.

**Attachments:**

1. 104020\_21\_24\_25\_26\_27\_28\_29\_Table  
[104020\_21\_24\_25\_26\_27\_28\_29\_Table\_COVID\_Payments\_to\_Harrow\_West\_Schools.pdf]

■ **Education: Coronavirus**

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

[\[106295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what additional support he has made available to support teachers to help return pupils' attainment back to the national standard after their attainment declined during the summer term and summer holiday during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Nick Gibb:**

All children and young people have had their education disrupted as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. In order to support schools, the Government has committed to a catch-up package worth £1 billion.

This funding includes a universal catch-up premium worth £650 million to support schools to deliver any additional activities required to make up for lost teaching time. 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, and a School Planning Guide, developed in partnership with expert school leaders from across the country, to support school leaders with their planning for the 2020/21 academic year.

Alongside this, the catch-up package includes a new £350 million National Tutoring Programme for disadvantaged pupils. This will increase access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged young people, further helping to tackle the attainment gap. Research shows high quality individual and small group tuition can add up to five months of progress for disadvantaged pupils.

■ **Free School Meals: Disadvantaged**

**Colleen Fletcher:**

[\[106367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of children in (a) Coventry, (b) the West Midlands and (c) England (i) eligible and (ii) not eligible for free school meals who achieved five or more GCSEs at grades 4 to 9 in each of the last three years.

**Nick Gibb:**

The table attached shows the number and percentage of pupils, by free school meals status, at the end of Key Stage 4 achieving 5 or more GCSEs (including English and mathematics) at grades 4 to 9 (or equivalent). The figures are for Coventry, West Midlands and England and cover the latest three academic years (2016/17 – 2018/19).

**Attachments:**

1. 106367\_Table [106367\_GCSE\_Attainment\_by\_FSM\_eligibility.xlsx]

**■ Ofqual****Emma Hardy:****[106469]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to ask Ofqual to publish the minutes of its board meetings that have taken place since September 2019.

**Nick Gibb:**

This is a matter for Ofqual, the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation. The Department has asked its interim Chief Regulator, Dame Glenys Stacey, to write directly to the hon. Member for Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle. A copy of her reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

**■ Pupils: Attendance****Fleur Anderson:****[106507]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to fill gaps in school attendance data to inform catch up plans.

**Nick Gibb:**

Since March the Department has been collecting daily attendance data from Schools and nurseries. The latest attendance data is published here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/2020-week-42>.

We have also introduced a new category of non-attendance for schools to use in the school census: 'not attending in circumstances related to COVID-19', to ensure that they record attendance accurately and consistently over this period.

In light of the disruption earlier in the year, the summer 2020 school census did not occur, and data for absence in the spring term 2019/20 was not collected. To reduce the burden on schools, the Department took a decision not to collect attendance data in the autumn 2020 school census relating to the summer 2019/2020 term.

Census data collection will resume in the spring 2021 census, collecting data on the autumn 2020/21 school term.

**■ Remote Education: Harrow West**

**Gareth Thomas:** [104030]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding each primary school in Harrow West constituency has (a) applied for and (b) received as part of the fund to support remote education; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:** [104031]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding each secondary school Harrow West constituency has (a) applied for and (b) received as part of the fund to support remote education; and if he will make a statement.

**Nick Gibb:**

It is vital that students have access to high quality and consistent remote education. The Department believes that through the hard work of teachers and staff, pupils will continue to receive the education they deserve, whatever the circumstances.

The Department is providing additional funding to schools, on top of existing budgets, to cover unavoidable costs incurred between March to July due to the COVID-19 outbreak that could not be met from their budgets.

Schools have been eligible to claim for: increased premises related costs associated with keeping schools open over the Easter and summer half term holidays; support for free school meals for eligible children who were not in school, where schools were not using the national voucher scheme; and additional cleaning costs required due to confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases, over and above the cost of existing cleaning arrangements.

To support remote education, the Government has invested over £160 million to provide schools with laptops, tablets and connectivity, peer-to-peer support and digital learning platforms. This includes providing over 220,000 laptops and tablets and over 50,000 4G wireless routers during the summer term for disadvantaged children in Year 10, children receiving support from a social worker and care leavers.

Local authorities and academy trusts were allocated a number of devices based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. A breakdown of the number of devices delivered to each local authority and academy trust can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/laptops-tablets-and-4g-wireless-routers-progress-data>.

The Department is now supplementing this support by making an additional 250,000 laptops and tablets available to schools in the event that face-to-face schooling is disrupted as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. This Department is also working with the major telecommunications companies to improve internet connectivity for disadvantaged and vulnerable families who rely on a mobile internet connection.

The Government is funding expert technical support to help schools set up secure user accounts for Google and Microsoft's education platforms. 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.

New resources for staff, including a good practice guide and school-led webinars, will also be made available. This builds on the universal package already in place through the Oak National Academy, which provides video lessons across a broad range of subjects for every year group from Reception to Year 11. Children will have the flexibility to access free remote education in addition to their own school's offer this year.

## ■ Schools: Admissions

**Layla Moran:**

**[106480]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance his Department provides to schools on the rights of children with British National (Overseas) status to school places.

**Nick Gibb:**

All children who live in the UK are eligible for a school place in England irrespective of their nationality.

The UK has offered a new route to full citizenship to British Nationals (Overseas) (BNO(S)) and their dependants. This means that those BN(O) families taking advantage of this offer and moving to the UK will be able to access a state-funded or independent school place for their children on the same basis as every other family in the UK. Those BN(O) families who choose not to avail themselves of our migration offer, and who remain in Hong Kong, will, as now, be able to send their children to the UK to access an independent school place under the UK study visa rules.

Advice to state-funded school admission authorities is contained within the School Admissions Code, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2>. We also provide specific advice to admission authorities on the rights of overseas pupils to access a school place on the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children>.

We sent a bulletin to schools in England on 14 October containing information about changes to the immigration system which said: 'Schools should continue to offer places to foreign national children who are resident in the United Kingdom.'

## ■ Schools: Coronavirus

**Matt Western:**

**[104160]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of test and trace systems to support schools to remain open to all pupils during the covid-19 outbreak.



**Nick Gibb:**

We are continuing to improve the testing system, including by ensuring teaching staff can get priority access when they have symptoms. The Government is scaling up testing capacity even further to 500,000 tests a day by the end of October.

In order to protect schools, it is important head teachers continue to have access to timely support and advice. There is a new dedicated advice line to help schools to implement the most appropriate public health measures once a case is confirmed. A team of advisers will inform schools what action is needed in response to a positive case based on the latest public health advice, and work through a risk assessment.

It is vital that children and school staff only get a test if they develop COVID-19 symptoms, with the exception of those who have specifically been asked to do so by a clinician. The NHS Test and Trace system must stay focused on testing those with true symptoms of the virus.

**Anne Marie Morris:****[106356]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he plans to allocate additional funding to schools to cover costs they have incurred in responding to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department is providing additional funding to schools, on top of existing budgets, to cover unavoidable costs incurred between March to July due to the COVID-19 outbreak that cannot be met from their existing resources.

Schools have been eligible to claim for: increased premises related costs associated with keeping schools open over the Easter and summer half term holidays; support for free school meals for eligible children who are not in school, where schools are not using the national voucher scheme; and additional cleaning costs required due to confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases, over and above the cost of existing cleaning arrangements. The Department has published detailed guidance on the fund at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-schools>.

The first claims window for the fund closed on 21 July. All claims for funding within the published cost categories and up to the maximum limit have already been paid. The Department is assessing all other claims, which will be paid later in the year if approved.

There will also be a further opportunity in autumn for schools to claim for exceptional costs they faced between March to July. This second claims window will be available for schools who were unable to claim in the summer and will be for the same eligible cost categories.



## ■ Students: Mental Health Services

**Afzal Khan:**

**[104767]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of funding for (a) student support services and (b) mental health support.

**Michelle Donelan:**

Protecting the mental health of students continues to be a priority for this government and I have convened representatives from the higher education and health sectors to specifically address the current and pressing issues that students are facing during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Department of Health and Social Care has overall policy responsibility for young people's mental health. We continue to work closely with them to take steps to develop mental health and wellbeing support.

The government is committed, through the NHS Long Term Plan, to investing at least £2.3 billion of extra funding a year into mental health services by 2023-24. This will see an additional 345,000 children and young people, and adults, able to access support through NHS-funded services.

We have invested £8 million in the Wellbeing for Education Return programme, providing schools and colleges with the knowledge and practical skills to help improve how to respond to the emotional impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. Further information is available here: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/wellbeing-for-education-return-grant-s31-grant-determination-letter](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wellbeing-for-education-return-grant-s31-grant-determination-letter).

In further education, £5.4 million of competitive grant funding has been provided through the College Collaboration Fund, with five of the projects funded to support student and staff mental health and wellbeing through online programmes and remote support.

It is for higher education providers as autonomous bodies to identify and address the needs of their student body, and many providers have boosted their existing welfare and counselling services to ensure students are able to access the support they need. Student Space, funded with up to £3 million from the Office for Students, provides dedicated support services (by phone and by text) for students and a collaborative online platform to help students access vital mental health and wellbeing resources. The platform bridges gaps in support for students arising from the COVID-19 outbreak and is designed to work alongside existing services.

We have asked that providers prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of students, enabling them to use funding, worth up to £23 million per month from April to July this year, and £256 million for the 2020-21 academic year starting from August, to go towards student hardship funds and mental health support.

Over £9 million has been provided by the government to leading mental health charities to help them expand and reach those most in need. Students struggling with their mental health can also access support via online resources from the NHS and Public Health England, and the mental health charity Mind.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****■ Angling****Scott Mann:**[\[104130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to support the recreational fishing sector in respect of negotiations on the UK's future relationship with the EU.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The UK will become an independent coastal state at the end of 2020 and will no longer be bound by the EU's common fisheries policy or its outdated and unfair method for sharing fishing opportunities.

The Government's position in negotiations on a future relationship with the EU on fish is reasonable and straightforward and seeks to secure the best outcome for all UK fishers, including the recreational sector. The UK wants a simple, separate fisheries framework agreement which reflects our rights under international law and which provides for annual negotiations over access and fishing opportunities based on the scientific principle of zonal attachment.

**■ Domestic Waste: Waste Disposal****Tim Farron:**[\[106287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which local authorities have taken enforcement action under section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in each of the last three years.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Defra does not hold information on which local authorities have taken enforcement action under section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in each of the last three years.

**■ Flood Control****Holly Lynch:**[\[104128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans the Government has to incentivise the installation of flood (a) resistant and (b) resilient measures to help improve protections for properties from future flooding.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Government launched a Policy Statement in July 2020 setting out how we want to boost uptake of Property Flood Resilience (PFR) in homes and businesses across the country. We want to encourage a faster transition to a market place for property flood resilience, including advice, service provision, products, and incentives.

We want the right incentives and financial products in place to encourage uptake of property flood resilience. We are considering options to remove barriers through the operation of the Flood Re scheme. This will include encouraging insurers to price

policies in ways that reflect risk reductions as a result of PFR and enable the scheme to support insurance pay-outs covering the additional cost of recoverable repairs. This winter, we will be consulting on these changes and publishing a Call for Evidence on PFR policy.

£2.9 million funding from the 2018 budget is already supporting 3 pathfinder projects up to September 2021 in Yorkshire, the South West and South Midlands. The funding is creating demonstration centres, engaging with suppliers and developing advice portals to promote uptake of PFR by homes and businesses. These innovative schemes will provide useful learning for other local authorities.

In addition, we are investing £200m to drive and test innovation at a local level to improve resilience to flooding and coastal erosion. There will be a PFR action as part of this. We will be inviting expressions of interest later this year.

### ■ Flood Control: Finance

**Holly Lynch:**

[\[104127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits making flood resilience grants available throughout the year.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Risk Management Authorities can develop local Property Flood Resilience (PFR) grant schemes and apply to Regional Flood and Coastal Committees for a contribution towards their cost through Local-Levy or Grant-in-Aid.

As set out in our Policy Statement, we want to encourage a faster transition to a market place for PFR, including advice, products and service delivery. We also want to ensure the right incentives and financial products are available to encourage property flood resilience installation. This winter, we will be publishing a Call for Evidence on PFR policy.

In addition, we are investing £200m in an innovative resilience programme to drive and test innovation at a local level to improve resilience to flooding and coastal erosion. This includes an action on PFR. We will be inviting expressions of interest later this year.

### ■ Floods: Building Regulations

**Holly Lynch:**

[\[104129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government on updating building regulations to include resilience standards that must be met when properties that have been flooded are being reinstated.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Defra and the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG) are in regular contact.

MHCLG keeps Building-Regulations under review. Approved Document C includes a reference to potential damage from flooding and states that buildings should be designed to mitigate this flood risk. Defra worked with MHCLG in 2015 on the development of a British Standard (BS85500:2015) on flood resilient construction for new buildings and retrofits for existing buildings, which complements building regulations.

■ **Planning Permission: Rural Areas**

**Matt Western:**

[\[104157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on the effect of proposed planning reforms on rural communities.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Secretary of State has regular discussions with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on a range of matters affecting rural communities.

■ **Pollution Control: Wakefield**

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

[\[104206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to tackle air pollution in Wakefield constituency.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Local authorities are required to review and assess local air quality and to take action where there are high levels of air pollution. The Government's Air Quality Grant Programme provides funding to local authorities for projects in local communities to tackle air pollution and reduce emissions which may include action targeting schools. The Government has awarded over £64 million in funding since the air quality grant started in 1997, including £3 million in 2018/19.

In 2018 Wakefield received from the Air Quality Grant £27,131.27 for a targeted extension of the "Eco stars scheme" to reduce diesel fuel consumption in commercial vehicle fleets through fleet management and efficient driving, and a further £61,604.33 for NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> sensors placed at 24 schools to measure air quality.

The Government has put in place a £3.8 billion plan to improve air quality and reduce harmful nitrogen dioxide emissions. Our Clean Air Strategy sets out measures we are taking to improve air quality and reduce emissions of pollution, improving public health. This includes being the first major economy to set goals working towards World Health Organization recommendations on particulate matter emissions.

We are bringing forward primary legislation on clean air, giving local government powers to take decisive action in areas with an air pollution problem.

## ■ River Severn: Flood Control

**Daniel Kawczynski:**

**[104074]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to implement the flood defences along the River Severn set out by the Environment agency and River Severn Partnership as soon as possible.

**Rebecca Pow:**

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

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

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

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

In addition, the Government funding announcement on 14 July secured significant additional investment for the River Severn Partnership, providing £30 million for the Severn Valley, £4.9 million for Tenbury Wells and £5.4 million for carbon offsetting work linked to the Partnership.

**Daniel Kawczynski:**

**[104075]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when his Department plans to allocate additional funding for flood defences along the River Severn.

**Rebecca Pow:**

In July this year, the Government announced that an additional £170 million will be spent to accelerate work on shovel-ready flood defence schemes that will begin construction in 2020 or 2021. The Government awarded the River Severn Partnership a significant additional investment from this fund which is providing up to £30 million for the Severn Valley, in addition to up to £4.9 million for Tenbury Wells.

The recent Budget announcement confirmed that the Government will double the amount it invests in the flood and coastal defence programme in England to £5.2 billion over six years from 2021, better protecting a further 336,000 properties including 290,000 homes.

The £5.2 billion capital programme will continue to be allocated in accordance with Defra's Partnership Funding Policy. This policy clarifies the level of investment communities can expect from Defra so that it is clear what levels of partner funding they need to attract from other sources to allow projects to go ahead.

## FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

### ■ Bahrain: Capital Punishment

**Layla Moran:**

[\[106479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has made to his Bahraini counterpart on whether the executions of Mohammed Ramadhan and Husain Moosa in Bahrain will be carried out imminently.

**James Cleverly:**

We have raised both cases at senior levels with the Government of Bahrain. Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister responsible for Human Rights, raised the cases with the Bahraini Ambassador to the UK on 14 July. During the recent visit to the UK of Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, I reiterated the UK's opposition to the use of the death penalty, in all circumstances.

### ■ Bahrain: Overseas Aid

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[106359\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 16 April 2018 to Question HL6838, which implementation partners the Government funds through the Integrated Activity Fund to support Bahraini-led reform, including in the field of human rights.

**James Cleverly:**

We do not disclose information related to implementing partners to maintain confidentiality and protect their security to ensure that our ability to use the Fund to deliver government policy is not compromised.

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[106360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 16 April 2018 to Question HL6838, whether the Integrated Activity Fund is used to finance (a) training and (b) other activities delivered Bahraini bodies dealing with security matters.

**James Cleverly:**

The Integrated Activity Fund supports Bahrain-led reform, sharing UK expertise and experience including on security matters. These projects aim to support progress on building effective and accountable institutions and strengthening the rule of law. Any training and activities provided by, or on behalf of, the British Government fully complies with our domestic and international human rights obligations.

## ■ **Carbones del Cerrejon**

**Patrick Grady:**

**[105415]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has made an assessment of the compatibility of the actions of the joint British-American registered Carbones de Cerrejón company at the Tajo Patilla mining site in Colombia with the commitments contained in the UK National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK was the first country to create a National Action Plan to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. This plan sets out what is expected of the conduct of UK businesses, including compliance with relevant laws and respect for human rights; treating the risk of causing human rights abuses as a legal compliance issue; adopting appropriate due diligence policies; and consulting those who could potentially be affected.

The Government backs its expectations with actions. We ensure that large UK companies are held to account on these issues through regulation, including the Companies Act, which requires corporate transparency over potential human rights issues, and due diligence measures taken.

**Patrick Grady:**

**[105416]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the findings of the 12 UN Special Rapporteurs on the operations of the Carbones de Cerrejón company at its Tajo Patilla mining site in Colombia.

**Wendy Morton:**

We have noted with concern the recent statement by David Boyd, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment, concerning the Cerrejón mine and are seeking further information.

As set out in the FCDO Annual Human Rights Report, we expect British businesses to respect local and international law wherever they operate, and look to extractive companies to comply with the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. BHP, Anglo American and Glencore, which own Cerrejón, are all signatories to these Principles.

## ■ **Chile: Freedom of Religion**

**Paul Girvan:**

**[106462]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representation he has made to his Chilean counterpart on freedom of religion in that country since the burning-down of a place of worship by protesters in Santiago.

**Wendy Morton:**

Chile's government strongly and swiftly condemned the burning-down of two churches in Santiago by violent protesters on 18 October. Chile has robust



constitutional and legal protections for the freedom of religion and the free exercise of worship, with the law prohibiting religious discrimination. The recent arson attacks against the places of worship are under investigation. We continue to discuss the human rights situation in Chile with the government through open and constructive dialogue.

## ■ Colombia: Diplomatic Relations

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[105414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether a representative from the UK embassy in Colombia has (a) been invited to and (b) attended a meeting with members of the indigenous Wayuu Community and the Jesuit Centre for Research and Popular Education on the operations of the Carbones de Cerrejón company at its Tajo Patilla mining site.

**Wendy Morton:**

Representatives from the UK Embassy were invited to a recent meeting with members of the Wayuu community and Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (CINEP) to discuss Cerrejón. Unfortunately, due to scheduling pressures, no-one from the Embassy was able to attend. Instead, FCDO officials in London convened a separate meeting with the Wayuu and CINEP to hear their concerns, and have fed them back to Embassy staff.

## ■ Developing Countries: Death

**Alexander Stafford:**

[\[104780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what plans he has to support the World Health Organisations' Ending Preventable Deaths Action Plan.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK is committed to working with others to end the preventable deaths of mothers, newborns and children in the developing world by 2030. Pregnancy, childbirth and the early years of life remain a dangerous time in many developing countries. A stillbirth occurs every 16 seconds somewhere in the world, and every year 2.4 million babies die in the first 28 days of life. The majority of these are preventable.

The UK works closely with the World Health Organisation and we are engaged in their Every Newborn Action Plan to end preventable deaths. For example, we recently supported the first-ever UN stillbirth report released this month. The UK supports newborn health through a broad range of country, regional and global programmes. Examples include the Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents that supports evidence-driven investments to improve reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health.



## ■ Diplomatic Service

**Hannah Bardell:**

[\[106413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what criteria his Department applies to assess the needs of people who require consular assistance.

**Nigel Adams:**

As I discussed with the Honourable Lady on 19th October, the level and type of assistance and advice we offer is tailored to the individual circumstances of each person. Our staff will make an assessment of the vulnerability of a British national and the needs they have, based on who they are, where they are, and their situation. We aim to assess their needs promptly and provide effective assistance based on their individual circumstances and local conditions, making every effort to contact vulnerable British nationals within 24 hours of being notified of their situation.

## ■ Diplomatic Service: Families

**Hannah Bardell:**

[\[106414\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what process his Department undertakes to assess the vulnerability of families when assessing their need for consular assistance.

**Nigel Adams:**

As I discussed with the Honourable Lady on 19th October, consular staff assess the vulnerability of a British national on a case-by-case basis, to provide a tailored level of assistance to the individual. This assessment will also take into account any family members, including children, with whom the British national may be travelling.

## ■ Diplomatic Service: Training

**Hannah Bardell:**

[\[106412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department's mystery shopper exercises to test its staff during the covid-19 pandemic is in line with international best practice on how to train consular staff.

**Nigel Adams:**

The FCDO provides consular staff with extensive training to ensure they respond to British people in an empathetic and knowledgeable manner. We use feedback gathered by our dedicated Insight Team, shadowing, skills practice, and 'mystery shopping' to inform and continually develop the skills and knowledge of our staff. While there is no definitive international best practice on how to train consular staff, the UK is an active member of international consular forums and learns from, and shares experiences and practice with, a range of other countries including on the learning and development of consular staff.

**■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Ministerial Responsibility**

**Patrick Grady:** [\[102861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what changes he has made to the responsibilities of Ministers in his Department following the merger of the Department for International Development with his Department.

**James Duddridge:**

Prior to the creation of the new department, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office team of Ministers had held joint Department for International Development and Foreign and Commonwealth Office portfolios since February 2020. These portfolios remain unchanged.

**Patrick Grady:** [\[102862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will list which Ministerial responsibilities previously allocated to the Secretary of State for International Development are now allocated to (a) the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs and (b) other Ministers in his Department.

**James Duddridge:**

The former Secretary of State for International Development was responsible for leading the DFID ministerial team, and setting the overall strategy and direction for the Department for International Development. Following the creation of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs assumed all of these responsibilities.

**Patrick Grady:** [\[102863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether any Ministerial responsibilities previously held by Ministers in the Department for International Development have been transferred to Ministers in Departments other than his Department.

**James Duddridge:**

No Ministerial responsibilities previously held by Ministers in the Department for International Development have been transferred to Ministers in Departments other than the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

**■ Hong Kong: National Security**

**Siobhain McDonagh:** [\[105280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has held discussions with representatives of (a) HSBC and (b) Standard Chartered since their statements on their support for China's national security legislation for Hong Kong.

**Nigel Adams:**

We are in close contact with a wide range of businesses in Hong Kong, but it is for businesses themselves to make their own judgement calls.

## ■ Iran: Nuclear Power

**Mr David Jones:**

[\[106233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to Iran's commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, what assessment he has made of reports of a nuclear installation at Sorkheh-Hessar in Iran.

**James Cleverly:**

We are aware of public claims relating to a site in the Sorkheh-Hassar region. Iran's reductions in compliance with its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) continue to be of serious concern. The UK, with France and Germany, triggered the JCPOA's Dispute Resolution Mechanism on 14 January to try to resolve these concerns. The Foreign Secretary, along with his French and German counterparts has made clear that Iran must return to compliance with the JCPOA without delay. We have called for a ministerial meeting of parties to the JCPOA to seek a diplomatic way forward.

## ■ Iraq: Kurds

**Robert Halfon:**

[\[106317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department has taken in response to the burning on 17 October 2020 in Baghdad of a Kurdish party office and the flag of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq; and if he will make a statement.

**James Cleverly:**

We strongly condemned the attack on the Kurdistan Democratic Party's office in Baghdad and made clear that addressing political difference through dialogue not violence was a fundamental element of a functioning democracy. The UK has welcomed steps taken to hold those responsible to account. We continue to work with the Government of Iraq on enhancing security measures, including through discussions during the Iraqi Prime Minister's Guest of Government visit to the UK on 22 October.

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**

[\[106450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had since 9 October 2020 with his counterparts in the Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq on the security and constitutional status of Sinjar.

**James Cleverly:**

We have regular discussions with Iraqi and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) counterparts including on Sinjar, most recently last week when our Ambassador to Iraq met with the President and the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region. We have underlined our strong support for the recently proposed joint security agreement between Government of Iraq (GoI) and the KRG in Sinjar province and the need to

work closely with the local population to ensure success. We continue to encourage cooperation between the Gol and KRG on these issues.

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**

[\[106451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq on the (a) safety and security of the Ezidi population of Sinjar and (b) importance of recognising and including the local democratic structures of the population in any decision-making process for that area.

**James Cleverly:**

We have regular discussions with Iraqi and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) counterparts, including on Sinjar. We have welcomed the recently proposed joint security agreement between the Government of Iraq and the KRG in Sinjar province and stressed that to be effective, the new security structure in Sinjar will need to work closely with the local population to ensure success.

## ■ Nagorno Karabakh: Armed Conflict

**Layla Moran:**

[\[106477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has made to OSCE Minsk Group on the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict; and what plans he has for the UK's role in the event that that conflict continues to escalate.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK Delegation to the OSCE has issued three statements on the 29 September, 8 October and 15 October on the current conflict, urging de-escalation and an urgent return to the negotiation table under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group. The UK continues to support the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs of France, Russia and the United States as they look towards finding a peaceful settlement to the ongoing conflict.

**Layla Moran:**

[\[106478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has (a) made to and (b) received from Canada on the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict.

**Wendy Morton:**

The Foreign Secretary has issued two joint statements with the Canadian Foreign Minister including, mostly recently, on 6 October. We continue to urge de-escalation and a return to the negotiation table under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group.

## ■ Overseas Aid

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[106361\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 16 October 2020 to Question 102832, how many of the 13

projects that were delivered under the Integrated Activity Fund and covered by an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment in the financial year 2018-2019 underwent Ministerial consultation.

**James Cleverly:**

During the 2018-19 financial year one Integrated Activity Fund project covered by an Overseas Security and Justice Assessment underwent Ministerial consultation.

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[106362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 16 October 2020 to Question 102832, how many activities delivered through the Integrated Activity Fund (a) were and (b) were not subject to an Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessment in financial year (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18 and the (iii) 2019-20, by year.

**James Cleverly:**

The Integrated Activity Fund was managed by the Cabinet Office during 2016/17 to 2017/18 and this information is not held by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. During the 2019-20 financial year the Integrated Activity Fund delivered 47 projects, 16 of which were covered by Overseas Security and Justice Assessments.

**Brendan O'Hara:**

[\[106363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 16 October 2020 to Question 102832 on Overseas Aid, what the titles are of the 44 projects delivered by the Integrated Activity Fund in 2018-19.

**James Cleverly:**

We do not disclose information related to Integrated Activity Fund projects to maintain the confidence and confidentiality of implementers and our Gulf partners.

## ■ **Palestinians: Olives**

**Ben Lake:**

[\[104761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the protection of West Bank Palestinians during the olive harvest season.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK condemns any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. We recognise that there can be an increase in assaults on Palestinian farmers, the destruction of olive trees and the stealing of produce coinciding with the Palestinian olive harvest, which began earlier this month. We have expressed our concerns to the Israeli Government on a number of occasions.

Under international law, Israel, as the occupying power, has an obligation to take all measures in its power to protect the Palestinian population from acts of violence. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population. We welcome the efforts of Israeli

authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance and bring those responsible to justice.

## ■ Sri Lanka: Peace Negotiations

**Mr Steve Baker:**

**[105360]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to promote peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK has long supported efforts to promote peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka, including in our role as penholder on Sri Lanka at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC). We firmly believe that UNHRC resolution 30/1, and its successor resolutions 34/1 and 40/1, remain the best framework for establishing truth and achieving justice and lasting reconciliation following the conflict in Sri Lanka. We continue to encourage and support Sri Lanka to deliver on the commitments it made to the UNHRC through these resolutions.

We are concerned about the Government of Sri Lanka's decision to withdraw support for the UN resolution. Minister of State for South Asia and the Commonwealth, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, has raised these concerns on several occasions with the Sri Lankan High Commissioner and Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena. The Foreign Secretary also underlined the importance of accountability and reconciliation when he spoke to Foreign Minister Gunawardena in May. The UK Government made our concerns clear in statements delivered on behalf of the Core Group on Sri Lanka at the UNHRC in February, June and September. These statements reiterated our ongoing commitment to justice and accountability for victims of conflict and human rights violations, and lasting reconciliation. We also have an active programme of engagement with a wide range of civil society groups and vulnerable communities, and support efforts to deliver peace and reconciliation through our programme work, including as part of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund. This includes support for resettlement and sustainable livelihoods of those displaced by the conflict, peacebuilding and landmine clearance, and a number of capacity building programmes to strengthen democracy, the rule of law and reconciliation.

## ■ Venezuela: FSO Nabarima

**Mr David Jones:**

**[106231]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the Venezuelan authorities on the condition of the of the barge Nabarima, moored in the Gulf of Paria.

**Wendy Morton:**

We are aware of reports about the condition of the Nabarima floating storage and off-loading facility in the Gulf of Paria. We have not made representations to the Venezuelan authorities, but would urge them to take all necessary measures to

prevent a potential environmental catastrophe that would have repercussions not only for Venezuela but also for the entire region.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### ■ Accident and Emergency Departments: Coronavirus

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[103457]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the introduction of video triage at A&Es during the covid-19 outbreak; and what plans he has to promote that policy beyond the outbreak.

**Edward Argar:**

*[Holding answer 21 October 2020]:* Video consultations are used primarily for elective and outpatient care rather than accident and emergency (A&E). However, Moorfields Hospital has successfully used video consultations for eye emergencies only.

The National Integrated Care and COVID Hospital Team is not aware of any assessment of the effectiveness of video consultation in A&E. The Improvement Directorate has been leading on video consultation work, but this is primarily within elective care.

### ■ Alcoholic Drinks: Consumption

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

[98890]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of alcohol consumption in domestic settings since March 2020.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 8 October 2020]:* Public Health England has published an online monitoring tool to track behavioural changes, including alcohol consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings on alcohol consumption are that intake across the population as a whole remained about the same during the pandemic. Those aged 18 to 34 were more likely to report consuming less alcohol each week than before and those aged 35 to 54 were more likely to report an increase. There was also an increase in the proportion of 'high risk' drinking between February and June 2020. The monitoring tool can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wider-impacts-of-covid-19-on-health-monitoring-tool>

### ■ Alcoholic Drinks: Labelling

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[99126]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of whether the September 2019 deadline to remove the outdated Chief Medical Officers' low-risk drinking guidelines from alcohol labels has been met.



**Kenny MacAskil:**

[\[99127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to ensure that the outdated Chief Medical Officers' low-risk drinking guidelines are removed alcohol labels.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 8 October 2020]:* The Department has worked with industry to ensure that alcohol labels reflect the United Kingdom Chief Medical Officers' Low Risk Drinking Guidelines for drinks produced after 1 September 2019. The Portman Group who are the regulator for alcohol labelling, packaging and promotion in the UK has committed to comply with this requirement. Local trading standards have powers to remove products produced after the 1 September 2019 that contain the old guidelines on the labels.

Any products produced before 1 September 2019 particularly those which may stay on shelf for a number of years, can continue to be sold until stocks are exhausted as is general practice around any new labelling arrangements, because labels were correct at time of production.

#### ■ **Autism: Mental Health Services**

**Cat Smith:**

[\[104119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many autistic (a) children and (b) adults have contacted mental health services since 23 March 2020.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The data is not available in the format requested.

#### ■ **Autism: Telephone Services**

**Cat Smith:**

[\[104118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that new NHS 24/7 mental health support lines are (a) accessible to autistic people and (b) are staffed with advisers that have received autism training.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement encourages National Health Service 24 hours per day, seven days a week mental health support line services to be universal and inclusive of people with co-existing conditions, including by making appropriate adjustments to support autistic people. This message has been reinforced through a series of webinars and various tools aimed at newly established local open-access crisis services.

In addition to existing training, the NHS England and NHS Improvement Learning Disability and Autism Programme commissioned Autistica to prepare a resource to help new crisis lines adapt to the needs of autistic children and young people, as well as the needs of parents. The resource is being finalised and there will shortly be two webinars to brief and support crisis line staff, managers and commissioners.



## ■ **Ayanda Capital: Protective Clothing**

**Sir Mark Hendrick:**

**[104695]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 22 September to Question 81545, what checks were made prior to direct awarding Ayanda Capital Limited a contract for providing PPE to the NHS.

**Jo Churchill:**

Using regulation 32(2)(c) under the Public Contract Regulations 2015 Ayanda Capital was evaluated by Departmental officials on their financial standing, compliance with minimum product, service and technical specifications and ability to perform the contract. Contracts are awarded by the appropriate Departmental accounting officer in line with Departmental terms and conditions.

## ■ **Blood Cancer: Coronavirus**

**Mr Clive Betts:**

**[R] [102671]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to develop advice for people who were previously shielding tailored to the risk associated with their particular disease, including different types of blood cancer, in the event that further restrictions are introduced as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

Shielding was paused on 1 August 2020 in England; however, it is important that clinically extremely vulnerable people continue to take extra care, particularly as infection rates rise again. On 13 October, the Government published new guidance to the clinically extremely vulnerable that advises additional things they are advised to do to keep themselves safe at each local COVID alert level.

In the future, the Government will only reintroduce shielding advice in the very worst affected areas and for a limited period of time. This decision will be based on advice from the Chief Medical Officer, informed by local public health experts.

The National Health Service is continuing to maintain the shielded patient list, allowing us to maintain targeted advice and support to those who are most vulnerable and to change advice and support if necessary. General practitioners and hospital clinicians remain able to add people to the list, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of an individual's needs.

**Martyn Day:**

**[88354]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will meet with representatives from the blood cancer community to discuss the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on patient (a) care and (b) treatment.

**Jo Churchill:**

No immediate plans are in place to meeting with any members of the blood cancer community.

Support and information for all cancer patients, including blood cancer patients, is provided through four personalised care interventions:

- Personalised care and support planning based on holistic needs assessments;
- Health and wellbeing information and support (including nutritional advice and psychological support);
- End of treatment summaries, that provide symptom management information; and
- A Cancer Care Review with their general practitioner.

As outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan, these interventions will be implemented by 2021.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all personalised care and support should be continuing by telephone, video, online or by post if face to face appointments and group sessions have not been possible.

**Martyn Day:**

[\[88356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to meet the needs of people living with blood cancer who are classed as vulnerable during the covid-19 outbreak due to their increased risk of severe disease with covid-19 infection.

**Jo Churchill:**

Support and information for all cancer patients, including blood cancer patients, is provided through four personalised care interventions:

- Personalised care and support planning based on holistic needs assessments;
- Health and wellbeing information and support (including nutritional advice and psychological support);
- End of treatment summaries, that provide symptom management information; and
- A Cancer Care Review with their general practitioner.

As outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan, these interventions will be implemented by 2021.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all personalised care and support is continuing by telephone, video, online or by post if face to face appointments and group sessions have not been possible.

## ■ Blood Cancer: Health Services

**Henry Smith:**

[\[86637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if a representative from his Department will meet with the blood cancer community to discuss how patient initiated follow-ups could best support patients with blood cancer, during and beyond the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

No immediate plans are in place to meeting with any members of the blood cancer community.

Support and information for all cancer patients, including blood cancer patients, is provided through four personalised care interventions:

- Personalised care and support planning based on holistic needs assessments;
- Health and wellbeing information and support (including nutritional advice and psychological support);
- End of treatment summaries, that provide symptom management information; and
- A Cancer Care Review with their general practitioner.

As outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan, these interventions will be implemented by 2021.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all personalised care and support should be continuing by telephone, video, online or by post if face to face appointments and group sessions have not been possible.

**■ Brain Cancer: Research****David Simmonds:**[\[102225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress his Department has made on its work with the Tessa Jowell Brain Cancer Research Mission.

**Edward Argar:**

The Tessa Jowell Brain Cancer Mission (TJBCM) has made excellent progress since its establishment in February 2018. It has set up strategic programmes aimed at solving some of the greatest challenges facing patients with brain cancer. These programmes cover initiatives in the key areas of services, research, clinical trials, training, and patient advocacy.

TJBCM is about to launch a major new initiative, termed the Tessa Jowell Centres of Excellence. Working with National Health Service trusts across the United Kingdom, the TJBCM has identified and defined standards of excellence in clinical practice, patient quality of life, clinical trials, staff training and research. The aim of the initiative is to empower NHS hospitals to achieve the highest standards of brain cancer patient care.

**■ Breast Cancer****Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**[\[98159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that patients whose breast reconstruction surgery has been delayed due to covid-19 will be able to access that surgery in areas where there are time limits on breast reconstruction operations.

**Jo Churchill:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement have been clear that breast reconstruction surgery should be provided as soon as practically and safely possible.

■ **Breast Cancer: Health Services**

**Zarah Sultana:**

[\[83972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to (a) maintain the standard of treatment of secondary breast cancer patients and (b) ensure the role of cancer prognoses in clinical assessments during the current pandemic.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Cancer Recovery Taskforce has been established, and met for the first time in September, where they took stock of the status of cancer services against recovery metrics on referrals, treatment and backlog levels. A national recovery plan will be developed for publication shortly.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are continuing to operate cancer surgical hubs, supported by the extension of the independent sector deal, to maintain a whole-system approach to managing cancer surgery at volume and in accordance with clinical priority.

■ **Breast Cancer: Radiotherapy**

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

[\[98160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the proportion of patients that have had a shorter course of breast radiotherapy as a result of covid-19.

**Jo Churchill:**

The latest available data from the National Cancer Registration and Analysis Service on radiotherapy episodes shows weekly counts up to May 2020. For the week commencing 25 May 2020 the proportion of breast radiotherapy being delivered as part of a shorter course was 65% (346 episodes).

■ **Breast Cancer: Screening**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[97478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to encourage regular breast cancer screening in areas where the breast cancer incidence rate is above average.

**Jo Churchill:**

As well as Public Health England's 'Be Clear on Cancer' campaigns, NHS England is investing in initiatives to help promote uptake of breast screening. Breast cancer screening providers are encouraged to work with cancer alliances, primary care networks and NHS England and NHS Improvement regional teams to build upon

existing local work to promote uptake of breast screening and, where health inequality is highlighted as an issue, identify the key groups affected and take action to ensure equality of access.

An information campaign to encourage people to continue to attend breast screening appointments has been established during the COVID-19 pandemic, including information to reassure women on the measures being put in place to protect them attached to screening invitations. Providers have also been encouraged to use methods such as text messaging to remind women about their breast screening invitation and encourage them to attend.

## ■ Cancer and Rare Diseases: Medical Treatments

**Kerry McCarthy:**

[\[100900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to allocate the £500 million Innovative Drugs Fund to (a) rare disease treatments and (b) cancer treatments.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 13 October 2020]:* We made a commitment to extend the successful Cancer Drugs Fund into an Innovative Medicines Fund (IMF) so that doctors can use the most advanced, life-saving treatments for conditions such as cancer or autoimmune disease, or for children with other rare diseases.

Proposals for the IMF are in development and we expect NHS England and NHS Improvement and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to lead a consultation on the fund in due course.

## ■ Cancer: Birmingham

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[96980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the cumulative cancer backlog of undiagnosed, relapsed, and delayed treatments in Birmingham as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

There are plans in place to protect cancer services across Birmingham and Solihull, with the implementation of COVID-secure sites at Solihull Hospital and Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which has enabled cancer treatments and other clinically urgent patients to be prioritised in a COVID-safe environment.

At the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital and Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospitals, there are no significant backlogs for cancer at present. At University Hospitals Birmingham, the number of patients in the backlog for cancer treatment are being monitored weekly. The 104 day backlog has reduced since mid-July by 48%.

Work continues to ensure there is a shared understanding of waiting times and utilisation of all available diagnostic and treatment capacity, including that in the independent sector, to reduce waiting times and backlogs.

■ **Cancer: Drugs****Crispin Blunt:** [\[90931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the Cancer Drugs Fund (CDF) expenditure was between (a) April 2019 to March 2020 and (b) April 2020 to September 2020.

**Jo Churchill:**

Between April 2019 to March 2020, the expenditure for the Cancer Drugs Fund was £317 million.

For the year 2020/21, data is only available for Q1 (April to June), during which period expenditure was £82 million.

■ **Cancer: Health Services****Colleen Fletcher:** [\[106369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of patients had their cancer symptoms investigated within two weeks of an urgent GP referral in (a) 2019 and (b) 2020.

**Jo Churchill:**

The percentage of people who have had their cancer symptoms investigated between the dates January to August 2019 and January to August 2020 is displayed in the following table.

January to August data has been used as August 2020 data is the most recently published information available.

JANUARY TO AUGUST 2019	90.9%
January to August 2020	91.0%

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[92717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to encourage NHS Cancer Alliances to set out clear plans for restarting cancer care.

**Jo Churchill:**

A newly formed Cancer Recovery Taskforce, bringing together experts from across the cancer community, is overseeing the development of the cancer recovery plan, including sharing practical suggestions about what the wider cancer community can do to support recovery.

There is an expectation that local systems should ask their Cancer Alliances to design and programme manage the cancer elements of their recovery plans, with accountability for delivery going back up through local systems to the regions and nationally. All areas are operating and cancer care will continue to be prioritised during a second wave or similar. NHS England and NHS Improvement have

confirmed funding allocations of £153 million to Cancer Alliances in England to aid with this work.

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[92718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that cancer care can continue safely during (a) a potential second wave of covid-19 and (b) a new series of covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

**Jo Churchill:**

The newly formed Cancer Recovery Taskforce is overseeing the development of the cancer recovery plan, including considering any impact of a second wave of COVID-19. The plan will be published in autumn 2020.

Membership of the Taskforce is drawn from across the cancer community to coordinate and share expertise and ultimately enable progress towards the successful recovery of cancer services during 2020/21.

**Alan Brown:**

[\[95691\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made for the implication of his policies of the announcement of 310 redundancies from Macmillan cancer support on the (a) health, (b) wellbeing and (c) financial security for cancer patients; and will he make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

The National Health Service is grateful for Macmillan Cancer Support's help to support and reassure patients during this unprecedented time and we continue to work closely with the charity at a national level.

Macmillan Cancer Support has representation on the new Cancer Recovery Taskforce along with the National Cancer Board, and the Chief Executive of Macmillan chairs the NHS England and NHS Improvement Cancer Charity Forum. The new Cancer Recovery Taskforce brings together members of the cancer community to coordinate and share expertise and ultimately enable progress towards the successful recovery of cancer services during 2020/21.

## ■ **Cancer: Tomography**

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[84254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of using (a) MRI scans and (b) T1 mapping in testing for cases of aggressive childhood cancer.

**Jo Churchill:**

No assessment has been made. The decision of testing for cancers is down to local medical professionals, who take into account National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance.



## ■ Cannabis: Medical Treatments

**Sir Mike Penning:** [\[91579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made for the implications of his policies of reports that Northern Ireland health authorities have provided funding for a patient requiring medical cannabis.

**Jo Churchill:**

No assessment has been made.

**Alberto Costa:** [\[99651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve access to medicinal cannabis.

**Jo Churchill:**

We continue to work hard with the health system, industry and researchers to improve the evidence base for other cannabis-based medicines, and to implement the recommendations of NHS England and NHS Improvement's review on barriers to accessing unlicensed cannabis based medicinal products. This includes the design of clinical trials and the establishment of a new independent specialist clinical network to provide impartial evidence-based advice to clinicians treating patients with refractory epilepsy.

Two licensed cannabis-based medicines: Sativex – for the treatment of spasticity in multiple sclerosis patients; and Epidyolex – for the treatment of seizures associated with two rare forms of epilepsy, have recently been made available for prescribing on the National Health Service for patients where clinically appropriate. This follows clear demonstrated evidence of their safety, clinical and cost effectiveness. Further evidence is required to support the routine use of unlicensed cannabis-based products in the NHS.

## ■ Clinical Trials

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[102799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the speed at which clinical trials for medical research can be conducted.

**Edward Argar:**

This Government is committed to supporting a vibrant clinical research environment. We need to make clinical trials faster, more efficient and more innovative and we need to further develop digital tools and infrastructure to support clinical research. Crucially, we need to ensure that patients and the public are engaged and involved in clinical trials so that research meets their needs. The Department and the Office for Life Sciences are working to develop a vision which will realise these goals, liaising with a range of health and care stakeholders.

The Department, through the National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network supports the set-up and timely delivery of commercial and non-commercial

studies across England. This includes advice and support for study feasibility, streamlined National Health Service permissions and effective patient recruitment.

## ■ Contraceptives

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[91581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he can provide of the size of the stockpiles of co-careldopa that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK prior to 31 October 2019.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[91582\]](#)

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

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[91583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Government last made an assessment of the stockpiling of co-careldopa that will be required in preparation for (a) a second wave of covid-19 and (b) the end of the transition period; and if he will publish that assessment.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[91584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he can provide of the size of the stockpiles of norimin that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK prior to 31 October 2019.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[91585\]](#)

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

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[91586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Government last made an assessment of the level of stockpiling of norimin that will be required in preparation for (a) a second wave of the covid-19 outbreak and (b) the end of the transition period; and if he will publish that assessment.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[91587\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he can provide of the size of the stockpiles of brevinor that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK prior to 31 October 2019.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[91588\]](#)

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

**Emily Thornberry:** [91589]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Government last made an assessment of the stockpiling of brevinor that will be required in preparation for (a) a second wave of covid-19 and (b) the end of the transition period; and if he will publish that assessment.

**Emily Thornberry:** [91590]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he can provide of the size of the stockpiles of phenelzine that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK prior to 31 October 2019.

**Emily Thornberry:** [91591]

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

**Emily Thornberry:** [91592]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Government last made an assessment of the level of stockpiling of phenelzine that will be required in preparation for (a) a second wave of the covid-19 outbreak and (b) the end of the transition period; and if he will publish that assessment.

**Jo Churchill:**

Our priority is to ensure that patients continue to have access to medicines and medical products they need. We are working closely with industry, the National Health Service and others in the supply chain to ensure that precautions are in place to mitigate against future possible risks of medicine shortages, including those linked to COVID-19 and the end of the transition period.

As set out in a letter from the Department to industry of 3 August, we are implementing a multi-layered approach, that involves asking suppliers to get trader ready, reroute their supply chains away from any potential disruption and stockpiling to a target level of six weeks on United Kingdom soil where this is possible. The letter is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-to-medicines-and-medical-products-suppliers-3-august-2020/letter-to-medicine-suppliers-3-august-2020>

None of the medicines listed were in the Government's Essential Medicines Buffer Stock on the dates in question. Neither is it our current intention to include any of those medicines in the COVID-19 supportive medicines stockpile.

With regard to stocks of medicines on UK soil owned and held by suppliers, commercially sensitive information has been shared with the Department to support our potential 'no deal' EU exit, end of Transition Period and COVID-19 contingency programmes. For this reason, we cannot share information received from suppliers, including on their UK stock levels, with third parties.

## ■ Coronavirus and Influenza

**Jim Shannon:**

[93590]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has for a public awareness campaign to highlight the differences between seasonal flu and covid 19 symptoms.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Government's communications and campaign activity clearly highlights the symptoms of COVID-19, encouraging those who have symptoms – regardless of whether the symptoms develop into flu – to isolate and get a test.

We are also encouraging people to get a flu jab if they are in eligible groups to reduce the risk this poses throughout the winter.

## ■ Coronavirus and Influenza: Vaccination

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

[R] [101988]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to publish the response to the consultation on Distributing vaccines and treatments for Covid-19 and flu.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Government hosted a public consultation from 28 August to 18 September on changes to the Human Medicines Regulations to support the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines.

The formal Government response to that consultation can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/distributing-vaccines-and-treatments-for-covid-19-and-flu>

## ■ Coronavirus: Disease Control

**Rosie Cooper:**

[104069]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what financial support is available to people (a) with cystic fibrosis and (b) others who are clinically extremely vulnerable to covid-19 and unable to work from home.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 20 October 2020]:* Shielding was paused on 1 August 2020 in England; however, it is important that clinically extremely vulnerable people continue to take extra care, particularly as infection rates rise again. On 13 October, the Government published new guidance to the clinically extremely vulnerable that advises additional things they are advised to do to keep themselves safe at each local COVID-19 alert level.

Currently, everyone is advised to work from home if they are able. If not, they should return to the workplace. Employers are required to take steps to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, ensuring the workplace is COVID-secure. If an individual has

concerns about their health and safety at work, they should raise them with their workplace union, the Health and Safety Executive or local authority.

**Kate Osborne:** [\[105561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of re-introducing shielding for the clinically extremely vulnerable in areas under (a) tier 1 (b) tier 2 and (c) tier 3 local covid-19 restrictions.

**Kate Osborne:** [\[105562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing shielding for the clinically extremely vulnerable who work in (a) retail, (b) health and social care, (c) education and (d) other public-facing roles.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 22 October 2020]:* Shielding was paused on 1 August 2020 in England, however, it is important that clinically extremely vulnerable people continue to take extra care, particularly as infection rates rise again. On 13 October, the Government published new guidance to the clinically extremely vulnerable that advises additional things they are advised to do to keep themselves safe at each local COVID alert level.

While the previous shielding advice helped protect those most at risk from COVID-19, we acknowledge that many people found this advice very restrictive. The new protective guidance to the clinically extremely vulnerable is designed to offer practical and proportionate advice to help people protect themselves and minimise the need to introduce restrictive shielding advice.

## ■ Coronavirus: Food

**Daniel Zeichner:** [\[94450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many covid-19 outbreaks have been recorded in food factories in England to date.

**Daniel Zeichner:** [\[94451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many covid-19 outbreaks in food factories in England are being monitored by the Food Standards Agency; and how many workers have (a) tested positive and (b) been told to self-isolate in each of those outbreaks.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 28 September 2020]:* This data is not held in the format requested.

## ■ Coronavirus: Funerals and Marriage

**Sir Mark Hendrick:**

**[104052]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the scientific basis is for the imposition of different attendance restrictions between weddings and funerals during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The Government recognises the significance of life events, particularly funerals and treat them with sufficient sensitivity, which is why there are different exemptions to the rule of six for weddings and funerals. Allowing attendance at weddings of up to 15, and at funerals of up to 30, goes some way towards meeting the participants' understandable wishes, while at the same time minimising the spread of the virus.

Throughout the pandemic, the Government has listened carefully to the views of the scientific community, in particular the information from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies and its sub-groups when taking decisions on the best way to tackle the pandemic. Although gathering in larger groups does increase the risk of transmission, but we have been clear that people should follow social distancing rules when gathering with people they do not live with. We continue to keep these restrictions under constant review and will ensure they remain proportionate to the threat to public health posed by COVID-19.

**Charlotte Nichols:**

**[104200]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the evidential basis for the Government's decision to allow (a) 30 people to attend a funeral and (b) 15 people to attend a wedding.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

We recognise that both weddings and funerals are significant events for people, and that their importance is perhaps more to the fore in difficult times. Allowing attendance at weddings of up to 15, and at funerals of up to 30, goes some way towards meeting the participants' understandable wishes, while at the same time minimising the spread of the virus.

Throughout the pandemic, the Government has listened carefully to the views of the scientific community, in particular the information from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies and its sub-groups when taking decisions on the best way to tackle the pandemic. We continue to keep these restrictions under constant review and will ensure they remain proportionate to the threat to public health posed by COVID-19.

## ■ Coronavirus: Gyms

**Ian Byrne:**

**[103651]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what impact assessment has been undertaken on the potential effect of gym closures in tier 3 covid-19 areas on (a) health and wellbeing and (b) mental health and wellbeing.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

In areas in local COVID alert level Very High, due to the impact of these new measures, we will work with local authorities to shape the set of restrictions that apply. In the case of Liverpool City Region, local leadership and the Government decided that leisure venues, such as leisure centres and gyms, should be closed in order to control the spread of COVID-19. This was considered a proportionate and necessary response given the rate of infection in the region.

We realise the impacts that these regulations have on people's health and wellbeing and we aim to minimise the impact wherever possible and noting that these restrictions are time limited. The Government have published guidance on mental health and wellbeing which includes guidance on looking after physical wellbeing at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19#what-can-help-your-mental-health-and-wellbeing>

**■ Coronavirus: Hospitality Industry****Caroline Lucas:****[100346]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Prime Minister's oral contribution of 22 September 2020, Official Report, Column 798, whether the evidential basis for the 10.00pm curfew was discussed at the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies prior to the decision to implement it.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 12 October 2020]:* The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) has provided expert strategic scientific advice to Government throughout the COVID-19 response.

SAGE has highlighted that alcohol consumption may increase risk of non-compliance with social distancing and that hospitality settings are associated with increased risk of transmission.

**■ Coronavirus: Mortality Rates****Dr Ben Spencer:****[104773]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the infection fatality rate of covid-19 is in the UK (a) overall and (b) by (i) age group, (ii) gender and (iii) ethnic background.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 21 October 2020]:* Public Health England does not publish data on the infection fatality rate or the case fatality rate of COVID-19.



## ■ Coronavirus: Protective Clothing

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[104755]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what level of personal protective clothing staff working in covid-19 testing centres should have.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 21 October 2020]:* In line with the national Public Health England guidance, there are different personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements dependent on the role test site staff take within the testing sites. In the case of the walk-in local testing sites (LTS) the PPE requirements are set out in the LTS Standard Operating Procedure. Test operatives (for Tester Assisted testing) are required to wear disposable gloves; a disposable plastic apron; a Fluid-resistant (Type IIR) surgical mask; and reusable eye protection.

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[48968]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the extent of the incidence of re-use of single use personal protective equipment; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Government recognises that securing the right PPE for frontline workers is of paramount importance, not only for their protection, but to enable them to continue to deliver the 1st class level of care that is amongst the best in the world.

We continue to work across Government and with regulators to investigate the efficacy and scientific validity of decontaminating and repurposing single-use respirators (FFP3s), to help with resilience in the event of potential future supply shortages. If proven safe and effective, we will work closely with NHS organisations to support preparedness in the event of a future emergency situation.

As set out in our PPE Strategy, published on 28 September, we want to move away from PPE disposable by default and assess new types of PPE that are designed for reuse from the outset, particularly through UK manufacturing.

## ■ Coronavirus: Sweden

**Jim Shannon:**

**[91043]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with his Swedish counterpart on that country's response to the covid-19 pandemic.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has many discussions with his international counterparts, but no official meetings have been held with his Swedish counterpart to discuss the respective countries' response to COVID-19.

**■ Coronavirus: Vitamin D****Dr Rupa Huq:****[92656]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the study published in the October 2020 edition of Journal of Steroid Biochemistry and Molecular Biology's October 2020, entitled Effect of calcifediol treatment and best available therapy versus best available therapy on intensive care unit admission and mortality among patients hospitalized for COVID-19: A pilot randomized clinical study, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the finding that vitamin D reduces the severity of covid-19.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 25 September 2020]:* The Department has noted the findings from this study. Public Health England (PHE) is monitoring any new, high quality evidence on nutrition and COVID-19 and is seeking further advice from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) as appropriate. On 29 June 2020, the SACN and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published a rapid evidence review which concluded that there is currently no evidence to support taking vitamin D supplements to reduce the risk or severity of COVID-19.

In April 2020, PHE re-issued advice on vitamin D supplementation, advising that people who do not go outdoors often should consider taking a daily supplement containing 10 micrograms of vitamin D to prevent deficiency.

**Mr David Davis:****[93522]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his response to the hon. Member for Ealing Central and Acton on 21 September 2020, Official Report, column 633, on Covid-19 Update, where he stated that Vitamin D is one of the many things that we have looked into, to see whether it reduces the incidence or impact of coronavirus, if he will publish the results of the trial to which he referred.

**Harriett Baldwin:****[93583]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his oral contribution of 21 September 2020, Official Report, column 633, on Covid-19 Update, if he will publish the citation for the trial to which he referred that showed that Vitamin D has no impact on coronavirus.

**Catherine McKinnell:****[95075]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to his oral contribution of 21 September 2020, Official Report, column 633, if he will publish details of the trial he referred to on the impact of vitamin D on the incidence or severity of coronavirus.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 29 September 2020]:* The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence published 'Vitamin D for COVID-19: Evidence Review' which is available at the following link:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/advice/es28/evidence/evidence-review-pdf-8777674477>

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition also published 'Rapid review: Vitamin D and acute respiratory tract infections' which is available at the following link:

<https://app.box.com/s/g0ldpth1upfd7fw763ew3aga3c0pyvky>

These rapid evidence reviews, published in June 2020, concluded that there is currently no evidence to support taking vitamin D supplements to reduce the risk and severity of COVID-19. My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care was referring to these publications when he responded to the hon. Member for Ealing Central and Acton (Rupa Huq MP).

Public Health England will keep this topic under review and will consider updating this assessment if emerging high-quality evidence suggests a change to existing conclusions, and advise the Government accordingly.

## ■ Cystic Fibrosis: Coronavirus

**Rosie Cooper:**

**[104070]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure safe access to deliveries of food, medicines and other essential items in high-risk and other areas to prevent people with cystic fibrosis and other clinically extremely vulnerable people taking unnecessary risks.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 20 October 2020]:* Shielding was paused on 1 August 2020 in England; however, it is important that clinically extremely vulnerable people continue to take extra care, particularly as infection rates rise again. On 13 October, the Government published new guidance to the clinically extremely vulnerable that advises additional things they are advised to do to keep themselves safe at each local COVID alert level.

Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals are advised to reduce shopping trips, shop at quieter times or shop online to avoid taking unnecessary risks. They are also advised to ask friends, family, people in their household or support bubble to collect food and medicines for them where possible. If more help is needed, NHS Volunteer Responders may be able to help with collecting shopping, medicine or other essential supplies. Those in a 'very high' local alert level who need extra support should contact their local council.

## ■ Eating Disorders and Obesity: Health Services

**Gareth Thomas:**

**[105277]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he took to include (a) anorexia nervosa, (b) bulimia, (c) binge eating disorder and (d) other eating disorders and the effects on the mental health and wellbeing of people affected by those disorders when determining health strategies for tackling obesity; and if he will make a statement.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

We have been careful to consider the views of a wide range of experts as we developed our plans for implementing the obesity strategy and we will continue to listen going forwards. This includes feedback from mental health charities, medical and public health professionals in response to our public consultations on specific policy proposals.

**Ehlers-danlos Syndrome: Health Services**

**Alexander Stafford:** [98301]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to improve the clinical pathway for people with hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos syndrome.

**Jo Churchill:**

The United Kingdom implements an overarching strategy recognising and responding to the needs of all those affected by rare diseases. The UK Strategy for Rare Diseases is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rare-diseases-strategy>

NHS England has no plans to develop any further guidance on treatment for hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos syndrome at this time.

**Alexander Stafford:** [98304]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that the NHS Long Term Plan improves the (a) healthcare options and (b) support for people with Hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome.

**Jo Churchill:**

Under the NHS Long Term Plan, the National Health Service remains committed to improving access to elective care. Sufficient funds have been allocated over the current five year period to expand the amount of planned surgery year on year, cut long waits and reduce the size of the waiting list.

NHS England has no plans to develop any specific guidance on treatment for hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos syndrome at this time.

**Ehlers-danlos Syndrome: Surgery**

**Alexander Stafford:** [98302]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to promote and enable surgical intervention to treat people with hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos syndrome.

**Alexander Stafford:** [98303]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that patients diagnosed with Hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome can access appropriate NHS healthcare to manage their complex and multi-system disorders and conditions.

**Alexander Stafford:**

**[98305]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to improve understanding within the NHS of Hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome and other hypermobility-related syndromes to improve (a) diagnostics and (b) clinical pathways.

**Jo Churchill:**

NHS England has asked the Society of British Neurological Surgeons to look at producing guidance on surgical intervention but has no plans to develop any further guidance on treatment for hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos syndrome at this time. We would expect clinicians to use their professional knowledge, clinical judgement and integrity when making a diagnosis or treating patients for any medical condition.

The United Kingdom implements an overarching strategy recognising and responding to the needs of all those affected by rare diseases. The UK Strategy for Rare Diseases is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rare-diseases-strategy>

## ■ Endometriosis: Diagnosis

**Nadia Whittome:**

**[106519]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 25 September 2020 to Question 91705 on Endometriosis: Diagnosis, if he will undertake a review of whether there has been an improvement in diagnosis and management of endometriosis in women since the publication of the 2018 NICE quality standards.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

There are currently no plans to undertake a review of whether there has been an improvement in diagnosis and management of endometriosis in women since the publication of the 2018 National Institute for Health and Care Excellence quality standards.

The Government has recently received the Inquiry Report from the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Endometriosis, the report raised a number of important issues concerning the treatment and diagnosis of endometriosis which will be carefully considered as part of our ongoing work in women's health.

## ■ Endometriosis: Medical Treatments

**Nadia Whittome:**

**[106520]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 25 September to Question 92782, if he will undertake a review of the adequacy of treatment provision for people diagnosed with endometriosis.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

There are currently no plans to undertake a review of the adequacy of treatment provision for people diagnosed with endometriosis.

The Government has recently received the Inquiry Report from the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Endometriosis, the report raised a number of important issues concerning the treatment and diagnosis of endometriosis which will be carefully considered as part of our ongoing work in women's health.

■ **Enzalutamide**

**Julian Sturdy:** [98956]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the supply to UK patients of the Dutch-made medicine Enzalutamide after the transition period.

**Julian Sturdy:** [98957]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect on the supply of the Dutch-made medicine Enzalutamide to UK patients of the UK and EU being unable to conclude a free trade agreement by the end of the transition period.

**Jo Churchill:**

It remains our objective to negotiate a future relationship with the European Union to ensure that patients across the United Kingdom continue to have unfettered access to the medicines and medical products they need at the end of the transition period.

In consultation with the devolved administrations and crown dependencies, we are working with trade bodies, suppliers and the health and care system to implement detailed plans to help ensure the continued supply of medicines and medical products, including Enzalutamide, in all scenarios. In the Department's letter to industry of 3 August, we asked suppliers to get trader ready, consider alternative routes away from potential disruption and stockpile medicines that come from or via the EU on UK soil to a target level of six weeks where this is possible. The letter is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-to-medicines-and-medical-products-suppliers-3-august-2020/letter-to-medicine-suppliers-3-august-2020>

■ **Epilepsy: Cannabis**

**Sir Mike Penning:** [90960]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the current financial difficulties that families with epileptic children who need access to medical cannabis are facing due to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

I refer the Rt. hon. Member to the answer I gave on 15 May 2020 to Question [43850](#).

No assessment has been made.

**Tracey Crouch:****[91608]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to accelerate access to medicinal cannabis on the NHS for severely epileptic children.

**Jo Churchill:**

The latest guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) demonstrates a clear need for more evidence to support routine prescribing and funding decisions for unlicensed cannabis-based products on the National Health Service.

We are working hard with the health system, industry and researchers to improve the knowledge base. This includes the design of clinical trials for children and young people with severe treatment resistant epilepsy.

NICE recommend two medicines – Sativex (treatment of spasticity in Multiple Sclerosis patients) and Epidyolex (treatment of seizures associated with two rare forms of epilepsy). These are licensed cannabis-based products which can be prescribed by specialist doctors, in cases where it is clinically appropriate and funded on the NHS.

**Liz Saville Roberts:****[91690]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of (a) access to medical cannabis for children and adults with rare and severe forms of epilepsy and (b) of Government financial support for vulnerable children with intractable epilepsy who are reliant on privately-paid for medical cannabis.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 22 September 2020]:* Guidelines published by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) demonstrate a clear need for more evidence to support routine prescribing and funding decisions of unlicensed cannabis-based medicines for severe treatment resistant epilepsy and other conditions. We are working hard with the health system, industry and researchers to improve the knowledge base available. The guidance is available at the following link:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng144>

With regard to Government financial support for vulnerable children with intractable epilepsy who are reliant on privately-paid for medical cannabis, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the Rt. hon. Member for Hemel Hempstead on 15 May 2020 to Question [43850](#).

No assessment has been made.

**■ Flour: Folic Acid****Stuart C McDonald:****[98995]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to introduce mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid.



**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 8 October 2020]:* The Department published a United Kingdom-wide consultation on the proposed mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid which ran from 13 June to 9 September 2019. A post-consultation update was made available on the GOV.UK website. We received 1,442 responses from a wide range of stakeholders. Publication of the consultation response has been delayed due to COVID-19 related work taking priority. We will publish our response as soon as possible.

**Food: Coronavirus****Daniel Zeichner:****[98237]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to prevent outbreaks of covid-19 in food factories.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England (PHE) has been working in partnership with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to provide guidance to food businesses. The guidance is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-food-businesses/guidance-for-food-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

**Food: Hygiene****Sarah Olney:****[99072]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of permitting the Food Standards Agency to conduct food hygiene inspections remotely during the covid-19 outbreak to help ensure the safety of food inspectors and food business owners.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has responsibility for hygiene inspections and other interventions – official controls - in abattoirs and meat plants. Local authorities have this responsibility in respect of most other food businesses.

Legislation requires an FSA presence in abattoirs at all times of operation to ensure food safety, and this has continued during the pandemic. In other meat establishments, the FSA is using remote/semi-remote assessment, but onsite visits continue at high-risk businesses.

Local authorities are similarly continuing to conduct onsite visits for high-risk and poorly compliant businesses but can use initial remote assessment to minimise the time onsite.

This approach aims to protect inspectors and those working in food businesses and minimise the spread of the disease while ensuring public health protection in relation to food.

## ■ Gambling: Health Services

**Ronnie Cowan:**

[\[99022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what increase there has been in the number of patients seeking assistance from the NHS when gambling is a relevant factor, since 2007.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 8 October 2020]:* We do not hold this information centrally.

## ■ General Practitioners: Coronavirus

**Alberto Costa:**

[\[82082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the safety of recommencing regular face-to-face GP surgery appointments as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

**Jo Churchill:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement on 31 August issued guidance stating that general practitioners (GP) practices must offer face-to-face appointments at surgeries and continue to use remote triage, video, online and telephone consultations where appropriate – whilst also considering those unable to access or engage with digital services. The importance of providing face-to-face appointment for those who need them was reiterated in a further NHS England and NHS Improvement letter of 14 September.

The Government and devolved administrations have published clear guidance on appropriate personal protective equipment for health and social care workers, including GPs. This has been written and reviewed by all four United Kingdom public health bodies and informed by NHS infection prevention and control experts. The guidance is consistent with World Health Organization guidance for protecting health and social care workers from COVID-19 and should allow the safe recommencement of regular face-to-face GP appointments.

## ■ General Practitioners: Fees and Charges

**Navendu Mishra:**

[\[99764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what criteria his Department uses to determine what a reasonable sum is for charges by General Practitioners for non-exempted completion of forms, certificates and letters.

**Jo Churchill:**

General practitioners (GPs) are free to charge for the completion of certificates, forms and letters that are not listed as being exempt from charges by General Medical Services and Personal Medical Services Regulations.

The Professional Fees Committee of the British Medical Association (BMA) suggests guideline fees for such services to help doctors set their own fees. The BMA also

publishes guidance for GPs on factors to consider when setting their own fees; this is available at the following link:

<https://www.bma.org.uk/pay-and-contracts/fees/setting-your-own-fees/what-to-consider-when-setting-your-own-fees>

However, the amount charged is ultimately a matter for the practice.

Where doctors intend to charge for services to patients, the BMA advises practices to forewarn patients, at the earliest opportunity, of the likely level of fees.

We recognise that there are concerns about some fees GPs charge for letters to certify a patient's health and the consistency of those charges, and the additional burden this can place on GPs. We are working with GPs and other stakeholders to look at where it is necessary for GPs to provide medical evidence and, where it is, that any charges for that evidence, where applicable, are fair and consistent.

## ■ General Practitioners: Termination of Employment

**Colleen Fletcher:** [100428]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of GPs (a) retiring and (b) leaving the profession in each of the last five years.

**Jo Churchill:**

[Holding answer 12 October 2020]: This data is not held in the format requested.

## ■ Haemophilia

**Dame Diana Johnson:** [85975]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 9 April 2019 to Question 240997, if he will publish updated data on bleeds for people with haemophilia for 2019.

**Jo Churchill:**

This information is not held by NHS England but is held on the *United Kingdom Haemophilia Centre Doctors' Organisation's (UKHCDO) National Haemophilia Database*. The annual report for 2019 from UKHCDO can be found at the following link:

<http://www.ukhcdo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/UKHCDO-Annual-Report-2019.pdf>

**Dame Diana Johnson:** [85976]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 9 April 2019 to Question 240997, what progress has been made in meeting the Government's aim for haemophilia patients to be bleed free; and if he will set out a timetable for meeting that aim.

**Jo Churchill:**

NHS England is committed to commissioning haemophilia services for patients in England, with the aim to enable patients with haemophilia and other bleeding

disorders to live as normal a life as possible, ensuring optimum treatment with clotting factor to maintain a bleed-free existence where possible.

NHS England is committed in its response to providing new treatment measures as set out in the NHS Long Term Plan of January 2019, through accessing advanced medicines. The NHS remains one of the key international environments for researching new treatments for haemophilia.

## ■ Health Professions: Coronavirus

**Tracy Brabin:**

**[88923]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance his Department has issued to NHS Trusts on (a) supporting front line NHS staff who have been shielding back to work and (b) providing those staff with appropriate personal protective equipment.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 16 September 2020]:* NHS Employers have produced guidance for National Health Service organisations to support staff returning to work after shielding. An individual risk assessment must take place to support those staff and the relevant adjustments made. The guidance is available at the following link:

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/covid19/staff-terms-and-conditions/staff-terms-and-conditions-faqs/pay#Shielding>

## ■ Health Professions: MMR Vaccine

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

**[92698]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of health care workers in England are not vaccinated against MMR.

**Jo Churchill:**

We do not hold information on the proportion of health care workers in England who are not vaccinated against mumps, measles and rubella (MMR).

All National Health Service trusts' occupational health services play a critical role in ensuring employees are appropriately assessed and, where required, vaccinated against MMR to protect staff and vulnerable patients. This data is recorded by the relevant occupational health provider.

## ■ Health Services: Computer Software

**Gareth Thomas:**

**[105278]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment was made as part of the development the NHS Better Health app of the potential effect of that app on people with eating disorders; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

Campaigns and tools that promote healthy eating are developed with guidance from Public Health England (PHE) experts. During the development of the Better Health campaign and digital assets, PHE also liaised with appropriate organisations

including a consultant psychiatrist, a charity working with people living with obesity and relevant physical activity organisations.

The NHS Weight Loss Plan app asks users to enter their height and weight to calculate their body mass index (BMI). If a user is underweight or a healthy weight according to their BMI, messaging is shown that explains this weight loss tool is not for them.

## ■ Health Services: Coronavirus

**Felicity Buchan:**

**[103647]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effect of the tiered system of covid-19 alert levels on the work of (a) Alcoholics Anonymous, (b) Narcotics Anonymous and (c) other support groups in areas of different levels of risk.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Government's COVID-19 guidance makes it clear that support groups for mutual aid, including people recovering from addictions, are able to meet in groups up to 15 people. The guidance can be viewed at the following link:

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

Public Health England published guidance outlining COVID-19 advice for commissioners and service providers involved in assisting people who are dependent on drugs or alcohol or both. It can be viewed at the following link:

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

The guidance includes advice about meetings of mutual aid and other support groups.

## ■ Hearing Impairment: Coronavirus

**Abena Oppong-Asare:**

**[99145]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many clear face masks (a) have been sent since the covid-19 outbreak began and (b) he plans to send to NHS regions.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 8 October 2020]:* A deal with United States-based company ClearMask will enable 250,000 masks to be delivered to National Health Service trusts and social care providers across the United Kingdom as part of a pilot. We are gathering feedback from this pilot, which will inform decisions on future procurement. Details of personal protective equipment deliveries (by item) are provided online at GOV.UK.

## ■ Hormone Replacement Therapy

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the size of the stockpiles of progesterone that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK prior to 31 October 2019.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the size of the stockpiles of progesterone that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK on 15 September 2020.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he last made an assessment of the level of stockpiling of progesterone required in preparation for (a) a second wave of the covid-19 outbreak and (b) the end of the transition period; and if he will publish that assessment.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the stockpiles of (a) all medicine combinations containing conjugated oestrogens mentioned in the Government's list of medicines that cannot be exported from the UK or hoarded and (b) all other conjugated oestrogens that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK prior to 31 October 2019.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the size of the stockpiles of (a) all medicine combinations containing conjugated oestrogens mentioned in the Government's list of medicines that cannot be exported from the UK or hoarded and (b) all other conjugated oestrogens that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK on 15 September 2020.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he last made an assessment of the level of stockpiling of (a) all medicine combinations containing conjugated oestrogens mentioned in the Government's list of medicines that cannot be exported from the UK or hoarded and (b) all other conjugated oestrogens which will be required in preparation for (i) a second wave of the covid-19 outbreak; and (b) the end of the transition period; and if he will publish that assessment.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the size of the stockpiles of erythromycin that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK prior to 31 October 2019.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the size of the stockpiles of erythromycin that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK on 15 September 2020.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he last made an assessment of the level of stockpiling of erythromycin required in preparation for (a) a second wave of the covid-19 outbreak and (b) the end of the transition period; and if he will publish that assessment.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the size of the stockpiles of (a) all medicine combinations containing estradiol mentioned in the Government's list of medicines that cannot be exported from the UK or hoarded and (b) all other estradiol that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK prior to 31 October 2019.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the size of the stockpiles of (a) all medicine combinations containing estradiol mentioned in the Government's list of medicines that cannot be exported from the UK or hoarded and (b) all other estradiol that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK on 15 September 2020.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he last made an assessment of the level of stockpiling of (a) all medicine combinations containing estradiol mentioned in the Government's list of medicines that cannot be exported from the UK or hoarded and (b) other estradiol required in preparation for (i) a second wave of the covid-19 outbreak and (ii) the end of the transition period; and if he will publish that assessment.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the size of the stockpiles of adrenaline that were available for prescription or purchase in the UK prior to 31 October 2019.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the size of the stockpiles of adrenaline that are available for (a) prescription and (b) purchase as at 15 September 2020.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[90976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Government last made an assessment of the level of stockpiling of adrenaline that will be required in



preparation for (a) a second wave of the covid-19 outbreak and (b) the end of the transition period; and if he will publish that assessment.

**Jo Churchill:**

Our priority is to ensure that patients continue to have access to medicines and medical products they need. We are working closely with industry, the National Health Service and others in the supply chain to ensure that precautions are in place to reduce the likelihood of future shortages

The Government continues to hold stockpiles of medicines, including many of those medicines raised in the Rt. hon. Member's questions, to cope with a range of scenarios, and robust contingency planning continues to ensure that the country is prepared for a possible second peak of COVID-19 infections and the end of the Transition Period.

The Essential Medicines Buffer Stock (EMBS) supports the NHS in the event of a pandemic or other health emergency by ensuring the continued availability of medicines that are in routine use within the NHS in the event that the supply chain is interrupted. Volumes of the medicines listed in the EBMS for the requested dates are shown in the following table. The original EMBS contracts ended in October 2019 and the current ones expire on 31 March 2021.

VOLUMES IN EMBS (PACKS)	PRIOR TO 31 OCTOBER 2019	ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2020
Progesterone	NIL	NIL
Meds containing conjugated oestrogens	NIL	NIL
estradio	NIL	NIL
adrenaline_1:1000 1mg/ml 1mL amp_injection 10 pack	30,487	NIL
Adrenaline 1:000 1/mg/ml 1mL 662 pfs injection 10 pack		662
Andrenaline 1:10000 100mcg/ml 1mL pfs injection 10 pack	15,465	3,000
Erythromycin_250mg Caps/Tabs 28 pack	662,087	NIL

## ■ Inflammatory bowel disease: Health Services

**Justin Madders:** [86085]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with NHS England on reducing variation in care for patients with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis patients across the UK.

**Justin Madders:** [86086]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to improve the quality of care for patients with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

**Helen Whately:**

No specific assessment on reducing variation in care for patients with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis has been made.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance 'Crohn's disease: management, published in May 2019, and Ulcerative colitis: management', also published in May 2019, set out best practice to improve and standardise the quality of care in the diagnosis, treatment care and support of patients with the condition. The NICE guidance can be found at the following links:

[www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng129](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng129)

[www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng130](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng130)

## ■ Influenza: Vaccination

**Jim Shannon:** [102817]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure availability of seasonal flu vaccinations through GP surgeries in Winter 2020.

**Jim Shannon:** [103519]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the availability of the flu vaccine at pharmacies and chemists.

**Jo Churchill:**

General practitioners (GPs) and pharmacies are directly responsible for ordering flu vaccine from suppliers which are used to deliver the national flu programme to adults, with deliveries phased through the season.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with local areas to ensure that local providers are supported to meet increased demand for the flu vaccination this winter. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has granted dispensation to allow the movement of vaccines locally this season, to address local shortages. In addition, the Department has procured additional doses of adult seasonal flu vaccine to ensure more flu vaccines are available from November. Guidance for pharmacists will be released soon. Guidance for GPs on accessing the additional stock is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/accessing-government-secured-flu-vaccines-guidance-for-gps>

**Kate Osamor:**

**[91108]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to (a) promote and (b) improve access to the Winter 2020-21 influenza vaccine.

**Jo Churchill:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with local areas to ensure that regional teams have plans in place to increase coverage of the flu vaccination this winter. New models of delivery have been shared with regional commissioning teams to encourage innovative thinking such as mobile and mass vaccination models to allow for increases in uptake safely whilst observing social distancing and personal protective equipment requirements.

NHS England and NHS Improvement will be introducing an enhanced call and recall system so that those who are eligible are reminded to attend a vaccination session alongside better mechanisms of data collection to target interventions into areas/cohorts with poor uptake during the season. Alongside this, additional trained workforce is being made available to local providers to help them vaccinate more eligible people. Public Health England will also be launching a new marketing campaign to encourage uptake of flu vaccination amongst eligible groups.

Additional flu vaccine has been purchased by the Department which will be available to providers to facilitate expansion of the programme.

**Alex Norris:**

**[91702]**

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

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 22 September 2020]:* We have sufficient vaccine for up to 30 million people to be vaccinated in England this winter.

General practitioners and pharmacists are directly responsible for ordering flu vaccine from suppliers which are used to deliver the national flu programme to adults. In addition, the Department has procured additional doses of seasonal flu vaccine to ensure more flu vaccines are available this winter.

**Steve McCabe:**

**[95982]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the availability of the 2020 flu vaccine.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 1 October 2020]:* We have sufficient vaccine for up to 30 million people to be vaccinated in England this winter.

General practitioners and pharmacists are directly responsible for ordering flu vaccine from suppliers which are used to deliver the national flu programme to adults. In

addition, the Department has procured additional doses of seasonal flu vaccine to ensure more flu vaccines are available this winter.

**Steve McCabe:**

**[95983]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what support he is giving to GPs and community pharmacies to ensure they have adequate stocks of the 2020 flu vaccine.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 1 October 2020]:* General practitioners (GPs) and pharmacists are directly responsible for ordering flu vaccine from suppliers which are used to deliver the national flu programme to adults. In addition, the Department has procured additional flu vaccine that will be available from November in addition to the supplies already ordered by providers.

Guidance on how GPs and community pharmacies can access the additional flu vaccine will be published shortly.

**Steve McCabe:**

**[95984]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to support (a) GP surgeries and (b) community pharmacies to meet increased demand for the winter flu vaccine.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 1 October 2020]:* NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with local areas to ensure that local providers have the support to meet increased demand for the flu vaccination this winter. New models of delivery have been shared with regional commissioning teams to encourage innovative thinking such as mobile, and mass vaccination models to allow for increases in uptake safely whilst observing social distancing and personal protective equipment requirements.

Alongside this, additional trained workforce is being made available to local providers to help them vaccinate more eligible people.

Additional flu vaccine has been purchased by the Department to ensure more flu vaccines are available this winter.

**Steve McCabe:**

**[95985]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many (a) GP surgeries and (b) community pharmacies in Birmingham have reported a shortage of the 2020 flu vaccine.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 1 October 2020]:* NHS England and NHS Improvement – Midlands has not received any direct report on flu vaccine shortages from general practitioner (GP) practices and community pharmacies in the Birmingham and Solihull Sustainability and Transformation Partnership.

GPs and pharmacists are directly responsible for ordering flu vaccine from suppliers which are used to deliver the national flu programme to adults. In addition, the

Department has procured additional flu vaccine that will be available from November in addition to the supplies already ordered by providers.

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[96118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with (a) general practitioners and (b) pharmacies on the adequacy of their 2020 flu vaccines supply.

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[96119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of flu vaccine supplies.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 1 October 2020]:* General practitioner (GP) practices and community pharmacies are responsible for ordering flu vaccine directly from suppliers for the adult programme.

This season, to support expansion of the programme, the Department has procured additional flu vaccine supplies that will be available from November. Information has been issued on how GP practices and community pharmacies can access additional central stock.

Discussions have been held with the General Practitioners Committee and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee in relation to GP practice and community pharmacy flu supplies.

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[96120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of people entitled to an NHS flu vaccine in 2020.

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[96121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of individuals who (a) are entitled to an NHS flu vaccine in 2020 and (b) have received one to date.

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[96122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of individuals with qualifying serious long term health conditions who (a) are entitled to an NHS flu vaccine in 2020 and (b) have received one to date.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 1 October 2020]:* Public Health England (PHE) publishes weekly influenza vaccine uptake reports throughout the flu season for general practitioner (GP) patients who are entitled to a National Health Service flu vaccine, including those with one or more serious long-term health conditions. This data is based on automated returns from GP practices. The first weekly report will be published on 8 October on the GOV.UK website.

PHE also publishes monthly influenza vaccine uptake data on the number of individuals who are entitled to a flu vaccine and who have received one. This data will be published on GOV.UK on 26 November 2020.

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[96123]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of pregnant women who have received a 2020 NHS flu vaccine to date.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England (PHE) publishes weekly influenza vaccine uptake reports throughout the season for general practitioner (GP) patients, which include data on the percentage of pregnant women, who have received the flu vaccine. This data is based on automated returns from GPs and includes data on women vaccinated in pharmacy and maternity services. The first weekly report will be published on the 8 October on GOV.UK.

PHE also publishes monthly vaccine uptake data on the number of GP patients, including the number of pregnant women, who have received the flu vaccine. This includes data from automated and manual returns. The first monthly report will be published on the 26 November 2020 at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vaccine-uptake#seasonal-flu-vaccine-uptake:-figures>

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[96124]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of people in long-stay residential care who have received a 2020 NHS flu vaccine to date.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England (PHE) does not collect data on the number of individuals in long-stay residential care who have received an influenza vaccine.

The flu vaccine uptake data collected by PHE is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vaccine-uptake#seasonal-flu-vaccine-uptake:-figures>

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[96125]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of people who are in receipt of carer's allowance or are the main carer for an older or disabled person who may be at risk if they get sick who have received a 2020 NHS flu vaccine to date.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England collects data on influenza vaccine uptake in carers. Data will be available in the 2020/2021 end of season vaccine uptake report, due to be published on GOV.UK in spring 2021.

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[96126]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of people living with someone who is at high risk from covid-19 who have received a 2020 NHS flu vaccine to date.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England (PHE) does not collect the data requested.

The influenza vaccine uptake data collected by PHE is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vaccine-uptake#seasonal-flu-vaccine-uptake:-figures>

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[96127]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the number of frontline health and social care workers who have received a 2020 NHS flu vaccine to date.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England publishes data on cumulative influenza vaccine uptake for frontline healthcare workers on a monthly basis. The first monthly data will cover the period between 1 September to 31 October 2020. This will be published on GOV.UK on 26 November.

This season, data is being collected by Skills for Care on flu vaccine uptake rates for social care workers. The Department is currently discussing arrangements to publish this data.

**Sarah Owen:**

[96193]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish an update on the roll-out of the flu vaccination programme for winter 2020-21.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 1 October 2020]:* Information on the flu vaccination programme for this season is included in the Annual Flu Letter Update 2020/21, which was published on 5 August 2020. The Annual Flu Letter is available at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/907149/Letter\\_annualflu\\_2020\\_to\\_2021\\_update.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907149/Letter_annualflu_2020_to_2021_update.pdf)

We will be providing further communication later in the season on the expansion of the programme to those aged 50 – 64 years.

**Sarah Owen:**

[96194]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that vulnerable people can access the flu vaccine for winter 2020-21.



**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 1 October 2020]:* General practitioners and other National Health Service providers have been asked to prioritise flu vaccination for all those who are in the clinically vulnerable groups documented in the national guidance.

Vaccination of those who are in at risk groups has started and will continue in all areas in England through the winter months.

**Dame Diana Johnson:****[96816]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS influenza vaccinations are planned to be available each month during the 2020-21 winter period in (a) Kingston upon Hull, (b) Yorkshire and the Humber and (c) England.

**Jo Churchill:**

Flu vaccinations sessions are organised by general practitioners, and other local providers. These sessions are a matter for individual providers. At a national level, we have sufficient vaccine for up to 30 million people to be vaccinated in England this winter.

**Dame Diana Johnson:****[96817]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the expected monthly demand for influenza vaccines for the 2020-21 winter period in comparison to monthly demand for those vaccines in the 2019-2020 winter period.

**Jo Churchill:**

It is anticipated that due to the current pandemic there will be a greater public demand for flu vaccinations this year. This season, we have expanded the flu programme to include new cohorts and have new uptake ambitions which are included in the Annual Flu Letter Update 2020/21 which is available at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/907149/Letter\\_annualflu\\_2020\\_to\\_2021\\_update.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907149/Letter_annualflu_2020_to_2021_update.pdf)

The previous season's uptake ambitions are available in the Annual Flu Letter 2019/20 is available at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/788903/Annual\\_national\\_flu\\_programme\\_2019\\_to\\_2020\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/788903/Annual_national_flu_programme_2019_to_2020_.pdf)

**Rosie Cooper:****[96820]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether it is his Department's policy to offer children and adults with cystic fibrosis priority access to influenza vaccinations for the remainder of 2020.

**Barbara Keeley:**

[96830]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether children and adults with cystic fibrosis will continue to receive priority access to influenza vaccinations in 2020.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 5 October 2020]:* General practitioners and other National Health Service providers have been asked to prioritise flu vaccination for all those who are in the clinically vulnerable groups, documented in the national guidance, this includes children and adults with cystic fibrosis.

Vaccination of those who are in at risk groups has started and will continue in all areas in England through the winter months.

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[96901]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much flu vaccine stock was available in England in (a) 2019 and (b) 2020.

**Jo Churchill:**

In 2019, over 22 million doses of flu vaccine were made available in England.

More than 30 million doses of flu vaccine are expected to be made available in England before the end of 2020. Further information is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/record-numbers-offered-flu-vaccine-as-those-with-flu-and-covid-19-more-likely-to-die>

**Dr James Davies:**

[96953]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the readiness of (a) delivery methods and (b) storage infrastructure for a potential vaccine for covid-19.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England is making preparations for storage of COVID-19 vaccines at the required temperatures to support a national COVID-19 vaccination programme. This includes both the central storage of vaccines and distribution capability across the United Kingdom to the National Health Service.

## ■ Lithium: Prices

**Luke Pollard:**

[98763]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his Department's issuing of a supply disruption alert for Lithium carbonate, what steps he has taken to (a) help prevent an increase in price of Priadel and (b) adjust the price of Camcolit as a result of that supply disruption.

**Jo Churchill:**

Supplies of Priadel (lithium carbonate) are currently available.

Ensuring patients have access to the medicines they need is vital. The Department brought the supply of Priadel to the attention of the Competition and Markets Authority which has now opened an investigation.

Essential Pharma has now agreed to continue supplying Priadel to the National Health Service whilst we work to agree a fair and appropriate price for this medicine.

Prices of branded medicines are controlled through the 2019 Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access and equivalent statutory scheme. There are no controls on prices of generic medicines. Instead, we rely on competition to drive prices down which has led to some of the lowest prices in Europe. In some instances, where there is no competition, some very large price increases have been observed. The Competition and Markets Authority has a number of live investigations into excessive prices of generic medicines.

## ■ Medical Treatments: Innovation

**Crispin Blunt:**

[\[90933\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the (a) budget and (b) scope is of the planned Innovative Medicines Fund; what funding will be allocated to (a) promising innovative medicines within or outside the Early Access to Medicines Scheme, (b) medicines for rare diseases and (c) support for research into, rescheduling of and licensing of compounds classified as Schedule 1 under the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001.

**Jo Churchill:**

Proposals for the Innovative Medicines Fund (IMF) are in development and will take full account of stakeholder views to ensure best use of the Fund. The budget for the fund will be confirmed in due course.

Alongside the IMF, we will continue to support the Early Access to Medicines Scheme, which is a key part of the Government's commitment to accelerating patient access to innovative, life-changing treatments.

The National Institute for Health Research welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health; it is not usual practice to ring-fence funds for particular topics or conditions. Applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality.

## ■ Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Independent Review

**Cat Smith:**

[\[105427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will implement recommendation one of the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review report entitled First Do No Harm, published on 8 July 2020.

**Cat Smith:**

[\[105428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the oral contribution of the the Minister for Patient Safety, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention of 9 July, Official Report, Column 1151, what discussions he has had with the Minister on implementing recommendation one of the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review report entitled First Do No Harm, published on 8 July 2020.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

Recommendation one of the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review has been implemented.

In my statement to the House of Commons on 9 July following the publication of the Independent Medicines and medical Devices Safety Review, ( *Official Report*, vol. 678, cols 1147-1148), I apologised on behalf of the health and care sector to the patients and families affected by Primodos, sodium valproate and pelvic mesh for the time the system took to listen and respond.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

**Robert Largan:**

[\[107128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for High Peak of 3 August 2020 on high consequence infectious diseases.

**Jo Churchill:**

I replied to the hon. Member's letter on 20 October 2020.

■ **Mental Health Services**

**Colleen Fletcher:**

[\[104110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate his Department has made of the (a) number and (b) proportion of people (i) seeking and (ii) qualifying for mental health support through the NHS in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 20 October 2020]:* The information is not collected in the format requested.

■ **Mental Health Services: Children and Young People**

**Laura Farris:**

[\[104774\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to reduce waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in West Berkshire.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 22 October 2020]:* Expanding access to children's mental health services nationally is a priority for this Government, and it is a core part of the NHS Long Term Plan. The National Health Service has set an ambitious goal of an extra

345,000 children and young people aged 0-25 receiving support via NHS-funded mental health services and schools-based mental health support teams (MHSTs) by 2023/24.

MHSTs are a proposal of our Green Paper on improving children and young people's mental health provision. We are trialling the proposals in trailblazer areas. The first 25 areas, announced in December 2018, are running the first wave of 59 MHSTs. West Berkshire is one of those 25 areas.

Twelve of the first trailblazer areas have also been chosen to pilot a four-week waiting time.

West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham co-operate at local leadership level to support a shared children's mental health Local Transformation Plan, which promotes resilience, and good mental health and wellbeing. It can be found at the following link:

[www.berkshirewestccg.nhs.uk/about-us/how-we-work-with-others/the-local-transformation-plan](http://www.berkshirewestccg.nhs.uk/about-us/how-we-work-with-others/the-local-transformation-plan)

## ■ MMR Vaccine

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

[92697]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to encourage parents to have their children vaccinated against MMR.

**Jo Churchill:**

The measles, mumps and rubella immunisation programme is a key priority, being closely linked with the national 'Measles and rubella elimination UK strategy'. A multi-agency implementation group including the Department, NHS England and NHS Improvement, and Public Health England has been established to take forward the broad range of actions outlined in the strategy in partnership with national and local stakeholders.

Actions already taken include a MMR catch-up vaccination programme for 10 and 11 year olds delivered through primary care, communications campaigns encouraging parents to have their children vaccinated, and local initiatives addressing inequalities in vaccine uptake, including targeting those who previously missed vaccination.

## ■ Mumps

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

[95993]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the change in the prevalence of mumps in the last three years.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 1 October 2020]:* In England, there were 1,796 laboratory confirmed mumps cases reported in 2017, 1,061 in 2018 and 5,042 in 2019. The data is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-confirmed-cases/confirmed-cases-of-measles-mumps-and-rubella-in-england-and-wales-2012-to-2013>

Mumps activity in 2019 was the highest observed in a decade and the number of laboratory confirmed cases remained high in the first quarter (Q1) of 2020. This rise in mumps cases has been driven by outbreaks in universities and colleges. Many of the cases were seen in young adults born in the late nineties and early 2000s who missed out on the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine when they were children.

In Q1 of 2020 there were 3,088 laboratory confirmed mumps infections. Cases were reported in all regions of England, predominantly in young adults aged 15 to 34 years - 2,533/3,088 or 82% - so the total number of laboratory-confirmed mumps cases in Q2 is likely to be an underestimate.

### ■ NHS: Protective Clothing

**Sir Mark Hendrick:**

**[81544]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many British manufacturers (a) approached the National PPE Sourcing team and (b) were awarded contracts to supply personal protective equipment to the NHS.

**Jo Churchill:**

We have rapidly processed over 24,000 offers of personal protective equipment (PPE) from over 15,000 suppliers who approached the National PPE Sourcing team, to ensure they meet the safety and quality standards that National Health Service staff need, as well as prioritising offers of larger volumes.

The company ownership and nature of business for each supplier cannot be readily identified from the available data held by the Department, therefore whether suppliers are British manufacturers is not verifiable.

We have contracted with over 175 new suppliers to deliver PPE at the scale and pace the United Kingdom requires. This includes signed contracts with 27 UK-based manufacturers for facemasks, visors, gowns and aprons, ensuring we build and maintain a domestic base for the future.

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

**[94428]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many items of personal protective equipment are in the stockpile of personal protective equipment for the NHS.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 28 September 2020]:* We have stabilised the UK PPE supply chain. Since 25 February 2020, the Department of Health and Social Care has distributed over 3.8 billion PPE items for use by health and social care services in England, which includes gowns, gloves, visors and surgical masks. We have over 32 billion PPE items on order and are building a stockpile equivalent to approximately 4 months PPE usage at COVID-19 usage levels which will be in place by November.

As set out in our PPE Strategy, which was published on 28 September, we are confident in managing demand for PPE arising from any second spike and from the winter period.

The operational process to build stockpiles is supported by a range of detailed operational and management data. We are working with those data flows to produce figures that could be published as official statistics; making the information available in a fully validated and clear way that aids understanding.

## ■ Obesity

**Stuart Anderson:** [104186]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 15 September 2020 to Question 83952 on Obesity, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of allocating funding to local groups tackling obesity.

**Stuart Anderson:** [105544]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 15 September 2020 to Question 83952, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of allocating funds to small businesses and voluntary groups as part of the Government's tackling obesity strategy.

**Jo Churchill:**

There has been no central assessment of the potential merits of allocating funding to local groups, small businesses or voluntary groups as part of the Government's strategy to reduce obesity. We have invested £3.279 billion in local authority public health services through the Public Health Grant in 2020/21, in addition to what the National Health Service spent on preventative interventions such as our world-class immunisation and screening programmes.

## ■ Obesity: Children

**Paul Blomfield:** [105357]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment has been made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on health services for seriously overweight children.

**Jo Churchill:**

The findings of Public Health England-led research indicates that during the COVID-19 outbreak children's face-to-face behavioural weight management services were suspended. Some services however continued to provide support remotely.

The research is available to view at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/weight-management-services-during-covid-19-phase-1-insights>



**Alex Norris:**

**[95730]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that every child in England requiring a tier two or three weight management service has access to it.

**Alex Norris:**

**[95731]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the obesity strategy provides (a) appropriate services and (b) support for at-risk children who are overweight or obese.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 30 September 2020]:* Local authorities and clinical commissioning groups are responsible for commissioning weight management services. Public Health England (PHE) has a responsibility to support the local delivery of evidence-based, effective and sustainable weight management services as recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence which adults, children and families can access if they are living above a healthy weight.

PHE has published a collection of evidence-based guides and resources to support the commissioning and delivery of tier two weight management services for adults and children and their families. The collection includes a guide to support healthcare professionals to start the conversation with families, research to some of the barriers and facilitators that some families may face.

## ■ Obesity: Health Services

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

**[103467]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the availability of NHS specialist weight management services.

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

**[103468]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average patient waiting times are for GP-led referrals for NHS specialist weight management services.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 19 October 2020]:* Through 'Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives', published in July, we are committed to looking at what further action can be taken to improve weight management services to better support people living with obesity to achieve a healthier weight.

The Department does not hold information on patient waiting times for general practitioner-led referrals to National Health Service specialist weight management services.

'Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives' is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-obesity-government-strategy/tackling-obesity-empowering-adults-and-children-to-live-healthier-lives>

**Dr James Davies:** [\[96954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the funding of weight management services.

**Dr James Davies:** [\[96955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how funding for weight management services is allocated to NHS organisations throughout the UK.

**Dr James Davies:** [\[96956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of changes to reimbursement mechanisms in the NHS on the funding for weight management services; and what the timelines are for the introduction of those changes.

**Jo Churchill:**

Government departments work very closely on reducing obesity. Through the obesity strategy we are committed to expanding weight management services and will provide further details on this later in the year.

NHS England is responsible for funding allocations to clinical commissioning groups. This process is independent of Government and NHS England takes advice on the underlying formula from the independent Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation.

NHS England has advised that it does not routinely commission weight management services. However, funding for weight management services for those living with obesity plus diabetes and/or hypertension was allocated to NHS England and NHS Improvement through the NHS Long Term Plan. NHS England and NHS Improvement are commissioning a Digital Weight Management Innovation Platform which will allow general practitioners to refer eligible service users into weight management services.

## ■ Ovarian Cancer: Health Services

**Abena Oppong-Asare:** [\[82573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to ensure that people with ovarian cancer can continue to access treatment in the event of a second wave of covid-19.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Cancer Recovery Taskforce has been established, and met for the first time in September, where they took stock of the status of cancer services against recovery metrics on referrals, treatment and backlog levels. A national recovery plan will be developed for publication shortly.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are continuing to operate cancer surgical hubs, supported by the extension of the independent sector deal, to maintain a whole-

system approach to managing cancer surgery at volume and in accordance with clinical priority.

## ■ **Pancreatic Cancer: Mortality Rates**

**Colleen Fletcher:**

[\[95654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the survival rate of people with pancreatic cancer.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 30 September 2020]:* Increasing the number of cancers that are diagnosed earlier is a top priority for the National Health Service. The NHS Long Term Plan sets an ambition to diagnose 75% of cancers at stage 1 or 2 by 2028.

To deliver on this ambition, NHS England and NHS Improvement are setting up Rapid Diagnostic Centres (RDCs) which bring together diagnostic equipment and expertise to streamline diagnostic services for cancer. RDCs are focusing on cancers that generate non-specific symptoms and are harder to diagnose, such as pancreatic cancer. As at October 2020, 45 RDCs were live across England.

## ■ **Pharmacy**

**Anne Marie Morris:**

[\[99614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance his Department has issued to pharmacists on the advice that pharmacists should provide to patients in circumstances where a medicine is not in stock but that may be available from another pharmacy or pharmacy chain.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 12 October 2020]:* The Department's Medicine Supply Team has established robust procedures to deal with medicine supply issues and they regularly communicate information on these with the National Health Service via networks in primary and secondary care. Where appropriate, the communications include guidance on the management of patients who may be affected by the supply issue.

Pharmacists are expected to use their professional judgement and expertise about the prescribed medicine and how quickly a patient needs it as to what they do to ensure the patient has timely access to the medicine.

## ■ **Pharmacy: Finance**

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[105287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to make an assessment of the adequacy of funding for community pharmacies.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 22 October 2020]:* Plans for additional funding, for costs incurred during the peak of the pandemic, are being actively discussed with the sector. We will

also carefully consider other representations on how we can further support community pharmacy so they can continue to deliver.

The Government has put in place an unprecedented financial package during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing support to all businesses, including community pharmacies. We have also made £370 million in advance payments to alleviate cash flow pressures and have provided extra funding to cover the costs of Bank Holiday opening, a new medicine delivery service for shielded patients, and measures taken by community pharmacy to support social distancing. For June to September 2020, there has also been an increase of £15 million per month, a total of £60 million, to reimbursement prices of the most commonly prescribed generic medicines.

### ■ Protective Clothing: Standards

**Derek Twigg:** [\[99529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the sufficiency of supply of personal protective equipment for the winter 2020-21 period for (a) NHS hospitals and other NHS settings, (b) pharmacies, (c) care homes and (d) dental surgeries.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 12 October 2020]:* We have stabilised the United Kingdom personal protective equipment (PPE) supply chain; we have over 32 billion PPE items on order and are building a stockpile equivalent to approximately four months PPE usage at COVID-19 usage levels which will be in place by November.

In the seven days to 4 October 2020, the Department distributed over 149 million PPE items for use by health and social care services in England through the PPE Dedicated Supply Channel, NHS Supply Chain and other routes.

Due to the strength of our supply we are ensuring many millions of additional PPE items reach those on the frontline through the PPE portal. The order limits on the PPE portal have now increased so that primary and social care providers will be able to order PPE to meet their COVID-19 PPE needs, free of charge.

The PPE Portal can be used by adult social care residential care homes, domiciliary care providers, children's social care settings, general practitioners, community pharmacies, dentists, orthodontists, optometrists, and community and residential drug and alcohol services in England.

### ■ Protective Clothing: Unmanned Air Vehicles

**Jamie Stone:** [\[105499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of using medical drone technologies to deliver personal protective equipment during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 22 October 2020]:* As part of our national effort to ensure critical personal protective equipment (PPE) is delivered to the frontline, we rolled out a PPE portal in collaboration with eBay, Clipper and Royal Mail through which primary and social care providers could access emergency PPE. The PPE Portal's customers currently include general practitioner practices, optometrists, dentists, pharmacies, children's social care homes and secure homes, children's residential special schools, resident social care providers and domiciliary care providers. Over 191 million items of PPE have been delivered through the Portal.

Our PPE Strategy (published 28 September) commits us to start transitioning to a future model next year that is both resilient (able to respond to any demand surges related to COVID-19 or another pandemic threat) and proportionate. Key considerations for the model beyond March 2021 include addressing how best to distribute PPE.

**Rare Diseases****Crispin Blunt:**[\[90932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to update the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Constitution and Functions) and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (Functions) Regulations 2013 with respect to appropriate pathways for the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to appraise technologies for both rare and very rare conditions.

**Jo Churchill:**

There are no plans to update the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Constitution and Functions) and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (Functions) Regulations 2013.

**Rare Diseases: Drugs****Anne Marie Morris:**[\[92776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many times a medicine for a rare disease has received a negative recommendation as a result of lack of data through the single technology appraisal process.

**Jo Churchill:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has published two technology appraisals on medicines for rare diseases where they have received a negative recommendation as a result of a lack of data:

- cenegermin for treating neurotrophic keratitis [TA532]; and
- darvadstrocel for treating perianal fistula in Crohn's disease [TA556].

## ■ Social Services: Coronavirus

**Paula Barker:**

**[92927]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans the Government has to support (a) local authorities and (b) the care sector more widely to deliver care services in the event that the covid-19 outbreak affects the financial viability of those sectors.

**Helen Whately:**

The Government is committed to supporting the adult social care system in the face of the pressures arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. We have now made £3.7 billion available to local authorities so they can address pressures on local services caused by the pandemic, including in adult social care.

In September we announced £546 million of additional funding to extend the Infection Control Fund to March 2021. This extension means we have now ringfenced over £1.1 billion to support social care providers with COVID-19 costs. The Government will continue to monitor the pressures on adult social care during this period and keep future funding under review.

## ■ Surgery

**Dan Jarvis:**

**[81912]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when elective NHS operations, including those that require (a) scans and (b) angiograms, can resume in England; and whether he will make a statement.

**Edward Argar:**

The restoration of elective treatments across the National Health Service has already resumed. On 31 July guidance was issued to local NHS providers and commissioners outlining the next phase of the NHS response to COVID-19 and concurrent non-COVID-19 activity. The letter can be found at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/07/Phase-3-letter-July-31-2020.pdf>

The guidance set the ambition for providers to recover elective services in October to 90% of last year's levels for admissions, and 100% for outpatients. The return of non-COVID-19 health services to near-normal levels involves making full use of available capacity between now and winter, whilst also preparing for winter demand pressures. This will be done alongside continued vigilance in light of any further COVID-19 spikes locally and possibly nationally.

## ■ Tranexamic Acid

**Jim Shannon:**

**[103518]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether tranexamic acid is used for accident victims to help control bleeding.

**Edward Argar:**

Tranexamic acid was introduced in all ambulance services in England for the management of traumatic bleeding and it forms part of the United Kingdom Clinical Practice Guidance for ambulance services. It is administered to patients with time critical injuries where significant internal/external haemorrhage is suspected and as part of the major trauma triage protocol.

**HOME OFFICE****■ Asylum: Children****Peter Kyle:**[\[106432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to commence covid-secure face-to-face substantive asylum interviews for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

**Chris Philp:**

The Home Office takes the wellbeing of asylum seekers extremely seriously and has put in place a range of measures to support asylum seekers affected by the covid-19 outbreak.

Asylum Operations have been clear it would not restart substantive asylum interviews until it was safe to do so and recommenced with adult interview at the end of July 2020. On 21 September 2020 we recommenced remote video interviewing for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC). Plans are in place to expand the number of UASC and minors' interviews utilising remote video interviewing and, where it is established that a face to face interview is more appropriate, an in-person interview will also be available.

**■ Coronavirus: Quarantine****Justin Madders:**[\[105413\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 29 September to Question 82041, how many Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued in England under the International Travel Regulations (a) in total and (b) by each police force since those regulations came into effect.

**Kit Malthouse:**

On 30 September, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) published its latest report on the police use of Covid-19 enforcement notices issued under all emergency health protections. The data shows that up to 22 September a total of 38 fixed penalty notices (FPNs) were issued by the police to individuals who have contravened the International Travel regulations for failing to self-isolate on arriving to England from a country on the UK Government's quarantine list.

In addition, as of 7 September, Border Force had issued a further 14 FPNs for non-compliance of the regulations across the UK:



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-on-health-measures-at-the-uk-border/data-on-health-measures-at-the-uk-border>.

The FPNs issued the police were from 14 police forces in England. The NPCC report provides a breakdown of issuance by police force, available here:

<https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/crime-is-close-to-pre-lockdown-levels-and-fines-given-to-the-public-rise-as-new-regulations-are-introduced-1>

## ■ Immigration: Windrush Generation

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [75445]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 15 January 2020 to Question 1928 on Immigration: Windrush Generation, when she plans to make the first compensation payments; and how much funding her Department has allocated to that scheme.

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [75446]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 16 July 2019 to Question 276275 on Immigration: Windrush Generation, if she will publish data on the time taken between a person submitting a claim to the Windrush compensation scheme and a decision being made on that claim.

**Priti Patel:**

I apologise for the delay in responding to this question, which was due to a departmental administrative error.

Information on the total number of claims paid and the overall amount paid out by the scheme is available to view on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-compensation-scheme-data-september-2020>.

Information relating to estimated costs including compensation payments are referred to in the Home Office's Impact Assessment IA No: HO 0329 dated 29/1/20. The Home Office has secured funding from HM Treasury for the scheme, and there is no cap on the amount of compensation an individual can receive.

We do not publish information on waiting times for decisions to be taken on Windrush Compensation Scheme claims. This could jeopardise a full assessment of the claim and ultimately be potentially detrimental to the claimant. Furthermore, as each claim is unique, we do not prescribe a set list of documentation but work with claimants to obtain evidence when required.

## ■ Members: Correspondence

**Gill Furniss:** [106440]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of correspondence sent to the MP correspondence team is replied to within the 20 working day service standard for a comprehensive response.

**James Brokenshire:**

71% of correspondence received in 2020, to the end of August, has been replied to within 20 working days. This includes replies to correspondence from hon. Members relating to immigration casework and operational matters provided by officials.

**■ Youth Services****Fleur Anderson:****[106503]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to increase youth intervention services.

**Kit Malthouse:**

It is vitally important that we prevent young people from being drawn into violent crime, exploitation and abuse. The Government recognises that high quality youth services can transform the lives of young people.

The Government has invested £200 million in a 10-year Youth Endowment (YEF) Fund to tackle the drivers behind serious youth violence. An extra £5million has been awarded to the YEF in 2020 to develop a National Centre of Excellence, which will share knowledge and expertise with those working with vulnerable children and young people at risk of involvement in serious youth violence.

In July 2020, the YEF offered a total of £6.5m to 130 organisations across England and Wales as part of its COVID-19 grant round. The funding will help charities, social enterprises, local authorities and youth organisations to re-connect with young people at-risk of being drawn into violent crime and tackle any problems to emerge because of COVID-19.

The Government has invested £70m over two years (19/20 – 20/21) in establishing Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) in the 18 police force areas most affected by serious violence. VRUs bring together police, local government, health and education professionals, community leaders and other key partners to identify the drivers of serious violence and agree a multi-agency response to them. In addition to leading and coordinating local responses, VRUs are also delivering interventions to support those most at risk of involvement in serious violence. In year 1 of their operation, VRUs applied £23.1m to enable delivery of 175 different interventions, which reached over 100,000 young people.

We are significantly increasing investment in specialist support for county lines victims this year. With investment of £860k the St Giles Trust will be delivering one-to-one support in London, Merseyside and the West Midlands (the three largest county lines exporting areas) which will help over 200 vulnerable children and young people who are criminally exploited by county lines gangs to exit their involvement.

The Home Office is also continuing to fund Missing People's SafeCall service (c.£200k FY20/21). This specialist 24/7 helpline provides advice and support to children, young people and their parents/carers who are concerned about county lines, criminal exploitation and gangs.

Through the £13.2m Trusted Relationships Fund we are identifying innovative approaches to tackling vulnerability among children and young people at risk of exploitation and abuse. The local authority-led projects, which went live in August 2018, provide support for children and young people identified as at high risk of child sexual exploitation and abuse, criminal exploitation and peer-on-peer abuse.

The Government also funded £22 million of funding for 40 projects through Early Intervention Youth Fund which ran from 2018 – 2020. This included awareness raising and education programmes, diversionary activities, tailored interventions, and programmes which aimed to cease offending or reoffending. A process evaluation of the EIYF will be available in Autumn 2020.

## HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Buildings: Insulation

**Tim Farron:**

[\[106288\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to (a) narrow the scope of the EWS1 process and (b) review his Department's policies and advice to lenders on that process.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The External Wall System (EWS1) and process is designed by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) with mortgage lenders to assist with valuation of high-rise residential buildings. Some lenders do not require an EWS1 form, and others seek them for a greater range of buildings than the process was designed for. It is not a Government policy or regulatory requirement. The Government does not support the blanket use of EWS1, especially for lower rise blocks. We are encouraging lenders to accept a broader range of evidence to assure themselves of a building's safety. This could include a fire risk assessment that includes external walls, a recent building control certificate, or other assurances of the building's safety the building owner can provide.

**Tim Farron:**

[\[106289\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of properties given zero valuations as a result of being unable to prove EWS1 certification.

**Tim Farron:**

[\[106290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of EWS1 on the ability of leaseholders to (a) sell or (b) re-mortgage properties.

**Christopher Pincher:**

Some lenders do not require an EWS1 form, and others seek them for a greater range of buildings than the process was designed for. It is not a Government policy or regulatory requirement and the department does not hold data on its use.

**Tim Farron:**

[\[106291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of buildings that will require a new ESW1 certification assessment every 5 years.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The EWS1 process is not a Government policy or regulatory requirement and the Government does not support a blanket approach in EWS1 use for lower risk properties. Some lenders do not require an EWS1 form, and others seek them for a greater range of buildings than the process was designed for. EWS1 assessments are commissioned by individual building owners, the department does not hold data on their use.

## ■ Buildings: Safety

**Mike Amesbury:**

[\[106481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Government update on building safety published in April 2020, what contribution leaseholders will be required to make towards the new building safety measures for properties over eleven metres tall.

**Christopher Pincher:**

In April 2020 the Government announced changes to the guidance to the building regulations (Approved Document B) lowering the height threshold from 30 metres to 11 metres for sprinklers in new build blocks of flats, or where existing blocks of flats are undergoing major renovation.

That change to Approved Documents B also introduced new guidance on providing better wayfinding signage, to assist evacuations and provide safer passage for firefighters and residents around and out of buildings.

Both of these safety provisions come into effect on 26 November 2020 and were widely welcomed as an important contribution towards resident safety – supported by residents, the fire service and the insurance industry as an important step forward to reducing casualties and protecting property in the event of fire within flats.

Developers will meet the costs of installation of sprinklers and better wayfinding signage in new buildings as part of the overall build cost. When buying a new flat with sprinklers installed, depending on the service charge provisions in their leases, leaseholders may be required to pay for maintenance and associated repairs of sprinklers and signage.

## ■ First Time Buyers: Coronavirus

**Colleen Fletcher:**

[\[106371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate his Department has made of the number of completed house sales involving first-time buyers during each month of the covid-19 outbreak; and what assessment he

has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the level of home ownership among first-time buyers.

**Christopher Pincher:**

COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact on the economy and there was a 43 per cent fall in first-time buyers claiming stamp duty relief in the 3 months to June 2020, broadly in line with a 45 per cent fall in residential transactions overall. We know many first-time buyers had their plans disrupted and that is why the housing market was one of the first sectors to reopen. We have provided a comprehensive economic package for people across the country and are keeping the impact of COVID-19 on first-time buyers under review.

■ **Flats: Insulation**

**Peter Kyle:**

[\[106433\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the situation of (a) buyers and (b) leaseholders of low-level flats who are unable to obtain mortgages or re-mortgage their properties because they do not possess an External Wall System 1 form; and whether the Government will take that matter into account in deciding whether to extend the cut to Stamp Duty Land Tax beyond 31 March 2021.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The External Wall System form (EWS1) and process was designed by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) with mortgage lenders to assist with valuation of high-rise residential buildings. It is not a Government policy or regulatory requirement and the Government does not support a blanket approach in EWS1 use for lower risk properties. Some lenders do not require an EWS1 form, and others seek them for a greater range of buildings than the process was designed for. It is not a Government policy or regulatory requirement and the department does not hold data on its use.

The temporary increase in the Stamp Duty Land Tax nil rate band was designed to provide an immediate stimulus to the property market, where property transactions fell during the COVID-19 lockdown. The Government does not plan to extend this relief and will continue to monitor the property market.

■ **Night Shelters: Coronavirus**

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

[\[105420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to his Department's announcement of 13 October 2020 on COVID-19: provision of night shelters, what steps the Government is taking to help support shelters which are not financially viable for re-opening with fewer guests during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

*[Holding answer 22 October 2020]:* On 13 October, the Government announced additional support for rough sleepers this winter, giving local areas the tools they need to protect people from cold weather and the risks posed by COVID-19.

Building on the £6.4 billion already given to councils to help them manage the impacts of COVID-19, this announcement includes a new £10 million Cold Weather Fund for local areas to bring forward COVID-secure accommodation. This is in addition to the new £2 million Transformation Fund for the faith, community and voluntary groups to help them provide secure accommodation for rough sleepers.

Alongside this, comprehensive guidance to the sector, produced with Public Health England and Homeless Link, has been published to help them open shelters more safely in situations where this decision needs to be taken and where not doing so would endanger lives.

We have allocated £91.5 million to Local Authorities from the Next Steps Accommodation Programme and have a £161 million fund this year to bring forward long term accommodation for rough sleepers.

**■ Sleeping Rough: Coronavirus****Thangam Debbonaire:****[105418]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what financial and other support he is providing to local authorities to enable them to provide self-contained accommodation to rough sleepers during winter 2020-21.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

*[Holding answer 22 October 2020]:* On 17 September MHCLG announced that £91.5 million had been allocated to 274 councils in England for the short-term funding aspect of the Next Steps Accommodation Programme, to help vulnerable people housed during the pandemic, and throughout the winter period.

On 13 October, we announced a further £10 million Cold Weather Fund for local areas to bring forward self-contained and COVID secure accommodation this winter, and £2 million funding for the faith, communities and voluntary sector to make available self-contained and COVID secure accommodation. Alongside this, comprehensive guidance to the sector, produced with input from Public Health England, Housing Justice and Homeless Link, has been published to help them open shelters more safely in situations where this decision needs to be taken, as a last resort and where not doing so would endanger lives.

This is on top of Government's commitment to support up to 6,000 rough sleepers into longer term accommodation, with 3,300 units of this accommodation becoming available in 2020/2021. Homes England, in partnership with MHCLG, have pledged to work hand-in-hand with leading Housing Associations and local authorities to deliver this.

Taken together, the overall amount Government is spending on rough sleeping and homelessness this year is over £700 million.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Department for International Trade: Meetings

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[104705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will publish the invitees to her Department's civil society roundtable meetings on the issues of (a) the environment, (b) sustainability, (c) development and (d) gender, as they relate to trade policy, as announced on 16 October 2020.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[104706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will hold civil society roundtable meetings on the issues of (a) human rights, (b) labour rights and (c) conflict resolution, as they relate to trade policy.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

*[Holding answer 21 October 2020]:* On 16 th October, as a part of my Department's increased programme of engagement, we launched the first of a series of roundtables with civil society groups on areas of key interest to them. Agendas for future roundtables will be developed in partnership with a range of civil society organisations. We do not plan to publish the names of organisations invited to participate.

### ■ Trade Agreements

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[106259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which of the continuity trade agreements under negotiation by her Department since July 2020 have been shared in draft form with members of her Department's (a) Trade and Agriculture Commission and (b) Trade Advisory Groups.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

In under two years, HM Government has agreed trade agreements with 51 countries. Our total trade with these countries was worth £144 billion in 2019. As we said in our election manifesto, we have ambitious goals for British trade. In fact, HM Government is seeking to secure free trade agreements with countries that cover 80 per cent of our trade within three years.

Continuity trade agreements simply seek to replicate, as far as is possible, the effects of trade agreements that Britain used when she was in the EU. That's why these agreements have not been shared in draft form with members of either the Trade and Agriculture Commission or the Trade Advisory Groups, as these groups are focused on Britain's new trade deals around the world.



## ■ Trade Agreements: Dispute Resolution

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[104018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she is taking to ensure that high ethical standards for arbitrators are secured as integral features of Investor-State Dispute Settlement mechanisms in future trade agreements; and if she will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[104019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she is taking to ensure that (a) transparency and (b) efficiency are secured as integral features of any Investor-State Dispute Settlement mechanisms when included in future trade agreements; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

The United Kingdom supports recent trends in Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provisions that seek high ethical standards for arbitrators.

Arbitrators are bound by rules governing conflicts of interest and other ethical issues, such as impartiality. These can be set in trade agreements themselves, through the International Bar Association Guidelines on Conflicts of Interest in International Arbitration, and through the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes Convention.

Should ISDS be included in a future trade agreement, the United Kingdom supports a modernised mechanism that takes account of this international best practice.

## JUSTICE

### ■ Prisoners: Bank Services

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[106279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an assessment of the effect on the work of charities who use the gov.uk portal to support prisoners with money for phone credit and other costs, and whose charitable bank accounts do not allow debit cards to be issued, of the planned exclusion of bank transfers, cheques, postal orders and cash from that portal from 2 November 2020.

**Lucy Frazer:**

From 2 November 2020, some arrangements for prisoner monies will change to improve the security of related processes and controls. Changes include a presumption that external payments to prisoners should be made online, a cap on prisoner funds in prison accounts and a weekly limit on the amount of funds a prisoner can disburse out of their accounts. The move towards online methods are in line with the increase in the use of electronic means of payment generally in the wider community.

Charities play a vital role in supporting people in the criminal justice system. We understand the importance of keeping in touch with families and friends. Because of this the changes allow for money senders who do not have access to debit cards to make alternative arrangements to pay by cheque.

■ **Treatment of, and Outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Individuals in the Criminal Justice System Independent Review**

**Matt Western:**

**[104164]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what progress there has been on the implementation of the Lammy Review recommendations.

**Alex Chalk:**

The Government has provided updates on the implementation of the independent review into the treatment of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in the criminal justice system (the Lammy Review). Where a recommendation could not be implemented in full or exactly as set out in the Review, alternative approaches have been sought to achieve the same aim. As of 16th October 2020, the status of the recommendations is as follows:

Out of the 35 recommendations listed in the Lammy Review: i. Actions in relation to 16 recommendations have been completed (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 22, 23, 33, 35)

ii. Actions in relation to 17 recommendations are still in progress, of which: a. 11 recommendations aim to be completed within 6 – 12 months (15, 17, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30)

b. 6 recommendations will take longer than 12 months to be completed (1, 9, 10, 31, 32, 34)

iii. Two recommendations (14, 16), specific to a target for judicial appointments and appraisal, are not being taken forward. This was announced in the Government's response to the Review in December 2017.

The Government's response identified actions going beyond the Review's recommendations. Progress on recommendations and additional actions are overseen by a CJS Race and Ethnicity Board which was created in response to the Review.

An Independent Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities is currently reviewing inequality in the UK, focusing on areas including education, employment, health and the criminal justice system. The Independent Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities will aim to report to the Prime Minister by the end of the year

**TRANSPORT****■ Air Passenger Duty: Coronavirus****Henry Smith:**[\[104092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions his Department has had with HM Treasury on the potential merits of introducing a 12-month waiver for Air Passenger Duty to support vital trade and connectivity during the covid-19 pandemic.

**Robert Courts:**

The Department recognises the importance of maintaining a thriving and competitive aviation sector in the UK to deliver connectivity.

Air Passenger Duty is led by HM Treasury. The Department for Transport works closely with HM Treasury and both Departments have engaged closely with the aviation sector to understand their assessment of the outlook for the sector and implications of any sector specific support measures.

**■ Bicycles: Repairs and Maintenance****Sarah Olney:**[\[106444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department plans to release the next wave of Fix your Bike Scheme vouchers.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The Department plans to do this very shortly. The release of vouchers has been staggered in order to prevent repairers from being overwhelmed. The first release was a small pilot to allow the Department to monitor the scheme's impact and adapt it as necessary. Further details will be announced in due course.

**■ Cycling and Walking: Schools****Matt Western:**[\[104153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions his Department has had with the Department for Education on making school curriculum time available for cycle training and the promotion of cycling and walking to school.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The Government is committed to making Bikeability training available to all schoolchildren by the end of this Parliament, and is providing £2 million of support this financial year for a programme to encourage more children to walk to school. The Government's statutory guidance to schools on Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) says that pupils should know the importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this, for example by walking or cycling to school. The Department continues to discuss this and other matters with the Department for Education.

## ■ Cycling: Infrastructure

**Zarah Sultana:**

[\[106502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of allocating additional funding for local cycling infrastructure to reduce covid-19 cases on public transport.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

On the 9th May the Government announced a £2bn package of funding for cycling and walking over this Parliament. This included a £225 million Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF) which is enabling local authorities across England to put in new cycling and walking infrastructure. This will reduce pressure on public transport services by making cycling and walking a viable alternative to public transport or private car use, particularly for shorter journeys. £42 million of the fund has already been allocated, and an announcement will be made shortly on allocating the remainder.

## ■ Electric Scooters: Pilot Schemes

**Virginia Crosbie:**

[\[106518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has drawn up criteria for evaluating the outcomes of his Department's trials of electric scooters.

**Rachel Maclean**

The Department set how it will evaluate rental e-scooter trials in its guidance to local areas and rental operators in September 2020. As stated in the guidance, the primary areas of focus for DfT and its monitoring and evaluation contractors include:

safety outcomes for e-scooter users and what influences this

interaction with, and effect on, other road users

public perceptions of e-scooters, including by people with disabilities and related groups

nature of modal shift and new journeys that have been enabled

characteristics of users, and how uptake and outcomes differ for different groups

The evidence gathered during trials, the responses to the Future of Transport regulatory review call for evidence and other research will inform legal changes that may be necessary after the trial period ends.

## ■ Global Travel Taskforce: Aviation

**Seema Malhotra:**

[\[106357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will instruct the Global Travel Taskforce to work with representatives of the airline caterers sector.

**Robert Courts:**

A core function of the Global Travel Taskforce (GTT) will be to afford policy makers a chance to discuss issues further with those outside of government, as it considers robust and sustainable proposals that will facilitate safer international travel. In its work, the GTT will therefore seek to consult representatives from across the sector.

Further information on the GTT can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/global-travel-taskforce>

**■ High Speed Two Railway Line: Iron and Steel****Mr Kevan Jones:****[106224]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether steel produced in the UK will be prioritised for High Speed Two.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

The contractors involved in the delivery of HS2 have only recently commenced their procurement of steel for HS2 and therefore it is not possible to determine at this time what % of that steel be British, but, the Government's guidance on the procurement of steel was published in November 2015 and subsequently updated in December 2016. All major government projects are required to take cognisance of the Crown Commercial Service Procurement Policy Note 11/16: "Procuring Steel in Major Projects - Revised Guidance"

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-1116-procuring-steel-in-major-projects-revised-guidance> ).

Whilst HS2 Ltd. does not directly buy steel, it does apply a strategic and transparent approach to the sourcing of steel for the HS2 Programme through its Tier 1 contractors and their supply chains. HS2 Ltd ensures a fair procurement process which complies with UK procurement law and the Government policy on the procurement of steel.

**■ Large Goods Vehicles: Manston****Kerry McCarthy:****[106228]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Cabinet Office Policy Paper entitled The Border Operating Model updated on 8 October 2020 and to the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Border Facilities and Infrastructure) (EU Exit) (England) Special Development Order SI 2020/928, what plans he has to locate (a) a lorry park and (b) an inland border facility in Manston.

**Kerry McCarthy:****[106229]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Cabinet Office Policy Paper entitled The Border Operating Model updated on 8 October 2020, whether Ashford Waterbrook, Sevington in Ashford, Ebbsfleet International Station and Dover are the only sites being considered for inland border facilities as part of EU exit planning in Kent.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The facilities listed in the Border Operating Model are the only long-term inland border facilities being considered. In addition, the Department is working to extend contractual arrangements relating to our use of Manston Airport for a further 6 months mainly to provide additional HGV holding capacity. HMRC will provide office of departure functions when the site is operational.

**■ Portsmouth International Port****Stephen Morgan:**[\[104183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what support the Government is providing to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum to help ensure that Operation Transmission will be in place before the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020.

**Rachel Maclean:**

DfT officials are working closely with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to ensure that the LRF has the required analysis and information to enable it to stand up an effective local traffic management plan (Operation Transmission), in case of traffic disruption post the EU Transition period.

**■ Public Transport: Coronavirus****Yasmin Qureshi:**[\[106299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what research the Government has commissioned on covid-19 transmission on public transport.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Department for Transport has worked with a Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) sub-group to develop the Transport Risk Assessment for COVID Knowledge (TRACK) project. TRACK is an 18-month, £1.7 million UKRI-funded project to understand and model the transmission of COVID-19 on public transport. The Department has also commissioned the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory to do work on the transmission risk for aviation.

Further information can be found in a press release from the University of Leeds from the 21st October entitled "Research to understand COVID-19 spread on public transport".

**■ Railway Stations: Retail Trade****Jack Brereton:**[\[104763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to Network Rail Limited's Annual Report and Accounts 2020, page 1, to what extent (a) station retail sales and (b) income to reinvest have grown (i) nationally, (ii) in each of the five Network Rail Regions, and (iii) at Stoke-on-Trent station; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

In 2019/20, income from Network Rail's managed stations, all of which is reinvested in the railway, grew by £8m / 4%.

A full break down of this information by region is provided in the table attached.

Stoke-On-Trent Station is owned by Network Rail and leased to the Train Operating Company, Avanti. We do not hold information on income for this station.

**Railways: Apprentices****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[106465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent estimate he has made of the number of apprentices working in the rail industry.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

We do not hold information for the whole rail industry. However, the Rail Delivery Group reports 3,182 apprenticeships in train operating companies. Network Rail has 1,307.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[106466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to increase the number of apprentices in the rail industry.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The department is committed to increasing the number of apprentices in the industry, as we set out in the Transport Infrastructure Skills Strategy in 2016, working with the Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce. We have been pleased to see increased numbers of apprentices in both road and rail, including in the supply chain.

We continue to work closely with industry on the skills agenda during this challenging period including through the continuation of apprenticeship programmes.

We also recognise the importance of schemes that can bridge the gap to taking on a full apprenticeship, such as traineeships, work placements and pre-apprenticeship programmes. We actively encourage industry to take advantage of DWP's recently launched 'Kickstarter' scheme.

**Railways: Coastal Areas****Caroline Ansell:**[\[104137\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential for economic regeneration of coastal communities through rail infrastructure investment; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

We have a £10.4bn budget for rail enhancements in Control Period 6 (2019-2024). £500m of this is available for Restoring Your Railway schemes, to start reopening lines and stations, reconnecting smaller communities, regenerating local economies and improving access to jobs, homes and education. All rail enhancement schemes



are assessed on a case by case basis. In addition, Ministers have approved the entry of the Kent and East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Scheme to formally enter the Government's rail enhancements pipeline.

#### ■ Railways: Fares

**Jim McMahon:**

[106439]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether it is his policy to increase regulated rail fares by the rate of RPI inflation on 2 January 2021.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Government is considering plans for regulated rail fares in January. Taxpayers have been very generous in their support to keep trains running throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, and it is only fair that passengers also contribute to maintaining and improving the services they use. Any fares rise will help fund crucial investment in maintaining railway services to enable social distancing and support our economic recovery.

#### ■ Railways: South East

**Caroline Ansell:**

[104136]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending High Speed rail services from Ashford to Eastbourne; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Ministers have approved the entry of the Kent and East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Scheme to formally enter the Government's rail enhancements pipeline. The Department and East Sussex County Council are funding the production of a Strategic Outline Business Case, due early 2021. As well as exploring options to create a new link to High Speed 1, this programme is considering options for a range of upgrades to the Marshlink line between Ashford and Hastings.

**Caroline Ansell:**

[104138]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to link the South Coast to growth corridors in (a) Kent and (b) the large scale-regeneration at Ebbsfleet via High Speed rail; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Ministers have approved the entry of the Kent and East Sussex Coastal Connectivity Scheme to formally enter the Government's rail enhancements pipeline. The Department and East Sussex County Council are funding the production of a Strategic Outline Business Case, due early 2021. As well as exploring options to create a new link to High Speed 1, this programme is considering options for a range of upgrades to the Marshlink line between Ashford and Hastings.

Network Rail is currently undertaking a study looking at the potential impact on Ebbsfleet and the wider area of the planned London Resort and other planned

regeneration on the rail network and we will consider its recommendations when these are available in the new year.

## ■ Railways: Trespass

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[106464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to prevent trespassing on the rail network.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The industry continue to build on their successful anti-trespass campaign “You vs Train”, and collaborate to prevent fatalities on the network. Through the Trespass Improvement Programme (TIP), the industry is also looking at implementing physical measures to prevent access to the network, which they are supplementing with technological improvements designed to deter trespass.

Projects under development include platform end and edge improvements, such as AI cameras and off-grid CCTV that help detect trespassers faster, Virtual Reality videos and mental health campaigns to encourage behavioural change, and a new partnership between the industry and the Scouts Association, covering Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers. We are taking active steps to support existing industry projects, and continue to participate in industry-wide trespass prevention initiatives.

## ■ Travel: Employment and Schools

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[104014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to promote active travel to (a) school and (b) work; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

On 28 July the Prime Minister launched ambitious plans to boost cycling and walking, with the aim that half of all journeys in towns and cities are cycled or walked by 2030. This included a £2 billion package of funding for active travel over the next 5 years, which is the largest ever boost for cycling and walking, and will deliver transformational change. The plan included a number of steps which will support active travel to school and work including the roll-out of segregated cycle lanes in towns and cities; cycle training for everyone who wants to undertake it, whether free or at a nominal charge; and increasing the number of school streets.

The Department recently announced £2m to enable more children to cycle and walk to school. This will support the roll out of Doctor Bike clinics which will deliver cycle repair workshops in primary schools through Cycling UK’s Big Bike Revival programme and further expansion of the Walk to School Outreach programme delivered by Living Streets.

## TREASURY

■ **Cash Dispensing****Colleen Fletcher:**[\[106370\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to secure long-term access to cash to support (a) people on low incomes, (b) vulnerable people, (c) disadvantaged communities and (d) businesses in the UK unable to effectively operate without cash.

**John Glen:**

The Government recognises that cash remains important to millions of people and businesses across the UK, including those who may be on low incomes or vulnerable. That is why Government 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, the Government published a Call for Evidence on 15 October seeking views on the key considerations associated with cash access, including deposit and withdrawal facilities, cash acceptance, and regulatory oversight of the cash system.

■ **Credit Unions****Gareth Thomas:**[\[104022\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many members of credit unions there are, by region of the UK.

**Gareth Thomas:**[\[104023\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many credit unions in each region of the UK have the ability to offer mortgages; and how many members each of those credit unions have.

**John Glen:**

According to the latest data on credit unions published by the Prudential Regulation Authority, the membership of credit unions in the first quarter of 2020 by region of the UK is given below:

REGION	MEMBERSHIP
England	923,321
Wales	81,766
Scotland	423,554
Northern Ireland	707,271

Neither HM Treasury, the Prudential Regulation Authority nor the Financial Conduct Authority collect information on the membership of credit unions on a local level. The data on overall credit union membership is available online and can be found here: <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/news?NewsTypes=571948d14c6943f7b5b7748ad80bef29&Taxonomies=5de036cac1ff46b49b8ac98c266de410&InfiniteScrolling=False&Direction=Latest>

In order to offer mortgage products, a credit union must hold special mortgage permissions. Any credit union can apply for these permissions, providing that they can demonstrate they can meet the requirements set out by the Financial Conduct Authority for mortgage lenders. Credit unions also need to comply with the maximum loan value limits set out by the Prudential Regulation Authority.

Currently, 4 UK credit unions hold mortgage permissions. These are Glasgow Credit Union, ScotWest Credit Union, Capital Credit Union and No1 Copperpot Credit Union. The first three are based in Scotland, while membership of No1 CopperPot Credit Union is open to UK police officers and staff. In total, these credit unions have approximately over 140,000 members. We are unable to provide data on the membership of the individual credit unions.

## ■ Debts Written Off: Developing Countries

**Zarah Sultana:**

**[105566]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make representations to his overseas counterparts at the G20 Finance Ministers Meetings on the cancellation of developing countries' debts to the IMF and World Bank to help those countries tackle the covid-19 pandemic.

**John Glen:**

The Government is closely monitoring the impact of the crisis on the debt situation in developing countries, including through our membership of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Paris Club. It is clear that the COVID-19 pandemic is placing extraordinary pressures on the finances of low and middle income countries.

Recognising this, the G20 has taken action to support these countries, agreeing the landmark DSSI (Debt Service Suspension Initiative). The DSSI provides a suspension of debt repayments to eligible countries so they can focus resources on their coronavirus response.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> October, the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) met. They agreed to extend the DSSI for a further six months and, importantly, reached an in principle agreement on a Common Framework on future debt treatments beyond the DSSI to facilitate timely and orderly debt treatment for DSSI-eligible countries where this is required. A further G20 FMCBG meeting is to take place in early November and the UK is asking all G20 countries to fulfil the necessary internal approvals to endorse and publish the Common Framework in due course.

**■ Employee Ownership and Save as You Earn****Philip Davies:****[104708]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people received income tax relief as a result of their participation in (a) Save As You Earn and (b) Share Incentive Plan schemes in the 12 months year for which such data is available, by (i) basic rate income tax payers, (ii) higher income tax payers, (iii) additional rate of income tax payers and (iv) people who fell beneath the income tax threshold.

**John Glen:**

The Save As You Earn (SAYE) scheme and Share Incentive Plans (SIPs) are tax-advantaged employee share schemes offered by the Government.

Information on employees' income tax band is not collected as part of SAYE or SIP returns. This information is therefore not readily available and could only be provided with disproportionate cost.

HMRC publishes annual statistics on participation in employee share schemes which are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/employee-share-schemes-statistics#national-statistics>

**Sarah Olney:****[106442]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people participated in (a) Save As You Earn (SAYE) schemes, (b) Share Investment Plans (SIPs) and (c) SAYE schemes and SIPs in the last three years for which data are available.

**John Glen:**

The Save As You Earn (SAYE) scheme and Share Incentive Plans (SIPs) are tax-advantaged employee share schemes offered by the Government.

HMRC publishes annual statistics on participation in Employee Share Schemes which are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/employee-share-schemes-statistics#national-statistics>

Data from these statistics on participation in SAYE schemes and SIPs for the last three years for which data is available can be found in the tables below. HMRC collects data at the points at which employees enter or leave Employee Share Schemes which is reflected in the tables below. However, HMRC does not hold data on the number of people who hold options or shares within an Employee Share Scheme each year.

For SAYE, data is provided on the number of employees who are granted and exercised options for each of the three years.

For SIPs, data is provided on the number of employees who are awarded or purchase the four different types of shares available. Some employees may receive more than one type of share in a given year.

Table 1 - SAYE

SAYE	EMPLOYEES GRANTED SHARE OPTIONS	EMPLOYEES EXERCISING SHARE OPTIONS
16-17	400,000	140,000
17-18	340,000	120,000
18-19	310,000	110,000

Table 2 - SIP

## SIP – EMPLOYEES

AWARDED / PURCHASED	FREE SHARES	PARTNERSHIP SHARES	MATCHING SHARES	DIVIDEND SHARES
16-17	140,000	4,160,000	2,990,000	760,000
17-18	140,000	2,890,000	2,010,000	530,000
18-19	110,000	2,840,000	2,050,000	500,000

■ **Employment: Females****Sir Mark Hendrick:****[104051]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure the covid-19 outbreak does not increase (a) job security, (b) job opportunity and (c) pay inequalities among men and women.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

To help protect people's job security, the Government announced the unprecedented Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to help firms keep millions of people in employment. Up to 30<sup>th</sup> June 4.5 million female employees have been supported through the Government's furlough scheme. With the announcement of the Winter Economy Plan, the Government is adapting its response to the changing context, as we said we would. The Job Support Scheme will provide more targeted support, aimed at viable businesses who are facing lower demand due to Covid-19 to help keep their employees in work.

Alongside this, the government has announced additional support for working parents. Any working parent usually eligible for Tax Free Childcare or 30 hours free childcare will temporarily remain eligible if they fall below the minimum income requirement due to COVID-19. This supports individuals with childcare commitments who are temporarily working less as result of Covid-19. An IFS report ( <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/bns/BN223.pdf> ) found that gender differences in rates of part-time and fulltime paid work account for approximately half of the widening of the gender wage gap over the 20 years after the first child in a

family is born, highlighting the importance of childcare for reducing pay inequalities between men and women.

Since 1 June, early years settings have already been able to welcome back children of all ages. The Government is continuing to work to understand how it can ensure that sufficient safe, appropriate and affordable childcare is available. Providers who run community activities, holiday clubs, breakfast and after-school clubs, tuition and other out-of-school provision for children can now operate with protective measures in place

In its Plan for Jobs, the Government has announced unprecedented support to help unemployed people in Great Britain find a job. We are providing £1.2bn to significantly expand and enhance work search support, including doubling the number of work coaches, additional investment into the Flexible Support Fund to provide direct support at a local level, and using externally contracted provision to expand support even further.

Recognising that young people are particularly at risk, the government has also launched a new £2bn Kickstart Scheme, creating hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people across Great Britain, as well as a guaranteed foundation of support to all 18-24 year olds on Universal Credit in the Intensive Worksearch group, through its new youth offer.

These measures will help provide job opportunities to women.

## ■ EU Grants and Loans

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[106492\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing funding for organisations in receipt of EU funds at the end of the transition period.

**Steve Barclay:**

Under the Withdrawal Agreement, the UK will continue to participate in programmes funded under the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) until their closure. This means that a number of programmes will continue to receive EU funding across the programme's lifetime. In such cases, funding will continue until after 2020 and the end of the transition period. In addition, for some programmes, UK organisations can continue to bid for new grant funding under the 2014-2020 MFF as under the Withdrawal Agreement the UK has committed to funding participation in these.

## ■ Exports: VAT

**Seema Malhotra:**

[\[106358\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish an economic impact assessment of the effect on airports of his decision to (a) withdraw the VAT Retail Export Scheme for all passengers and (b) remove tax-free sales for non-excise goods throughout the UK.



**Jesse Norman:**

Ahead of the end of the transition period, the Government has announced the VAT and excise duty treatment of goods purchased by individuals for personal use and carried in their luggage arriving from or going overseas (passengers). The following rules will apply from 1 January 2021:

- Passengers travelling from Great Britain to any destination outside the United Kingdom (UK) will be able to purchase duty-free excise goods once they have passed security controls at ports, airports, and international rail stations.
- Personal allowances will apply to passengers entering Great Britain from a destination outside of the UK, with alcohol allowances significantly increased.
- The VAT Retail Export Scheme (RES) in Great Britain will not be extended to EU residents and will be withdrawn for all passengers.
- The concessionary treatment on tax-free sales for non-excise goods will be removed across the UK.

The Government published a consultation which ran from 11 March to 20 May. During this time the Government held a number of virtual meetings with stakeholders to hear their views and received 73 responses to the consultation. The Government is also continuing to meet and discuss with stakeholders following the announcement of these policies.

The detailed rationale for these changes is included in the written ministerial statement and summary of responses to the recent consultation: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2020-09-11/hcws448> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-consultation-on-duty-free-and-tax-free-goods-carried-by-passengers>. A technical note has also been issued to stakeholders to expand on this document and to respond to issues raised by stakeholders.

HMRC estimate that VAT RES refunds cost about £0.5 billion in VAT in 2019 for about 1.2 million non-EU visitors. In 2019 the ONS estimated there were substantially more EU visitors (24.8 million) than non-EU passengers (16.0 million) to the UK. This implies an extension to EU residents would significantly increase the cost by up to an estimated £0.9 billion. This would result in a large amount of deadweight loss by subsidising spending from EU visitors which already happens without a refund mechanism in place, potentially taking the total cost up to about £1.4 billion per annum.

The concessionary treatment on tax-free sales currently affects airports that fly to non-EU destinations. The extension of duty-free sales to EU bound passengers will be a significant boost to all airports in England, Scotland and Wales, including smaller regional airports which have not been able to offer duty-free to the EU before.

HMRC estimate that about £150 million of VAT is not charged as a result of tax-free airside sales. As with the VAT RES, extending the relief to the EU would significantly

increase the cost of the scheme and result in a large amount of deadweight loss by subsidising spending from EU-bound passengers which already happens.

The final costings will be subject to scrutiny by the independent Office for Budget Responsibility and will be set out at the next forecast.

The Government also recognises the challenges that the aviation sector is facing as it recovers from the impacts of COVID-19 and has supported the sector throughout the pandemic, including schemes to raise capital, flexibilities with tax bills, and financial support for employees.

## ■ Financial Services: Regulation

**Sarah Olney:**

[\[105494\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the financial services sector on the effectiveness of the (a) Financial Conduct Authority, (b) Financial Services Compensation Scheme and (c) Financial Ombudsman Scheme.

**John Glen:**

The government engages with the financial services sector on a regular basis to discuss matters related to the Financial Conduct Authority, Financial Services Compensation Scheme, and Financial Ombudsman Service, and will continue to do so.

## ■ Football: Unpaid Taxes

**Damian Collins:**

[\[106318\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much in total is owed by football clubs playing in the English Football League to HMRC in overdue unpaid taxes.

**Jesse Norman:**

The total of overdue taxes is £77,612,777 excluding VAT which is auto-deferred to 31 March 2021 and Month 6 PAYE payments.

This is broken down by league as:

### DEBT

Championship	£59,127,124
League 1	£13,637,069
League 2	£4,848,583
Total	£77,612,777

## ■ Job Support Scheme

**Sir Roger Gale:**

[\[106211\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he plans to publish final guidance on the implementation of the Job Support Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

On 22 October the Government published further details on the Job Support Scheme, increasing the scale of support available to employers through JSS-Open, above that which was initially announced. Further guidance on the Job Support Scheme will be available by the end of October.

## ■ Lone Parents: Coronavirus

**Liz Twist:**

[\[106452\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what financial support is available for single parents who cannot work from home and whose children are instructed to self-isolate without having a positive covid-19 test.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government has committed to an unprecedented package of support for individuals through this difficult time. This includes the introduction of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, the Job Support Scheme, and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, as well as injecting an additional £9 billion into the welfare system according to Office for Budget Responsibility estimates.

If an employee earns average weekly earnings of at least £120 per week, they will be eligible for SSP if they are self-isolating under Government guidance and cannot work from home. This includes parents living in the same households as children self-isolating with symptoms of COVID-19. The Government has changed the rules so that SSP is now payable from day 1, not day 4, for COVID-19 cases.

Parents of children who are self-isolating under Government guidance may be eligible for “new style” contributory Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) if they are ineligible for SSP and unable to work from home. The Government has made it easier for people to claim by removing the seven-day waiting period which means people can get support from day one.

The welfare system is best placed to provide support for those not eligible for SSP. This group will benefit from changes to the welfare system to support the most vulnerable. These changes include a £20 per week increase to the UC standard allowance and Working Tax Credit basic element, and a nearly £1 billion increase in support for renters through increases to the Local Housing Allowance rates for UC and Housing Benefit claimants.

**■ Marriage: Coronavirus****Yasmin Qureshi:****[106306]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he has taken to ensure that businesses in the wedding industry can access suitable insurance for delays and cancellations resulting from the covid-19 outbreak.

**John Glen:**

The Government is working closely with the insurers, the trade bodies and regulators to understand what more the industry can do to support firms as the economy reopens. We also continue to gather and monitor information on how different sectors, including the wedding industry, are being affected by the current crisis and the availability of cover.

The Government would need to assess access to insurance alongside any other barriers to a sector re-opening, such as social distancing restrictions, when determining the appropriate course of action.

Wedding operators are eligible for assistance through the wider Government support package if they are in financial difficulty. We continue to keep this package under close review.

**■ Money Lenders: Coronavirus****Jim Shannon:****[106346]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to prevent people made vulnerable as a result of the covid-19 outbreak from becoming victims of loan sharks.

**John Glen:**

The Government funds the Illegal Money Lending Teams (IMLTs) of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to tackle illegal money lenders, or 'loan sharks', via a Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) levy on industry. The IMLTs also have powers to deal with wider criminality associated with loan sharks, such as violence and blackmail, and can seize the assets of convicted loan sharks to fund support for victims and raise awareness of the dangers of illegal lending in affected communities.

The Government and IMLTs are alert to the particular challenges faced by vulnerable consumers as a result of COVID-19 and continue to work together to ensure that this dangerous and illegal activity is stopped.

The Government also recognises that some people who are struggling with their finances at this challenging time may turn to loan sharks.

That is one of the reasons why the Government has delivered unprecedented support for living standards, protecting livelihoods with the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, and temporary welfare measures amongst other support.

To help people in problem debt get their finances back on track, an extra £37.8 million support package is being made available to debt advice providers this financial year, bringing this year's budget for free debt advice in England to over £100 million.

In May, the Government also announced the immediate release of £65 million dormant assets funding to Fair4All Finance, an independent organisation that has been founded to support the financial wellbeing of people in vulnerable circumstances. The funding is used to increase access to fair, affordable and appropriate financial products and services, including credit, for those in financial difficulties.

### ■ **Police: Finance**

**Sarah Jones:**

[\[106460\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if she will include a review of the police allocation formula in the Comprehensive Spending Review.

**Steve Barclay:**

The Government is alive to the concerns held by many in the policing sector over the police funding formula, and Home Office Ministers have agreed that the current arrangements are out of date. We are considering the police funding formula as part of our long-term vision for policing. Our priority for the Spending Review is continuing to support police forces with the required resources to tackle crime. At the 2019 Spending Review the Government agreed a total police funding settlement of up to £15.2 billion in 2020/21, which is an increase of up to £1.1 billion compared to 2019/20 and the biggest increase in funding for the policing system since 2010.

### ■ **Public Expenditure**

**Sir Mark Hendrick:**

[\[104050\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to tackle (a) gender, (b) race and (c) socioeconomic inequality as part of his Winter Economic Plan.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Government considers the equality impacts of individual policies on those with protected characteristics carefully and consistently, in line with both its legal obligations and its strong commitment to equality; and there are internal procedural requirements and support in place for ensuring that such considerations inform decisions taken by Ministers.

### ■ **Retail Prices Index**

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[\[104085\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which stakeholders he or his ministerial colleagues have met since December 2019 to discuss changing the formula for calculating the Retail Price Index.

**John Glen:**

The Retail Prices Index (RPI) is a measure of inflation with a number of shortcomings. To address these shortcomings, the UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) has made a proposal to reform RPI by bringing the methods and data sources of the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) into RPI. Owing to the use of RPI in specific index-linked gilts, prior to 2030 the Chancellor's consent to this proposal is required before it can be implemented.

As outlined in the consultation document (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-consultation-on-the-reform-to-retail-prices-index-rpi-methodology>), factors related to the impact of the proposal on the holders of index-linked gilts are likely to be relevant to the Chancellor's decision on whether he would offer his consent to such a proposal before 2030. At the Budget in March, the government and UKSA launched a consultation to seek views on whether UKSA's proposal should be implemented at a date other than 2030, and, if so, when between 2025 and 2030.

The consultation closed for responses on 21 August. The government and UKSA will respond to the consultation in the autumn. As Economic Secretary to the Treasury, in July 2020 I chaired two roundtables comprising representatives of index-linked gilt holders to hear their views on the impact of the timing of reform. Further details of these meetings will be published as part of the response to the consultation.

**■ Small Businesses: Coronavirus****Holly Mumby-Croft:****[104225]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what support is available for small businesses owners instructed to self-isolate on numerous and separate occasions to prevent the spread of covid-19.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

The Government recognises that the necessary restrictions to protect public health have been disruptive for small business owners. Small business owners may be eligible for new style Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) if they are incapable of work, required to self-isolate according to Government guidance and have made sufficient national insurance contributions. We have made it easier for people to claim this support by removing the seven-day waiting period, meaning people can get support from day one.

Small business owners are also able to claim back from the Government the costs of up to two weeks of Covid-19 Statutory Sick Pay per employee, if their business has fewer than 250 employees. This rebate will pay for any Covid-19 related SSP, including if the owner is themselves employed by the company and has to self-isolate.

Small business owners who are self-employed have also benefitted from the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) Grant Extension. Through this scheme, self-employed individuals will be able to claim two grants, the first of which will cover the start of November until the end of January, and the second of which will

cover the start of February until the end of April. On 22 October, the Chancellor announced that we would be doubling the value of the grant for November to January from 20% to 40% of three-month trading profits. This will mean the maximum grant will increase from £1,875 to £3,750.

These measures are in addition to the Government's unprecedented package of support available for individuals and businesses, worth over £190bn. This includes measures to support businesses who are legally required to close, such as the expanded Jobs Support Scheme and a more generous Local Restrictions Support Grant.

As we head into the Winter, the Government is continuing to collect evidence on the impact of the pandemic. This will of course inform our efforts to support small business owners going forward.

#### ■ **Tobacco: Excise Duties**

**Owen Thompson:**

[\[103577\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will revise the definition of cigarillos so that they are in the same tax bracket as factory-made cigarettes after the end of transition period.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

While all taxes are kept under review, the Government has no current plans to redefine the classification of cigarillos or increase the duty to the same level as cigarettes.

### WORK AND PENSIONS

#### ■ **Children: Maintenance**

**John McNally:**

[\[106380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to paying parents who receive income from rental property being required to pay more in child maintenance payments as a result of changes in the calculation of their gross income, if she will make a make an assessment of (a) the equity of that policy, (b) the effect of those changes on the amount affected individuals are required to pay and (b) the effect on paying parents affected by those circumstances.

**Mims Davies:**

We believe that both parents have a financial responsibility to contribute towards the cost of bringing up their child. The calculation represents an amount of money that is broadly similar to the amount that a paying parent would spend on the child if they were still living with them.

Variations of a Child Maintenance calculation can be requested on grounds of unearned income; such as rental income from property or land, where the paying parent receives unearned income of at least £2,500 a year. This amount is then



included in the gross income figure used to calculate the amount of maintenance owed.

As landlords can claim tax relief for certain costs linked to their properties, the rental income used in the calculation is usually net of HMRC allowable expenses (i.e. mortgages, maintenance of the property, rent, ground rent and service charges).

The Service runs through broad rules set out in child support legislation. The statutory scheme aims to provide the best overall outcome and protect the welfare of all of its clients.

## ■ Disability: Coronavirus

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

**[106308]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the economic effect on disabled people of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

The Government is committed to supporting disabled people affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. We continue to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on disabled people using existing and new data sources.

The Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work has had discussions with charities, disabled people's organisations and individuals to understand the range of experiences disabled people have had during the COVID-19 pandemic and to identify the support needed as lockdown restrictions are eased.

We are ensuring that disabled people continue to have access to disability benefits, food, medicines, essentials, accessible communications, updated guidance, including workplace and transport related guidance, as well as financial and other support during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Government continues to provide disability employment support through initiatives such as Access to Work, Disability Confident, the Work and Health Programme, Intensive Personalised Employment Support, and other forms of support that disabled people need to retain, adapt and move into employment.

The Cabinet Office Disability Unit works with disability stakeholders and across Government Departments to ensure that the needs of disabled people are considered in the UK Government's response to COVID-19. We are clear that consideration of equality impacts must be integral in all key policy decisions. All equality and discrimination laws and obligations continue to apply during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We will publish the National Strategy for Disabled People taking into account the impacts of the pandemic on disabled people. The Strategy will focus on the issues that disabled people say affect them the most in all aspects and phases of life.

## ■ Housing: Discretionary Grants

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**

**[106448]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much in discretionary housing payments was allocated between March and July (a) 2020 and (b) 2019.

**Will Quince:**

Since 2013 the Department has requested that Local Authorities provide details of their use of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) funds. This monitoring information is collected twice yearly; in the middle and at the end of the financial year.

The returns are published on-line, and the information to the end of March 2020 is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-discretionary-housing-payments-financial-year-2019-to-2020/use-of-discretionary-housing-payments-analysis-of-end-of-year-returns-from-local-authorities-april-2019-to-march-2020>

DHPs for Scotland were devolved from 1 April 2017, information and statistics on the use of DHPs in Scotland are available here: [DHPs in Scotland](#)

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**

**[106449]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much in 2020-21 discretionary housing payments had been distributed nationally as of August 2020.

**Will Quince:**

We have provided £180m in Discretionary Housing Payment (DHPs) funding to Local Authorities (LAs) to support vulnerable claimants with housing costs in the private and social rented sector in England and Wales for 2020/21. This includes an extra £40m as announced last year at the spending round.

Each year the Department publishes the annual LA allocations; the current year allocations are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-subsidy-circulars-2020/s22020-2020-21-discretionary-housing-payments-government-contribution-for-english-and-welsh-local-authorities>

Since 2017 DHPs have been fully devolved in Scotland; the Scottish Government is responsible for informing Scottish LAs of their individual allocations.

## ■ Poverty: Children

**Jon Trickett:**

**[104040]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her policies of the finding by the End Child Poverty Campaign that eight out of the 10 local authorities in which child poverty increased between 2014 and 2019 are in the North of England.

**Will Quince:**

We have examined, from what has been published, Loughborough University's methodology for estimating housing costs by constituency. We are unable to assess how robust the method for modelling local housing costs is and we do not know the process used for calibrating the local measures with regional level statistics on child poverty from Households Below Average Income.

National Statistics on the number and percentage of children in low income are published annually in the "Households Below Average Income" publication. These remain the most accurate published measurements of low income. The latest HBAI statistics (2018/19) show that since 2009/10, 100,000 children have been lifted out of absolute poverty (both before and after housing costs) and levels of combined material deprivation and low income for children are at their joint lowest level.

**■ Sick Pay: Social Workers****Caroline Lucas:**[\[106311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make it her policy to provide social care workers with full sick pay; what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on providing full sick pay for social care workers; and if she will make a statement.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

We want to ensure that social care workers who are unwell or self-isolating because of Covid-19 do not lose out financially because they are doing the right thing. In May, we announced an Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund, to be used on measures such as helping maintain the normal wages of social care staff who may need to self-isolate. This has now been extended until March 2021, meaning we have now ring-fenced over £1.1bn to support social care providers.

The Infection Control Fund and Test and Trace Support Payment are available to staff who are off work due to illnesses or self-isolation relating to coronavirus. This is on top of measures that allow the payment of Statutory Sick Pay from the first qualifying day of sickness or self-isolation.

For other sickness absences not relating to coronavirus, employees may be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay, which is paid from the fourth qualifying day. Eligibility conditions apply.

**■ Social Security Benefits: Terminal Illnesses****Carla Lockhart:**[\[107136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when her Department plans to publish its review of how the welfare system supports terminally ill people; and for what reason that review has not yet been published.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

The Department is committed to delivering an improved system for claimants that are nearing the end of their lives and is working at pace across government to bring forward proposals.

In July 2019, the Secretary of State announced an in-depth evaluation of how the benefits system supports people nearing the end of their life. The evaluation included 3 strands of research:

- hearing directly from claimants and charities about their first-hand experiences;
- considering international evidence to find out what works in other nations and the support they provide; and
- reviewing current DWP performance to better understand how our Special Rules for Terminal Illness process operates and performs.

**■ Universal Credit: Self-employed****Stephen Timms:**[\[106212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of universal credit claimants were self-employed in the last period for which data is available.

**Bob Seely:**[\[106488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of universal credit claimants were categorised as self-employed in the latest period for which that data is available.

**Mims Davies:**

In August 2020, the number of self-employed people claiming Universal Credit and required to report self-employed income, stood at 746,000.

This represented 13.4% of all people claiming Universal Credit.

Notes:

Volumes are rounded to the nearest thousand

**Stephen Timms:**[\[106213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many universal credit claimants will be subject to the minimum income floor when its suspension ends on 12 November 2020.

**Bob Seely:**[\[106489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of universal credit claimants who will be subject to the minimum income floor when the relaxation ends on that threshold on 13 November 2020.

**Mims Davies:**

The Information requested on the minimum income floor is not available.

■ **Universal Credit: Wakefield****Imran Ahmad Khan:**[\[105606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people from Wakefield constituency applied for universal credit in the (a) 2019-20 financial year and (b) 2020-21 financial year to date.

**Will Quince:**

In the 2019-20 financial year, 6,940 claims to Universal Credit were made in the Wakefield constituency.

In the 2020-21 financial year (up to 31st August 2020), 3,500 Universal Credit claims were made in the Wakefield constituency

Notes:

Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 cases.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Extension of decision deadline on Wylfa Newydd nuclear power station

**Minister of State (Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth) (Kwasi Kwarteng):**

[\[HCWS537\]](#)

This statement concerns an application made by Horizon Nuclear Power Limited under the Planning Act 2008 for development consent for the construction and operation of a new nuclear power station and associated infrastructure at Wylfa Head on the Isle of Anglesey.

Under section 107(1) of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State must make a decision on an application within three months of receipt of the Examining Authority's report unless exercising the power under section 107(3) to set a new deadline. Where a new deadline is set, the Secretary of State must make a Statement to Parliament to announce it. The Secretary of State had previously reset the deadline for the application for the Wylfa Newydd Nuclear Power Station to 30 September 2020.

Following the announcement that its ultimate parent company, Hitachi Ltd., was ending business operations in respect of the Wylfa Newydd Nuclear Power Station, Horizon Nuclear Power Wylfa Limited wrote to the Secretary of State requesting that he reset the deadline for his decision on the application until 31 December 2020 so that it could ascertain its options for the project.

The Secretary of State has agreed to that request and has therefore set a new deadline for deciding the application of 31 December 2020. The decision to set the new deadline for the application is without prejudice to the Secretary of State's decision on whether to grant or refuse development consent.

### EDUCATION

#### ■ Qualification reform

**The Secretary of State for Education (Gavin Williamson):**

[\[HCWS538\]](#)

Today, I am pleased to launch the next stage of the review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below in England. The review is an opportunity to develop a qualifications system where every student, including those with SEND and from disadvantaged backgrounds, benefits from high quality qualifications that help them realise their talents and achieve their career ambitions. This is vital to addressing our country's productivity and skills gaps and achieving the international competitiveness on which our future prosperity depends. The proposals I am setting out today complement important technical education improvements already underway through T Levels, apprenticeships and to higher levels of technical study.

The proposals follow a first stage consultation which was carried out in 2019 and are open for consultation until 15 January 2021.

The case for reform is strong. There are more than 12,000 different qualifications funded in England at level 3 and below. Some of the qualifications are well recognised and valued, but as the Wolf Review and Sainsbury Review identified, too many are poorly understood and poor quality. Students face a bewildering choice over which is right for them and which will increase their employment opportunities. Our aim is for clearer qualifications choices for young people and adults. We want students and employers to have confidence that every qualification on offer is high quality and can lead to skilled employment or further study.

We believe that T Levels and A Levels should become the programmes of choice at level 3. T Levels have been developed with employers to give young people the skills they need to enter employment or higher technical study, and A levels have consistently prepared students well for higher education.

This consultation focusses on level 3. It sets out proposals for the qualifications we believe are needed alongside T Levels and A levels for 16 to 19 year olds and adults, and how to ensure they meet the consistently high levels of quality that are needed to support all students to fulfil their potential and provide the skills and knowledge employers and higher education institutions need. The consultation sets out detailed proposals to streamline the technical offer for 16 to 19 year olds alongside T Levels to ensure that as many young people as possible can benefit from the preparation T Levels will provide. For young people choosing academic qualifications, we want only those qualifications that give the best preparation to progress onto, and successfully complete, high quality HE courses.

The new Lifetime Skills Guarantee announced by the Prime Minister will fund level 3 technical courses for adults. We must ensure qualifications give adults the skills the country needs, so they are able to gain employment or to progress in the workplace. Adults will generally need greater flexibility than 16 to 19 year olds and will also tend to have greater prior experience. Our starting point for adults is a similar offer as for 16 to 19 year olds, but with some additional technical qualifications to meet their needs and more flexibility built in to the design of qualifications for adults.

We propose Ofqual and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education should have a key role in ensuring and maintaining quality. And we want to put employers at the heart of this process by aligning the majority of qualifications to employer-led standards.

Alongside these proposals for level 3 qualifications, we want to improve study at level 2 and below. Getting level 2 and below right is key to making sure that students have clear lines of sight to level 3, apprenticeships, traineeships, and for some, directly into employment. We want to know more about what is working well in the current system and what more needs to be done to support all students to succeed. That is why we will shortly be publishing a call for evidence on level 2 and below.

This review is a once in a generation opportunity to develop a qualifications system where every student can benefit. Our proposed landscape – with employers at the heart



and a much greater focus on quality – will serve all students better, including those with SEND and from disadvantaged backgrounds.

I look forward to continued engagement with the sector on these reforms. I will set out our firm plans and the next steps for implementation of our level 3 reforms in response to this consultation; and we intend to follow the call for evidence with a consultation on level 2 and below next year.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ CONTINGENCIES FUND ADVANCE

**Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (George Eustice):**  
[\[HCWS540\]](#)

Defra has sought a repayable cash advance from the Contingencies Fund of £536,000.

The requirement has arisen because there is an urgent requirement to proceed with setting up the Office for Environmental Protection in advance of Royal Assent of the Environment Bill.

Under Managing Public Money rules, expenditure to make preparation for the delivery of a new service prior to Royal Assent requires an advance from the Contingencies Fund. The cash advance will pay for essential set up expenditure for IT, corporate services, estates, finance, recruitment and other HR costs that are needed for establishing for the Office of Environmental Protection. The need to spend now in advance of Royal Assent is driven by the necessary timelines associated with recruitment, procurement and set up which are expected to take several months. This will ensure that the Office for Environmental Protection can be brought into operation and begin exercising its statutory functions as soon as practical after Royal Assent of the Environment Bill.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £536,000 for this new service will be sought in an Estimate for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £536,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

This contingencies fund advance is in addition to the £215,000 notified to Parliament on 21 July 2020 to cover essential spend including public appointments and minimal staff recruitment.

### ■ UK priorities and objectives for 2020 annual fisheries negotiations

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Farming, Fisheries and Food)**  
**(Victoria Prentis):** [\[HCWS541\]](#)

The UK is now entering into a period of annual fisheries negotiations to agree fishing opportunities and access to waters for the 2021 fishing year. We will be doing that as an independent coastal state for the first time in over 40 years. It is an important milestone as we leave the Common Fisheries Policy, and one which warrants this update to the House.

Our aim across all annual fisheries negotiations will be to work closely with our counterparts in the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish governments to secure the best outcomes for the whole of the UK fishing industry and for our marine environment.

We will be participating in a range of annual fisheries negotiations. The UK will be taking its seat at the coastal states negotiations for key pelagic species; participating in multilateral organisations like the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), which we have already joined along with the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO), the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), and conducting our own bilateral negotiations to set 2021 opportunities and agree access to waters for next year with partners like Norway, the Faroe Islands, and the EU.

With Norway and the Faroe Islands, we have already agreed new fisheries frameworks to underpin bilateral negotiations and the former has already been signed and laid before the House. We are seeking to negotiate a fisheries framework agreement with the EU. This is proving a difficult negotiation and the UK and EU positions are very far apart, principally because the EU has not yet accepted the implications of our future status as an independent coastal state. Negotiations are continuing and updates will be shared with the House as available.

In all fisheries negotiations we will ensure that our actions are founded on the best available scientific advice. We will aim to deliver sustainability improvements—safeguarding our natural marine assets for future generations. Our landmark Fisheries Bill enshrines in legislation the Government's commitment to sustainable fishing, and it is right that we make this a cornerstone of our negotiating positions.

Through the negotiations we will look to support our vital UK fishing industry, not only through securing additional quotas but also by continuing to support the elimination of illegal and harmful discarding. Again, our UK-wide approach will ensure we consider the needs of the fishing industries of all devolved nations, and the Crown Dependencies, in negotiations.

Finally, and underpinning all our negotiations, we will be seeking to maximise the benefits of our new status as an independent coastal State. We will decide who can access UK waters to fish and on what terms; and we will negotiate access for UK fleets to fish in other countries' waters on terms that suit us. Through friendly cooperation as sovereign equals, we will improve management of shared fish stocks with benefits for the wider marine environment and the long-term future of the UK fishing industry.

## FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

### ■ Citizens' Rights: Update on Implementing the Withdrawal Agreement

**Minister for European Neighbourhood and the Americas (Wendy Morton):**  
[\[HCWS542\]](#)

The Withdrawal Agreement provides citizens with the certainty they need about their rights now that the UK has left the EU. It protects the rights of EU citizens in the UK, UK

nationals in the EU and their family members who are lawfully resident by the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020. It ensures they can continue to live, work, study and access benefits and services, such as healthcare, broadly as they do now. The Government remains committed to ensuring the correct and timely implementation of the Citizens' Rights part of the Withdrawal Agreement in the UK and continues to work with EU Member States to ensure they undertake the same implementation for UK nationals. We also have similar citizens' rights agreements with the EEA EFTA States and Switzerland

#### *Implementation for EU citizens in the UK*

In the UK, EU citizens and their family members with both settled and pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme have secured their rights in UK law. The EU Settlement Scheme is a success and as of 30 September 2020, over 4 million applications have been received, of which nearly 3.8 million grants of status have already been made. The Government has taken early action to protect the rights of EU citizens in the UK and there is plenty of time left to apply before the deadline of 30 June 2021. A Frontier Workers' Permit Scheme is also being established with an opening date due to be announced shortly.

Work to operationalise the provisions relating to social security coordination, are also advanced. Operational guidance will also be published to aid frontline staff in determining entitlements to benefits and healthcare in scope of the social security coordination provisions in the Withdrawal Agreement.

The Government is also on track to establish the Independent Monitoring Authority for the citizens rights' agreements that will monitor the UK's compliance with the Citizens' Rights part of the Withdrawal Agreement and EEA EFTA Separation Agreement in the UK and Gibraltar. Information on its functions have recently been published on gov.uk.

#### *Implementation for UK nationals in the EU*

The Government has been working closely with EU Member States on implementation for UK nationals in the EU throughout the transition period. The Specialised Committee on Citizens' Rights has already met three times to monitor the implementation and application of the Citizens' Rights part of the Withdrawal Agreement in both the UK and the EU. Joint statements from each of these meetings have been published on gov.uk.

The EU Settlement Scheme in the UK has been fully open since 30 March 2019. Throughout the transition period, we have sought application windows, beyond the minimum six-month window, in the thirteen Member States that will require UK nationals and their family members to apply for a new residence status. The Government is pleased to announce that all thirteen Member States have responded positively and UK nationals and will have at least eight months to apply and significantly longer in some Member States. Full details can be found on the 'Living in Guides' on gov.uk.

The remaining fourteen Member States will operate a declaratory system, whereby rights under the Withdrawal Agreement are conferred automatically by operation of the law, for individuals that meet the conditions of the Withdrawal Agreement. As is already the case,

UK nationals should ensure they are correctly registered in their Member State of residence.

The Government will publish a full list of Member State frontier worker systems on gov.uk before the end of the transition period.

The Government continues to work with the EU on clear and consistent communications and comprehensive support for the vulnerable. We are reaching out directly to UK nationals in the EU through our network of Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates at town hall events and online to ensure all UK nationals and their family members are aware of any actions they may need to take in the Member State where they have made their home.. Our 'Living in Guides' on gov.uk, which cover the EU and EFTA States, are the principal source of guidance for UK nationals in the EU, including their rights under the Withdrawal Agreement and EEA EFTA Separation Agreement. They provide the latest information and actions that UK nationals may need to take and signpost to Member State and EU guidance where relevant.

#### *Readiness for the end of the transition period*

Looking to the end of the transition period and beyond, the Government published an "explainer" on gov.uk on 19 October 2020 to help EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU understand their rights and how they are protected by the Withdrawal Agreement.

The Government is also pleased to confirm that a Joint Report on Residency, produced by the Specialised Committee on Citizens' Rights has, today, been published on gov.uk and placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The Joint Report provides comprehensive details of residency systems in the UK and the EU, including details of application deadlines and the number of EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU who have secured their rights. It is the Government's intention to publish updates to the Joint Report throughout 2021 in order to provide additional assurance that citizens' rights are being upheld.

The Government will continue to work closely with the EU and Member States to ensure that citizens' rights are protected and individuals are aware of any steps they may need to take to secure their rights and access the entitlements that flow from those rights in the future. Further details on the progress of implementing the Citizens' Rights part of the Withdrawal Agreement will be made available to Parliament.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ **Signing of the UK-Japan Free Trade Agreement**

**Secretary of State (Elizabeth Truss):**

**[[HCWS536](#)]**

Today Japan's Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu and I are signing the UK-Japan Partnership Agreement in Tokyo. This is the first trade deal that the UK has struck as an independent trading nation.

This British shaped deal goes beyond the existing EU agreement with major wins for all parts of the UK in areas such as digital and data, financial services, food and drink and creative industries. This deal could boost trade between the UK and Japan by £15.7 billion and drive economic growth in the long run.

The agreement also includes a strong commitment from Japan to support the UK joining the Comprehensive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) meaning closer ties with 11 Pacific countries in one of the world's biggest free trade areas, covering 13% of the global economy in 2018 and more than £110bn of trade in 2019.

The Government is committed to transparency and the effective scrutiny of our trade negotiations. Following my Written Ministerial Statement of 12 October, I can announce that at the earliest possible opportunity today the Department for International Trade and the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office will be formally presenting the signed treaty text and related documents electronically to Parliament. They will subsequently be published on GOV.UK.

The documents being laid in Parliament today are the UK-Japan Partnership Agreement treaty text, Explanatory Memorandum and Parliamentary Report, which provides an explanation of the Partnership Agreement, including any significant differences or enhancements from the EU-Japan Agreement. An independently verified impact assessment of the UK-Japan Partnership Agreement, will also be deposited in the House Library.

While the Government is formally laying the treaty text electronically in Parliament today, the Constitutional Reform and Governance (CRAg) Act scrutiny procedure will not commence until 2 November, when the House of Commons returns from recess. Laying today ahead of the commencement of CRAg ensures that the House has the maximum amount of time to scrutinise the detail of the UK-Japan Partnership Agreement.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ 2022 Commonwealth Games: Games Transport Plan

**Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps):**

**[\[HCWS539\]](#)**

The 2022 Commonwealth Games, held in Birmingham, will be the biggest sporting and cultural event that the city and the region have ever seen. With an estimated television audience of 1.5 billion people, it will showcase Birmingham, the West Midlands and the entire country as an amazing place to live, work, study, visit and do business.

Effective transport helps local communities and supports local economies. We are investing in transport across the region including over £320m of Transforming Cities Fund funding to support local transport projects in the West Midlands.

We know that putting in place effective transport provision is a crucial part of any major sporting event and requires detailed planning and coordination. A well understood and supported Transport Plan is therefore essential.

The Birmingham Commonwealth Games Act 2020 (the “Act”), which received Royal Assent on 25<sup>th</sup> June, includes a number of transport measures and places the Games Transport Plan on a statutory footing, awarding it appropriate weight and authority.

Today, I am delighted to inform the House that, in line with s.25(1) of the Act, I have directed the West Midlands Combined Authority to prepare a Games Transport Plan for the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The Games will be delivered in a much shorter time than other Games: in just four and a half years, rather than the typical seven. Local partners in Birmingham and the West Midlands are already leading the transport preparations for the Games.

The Games Transport Plan is an integral measure, which will set out a strategic approach to planning and coordination of transport to support the Games; covering the transportation of spectators, athletes and the Games Family, whilst at the same time ensuring that any disruption to transport users is kept to a minimum.

When complete a copy of the final Games Transport Plan will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.