



Daily Report

Thursday, 19 November 2020

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 19 November 2020 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:43 P.M., 19 November 2020). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Bounce Back Loan Scheme

Dan Jarvis:

[115672]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions his Department has had with Bounce Back Loan Scheme lenders on access to credit for businesses that have business accounts with other lenders.

Paul Scully:

The Bounce Back Loan Scheme, launched in May 2020, has been introduced to help smaller businesses impacted by coronavirus (COVID-19). It is available through a range of British Business Bank accredited lenders and partners listed on the British Business Bank website: www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-schemes/bounce-back-loans/current-accredited-lenders-and-partners/

In the first instance and where possible, businesses should approach a Bounce Back Loan Scheme accredited provider with whom they have an existing relationship. They may also consider approaching other Scheme accredited providers if they are unable to access the finance they need or if their existing provider is not accredited to provide loans under the Scheme.

The Bounce Back Loan Scheme does not mandate that the applicant must have a business relationship with the lender in order to receive a loan. However, certain lenders may require that you enter into a business relationship with them before you can apply and, within their standard policies and terms and conditions of business, some lenders may not permit an existing customer to operate their business via a personal account.

All lending decisions remain solely at the discretion of the lender.

■ Bounce Back Loan Scheme and Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

Sir Charles Walker:

[115516]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has to review the adequacy of the underwriting and risk processes required in advance of an offer being made of a loan under the (a) Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme Loan and (b) Bounce Back Loan Scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Paul Scully:

The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs) are delegated schemes; meaning the decision to lend to a prospective borrower remains at the discretion of the lender. The rules of the

schemes are overseen by the Government in conjunction with the British Business Bank.

CBILS is operated on the same basis as fully commercial loans, with lenders conducting the full range of checks they would usually make, subject to the specific eligibility requirements of the scheme. As part of the BBLs application process lenders undertake fraud checks, including Know Your Customer and Anti Money Laundering checks as required. Lenders do not undertake credit checks for BBLs applications and rely on the information provided by the borrower as part of the application. We continue to review the schemes to consider whether further measures can be introduced to reduce the risk of fraud.

The British Business Bank audits accredited lenders against their compliance with the scheme rules and can take action where lenders are not following the appropriate processes.

■ Climate Change Convention

Andrea Leadsom:

[\[115641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 12 November 2020 to Question 113087, what recent assessment he has made of the timeframe for the confirmation of the final budgets for COP26.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

Budget discussions are ongoing, and will continue to develop in the run up to COP26.

■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Hilary Benn:

[\[115852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether a person who has been informed by letter that they are clinically extremely vulnerable and should not go to work can be put on the new Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Paul Scully:

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) continues to support businesses and individuals throughout the UK. Where employees are deemed to be clinically extremely vulnerable, they can be furloughed through the CJRS. As with the previous scheme, it is up to employers to decide whether to furlough these employees.

■ Coronavirus: Northern Ireland

Colum Eastwood:

[\[115846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what additional financial assistance will be provided to the Northern Ireland Executive for the purchase of covid-19 vaccines.

Amanda Solloway:

The UK government has secured early access to 355 million vaccines doses through agreements with seven separate vaccine developers, which have been purchased for the whole of the UK.

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination**Munira Wilson:**[\[115828\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the cost per unit is of the Pfizer covid-19 vaccine to the UK.

Amanda Solloway:

At present we are not able to disclose details of this agreement because of the commercially confidential nature of the contracts between the Government and vaccine manufacturers while commercial negotiations are ongoing.

■ Employment**Andy McDonald:**[\[115683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the Government plans to bring forward an employment Bill.

Paul Scully:

In the Queens' Speech, we announced we will bring forward measures to deliver on a range of Manifesto commitments.

Our legislation will make workplaces fairer, by providing better support for working families and by encouraging flexible working.

We will deliver on our commitment to balance the needs of both employers and workers to ensure we have an employment framework that is fit for purpose for the 21st century.

It is important that we work closely with stakeholders to make sure we get the legislation right, and we will bring forward details of the Employment Bill in due course.

Andy McDonald:[\[115684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the Government plans to bring forward an employment Bill.

Paul Scully:

In the Queens' Speech, we announced we will bring forward measures to deliver on a range of Manifesto commitments.

Our legislation will make workplaces fairer, by providing better support for working families and by encouraging flexible working.

We will deliver on our commitment to balance the needs of both employers and workers to ensure we have an employment framework that is fit for purpose for the 21st century.

It is important that we work closely with stakeholders to make sure we get the legislation right, and we will bring forward details of the Employment Bill in due course.

■ Employment: Environment Protection

Sarah Olney:

[\[115757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answers of 7 September 2020 to Question 82123 and of 10 November 2020 to Question 908549, for what reason the estimate of the number of jobs that that funding could support was 140,000 in September and 80,000 in November.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The answer provided on 7 September 2020 to Question 82123 was for the expected number of jobs created by over £3 billion of investment in the green recovery, as announced by my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer on 8 July. This included the £2 billion Green Homes Grant Scheme, £1 billion to improve the efficiency of public sector buildings, alongside a £50 million fund to pilot the right approach to decarbonise social housing.

The answer provided on the 10 November 2020 to Question 908459 was for the expected number of jobs created through the £1.5 billion Green Homes Grant Voucher scheme.

■ Employment: Pregnancy

Owen Thompson:

[\[115730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it a legal requirement for employers to allow all pregnant women who pass (a) 20 weeks or (b) 28 weeks gestation to work from home or be suspended on full pay during the covid-19 outbreak.

Owen Thompson:

[\[115733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on bringing forward legislative proposals to require employers to allow pregnant women who pass (a) 20 weeks or (b) 28 weeks gestation to work from home or be suspended on full pay.

Paul Scully:

Ministers and officials regularly discuss a wide range of issues relating to Coronavirus and employment rights. Existing legislation and public health guidance covering the health and safety of pregnant women in the workplace puts in place protections to cover the risks pregnant women may face during the Coronavirus outbreak. The Department of Health and Social Care is also working with the Health and Safety Executive, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Royal College of Midwives and health departments in the devolved nations on developing guidance on occupational health advice for pregnant women in the workplace. The Department plans to publish the guidance shortly.

Under current public health guidance, pregnant women are in the clinically vulnerable group. This means that they are advised to work from home where it is possible to do so. Where working from home is not possible, pregnant women can attend a place of work provided this is supported by the employer's health and safety risk assessment and particular attention is paid to social distancing guidelines. Guidance on working safely can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>.

A small number of pregnant women are considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable. Current guidance strongly advises that clinically extremely vulnerable individuals work from home. Where this is not possible they are advised not to attend work for this period of restrictions. The guidance makes clear that pregnant women who are clinically extremely vulnerable and cannot work from home should be suspended on full pay. This is in line with normal requirements under regulation 16(3) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. This guidance can be found here: https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/protect-people.htm?utm_source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=coronavirus&utm_term=more-2&utm_content=digest-10-jul-20#pregnant_workers.

■ Energy: Waste

Catherine West:

[115747]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of including energy from waste incineration emissions in the UK's net-zero plans.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The UK's climate change framework enables the Government to determine how best to balance emissions reductions across the economy. Emissions are managed within the Government's overall strategy for meeting carbon budgets and the 2050 net zero target, as part of an economy-wide transition.

The UK follows the agreed international approach for estimating and reporting greenhouse gas emissions under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, which is for countries to report the emissions produced within their territories.

The Climate Change Act defines UK emissions as being those of greenhouse gases from sources within the UK, i.e. consistent with international reporting practice.

Therefore all emissions from UK sources, including those produced in energy production through waste incineration, are accounted for.

■ Energy: White Papers

Andrea Leadsom:

[115639]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish the energy White Paper.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Energy White Paper is a priority for the Department and it will be published this Autumn.

Flexible Working**Andrea Leadsom:**[\[115640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has in the forthcoming employment bill to include flexible working as standard; and what assessment he has made of the potential effect on that matter on levels of work life balance.

Paul Scully:

In the Queen's Speech, we announced that we will bring forward measures to deliver on a range of Manifesto commitments.

Our legislation will promote fairness in the workplace by striking the right balance between the flexibility that the economy needs and the security that workers deserve. In our manifesto, we committed to encouraging flexible working and consulting on making it the default unless employers have good reasons not to.

It is important that we work closely with stakeholders to make sure we get the legislation right, and we will bring forward details of the Employment Bill in due course.

The Government is clear about the benefits of flexible working for employees wishing to balance their working lives with their personal lives. Since 2014, all employees with 26 weeks' continuous service have had the Right to Request Flexible Working. We are currently evaluating how effective those regulations have been.

Housing: Heating**Sarah Olney:**[\[115755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of the time required to fully train each apprentice installer of domestic heat pumps.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is working closely with industry, the Department for Education the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, to ensure that there are clear routes for new entrants to join the heat pump installation market, through higher education including apprenticeships.

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education estimates that the typical duration of an apprenticeship to become a Plumbing and Domestic Heating Technician is 48 months.

■ Motor Vehicles: Manufacturing Industries

Hilary Benn:

[\[115483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the UK car industry of tariffs in the event that no agreement is reached in the current negotiations between the UK and the EU on the future relationship.

Nadhim Zahawi:

We are confident that we can reach a deal and will continue to work hard to reach an agreement with the EU for as long as there is a constructive process ongoing. The Political Declaration sets out our ambition for a zero tariff and zero quota Free Trade Agreement; reducing the costs and processes associated with trade is in the interests of people and businesses across the UK and the EU.

Extensive engagement has been taking place between the Government and the automotive sector on future trade negotiations. We shall continue to work with companies over the next few months to ensure that they are well prepared for the end of the transition period.

In addition, the Government has a long-standing programme of support to maintain the competitiveness of the UK's automotive sector.

■ Nuclear Power

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[115593\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 9 November to Question 110779, whether his Department has held discussions since 2016 with the Ministry of Defence on ways to develop (a) skills and (b) capacities for nuclear submarines through exploring potential synergies with civil nuclear programmes.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Department has had no discussions since 2016 with the Ministry of Defence on the Government's action to develop skills and capacities for nuclear submarines through exploring potential synergies with civil nuclear programmes.

There is an industry-led Nuclear Skills Strategy Group, of which the Department, as well as the Ministry of Defence and the Department of Education, are members. This group considers skills challenges and opportunities for the wider industry and its supply chain organisations.

■ Nuclear Power: Skilled Workers

Jonathan Edwards:

[\[115592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions his Department has held with HM Treasury on the potential merits of coordinating the development of key skills required for (a) civil and (b) military nuclear programmes in order to reduce the cost of that skills development to the public purse.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Department has not had any recent discussions with HM Treasury on the potential merits of coordinating the development of key skills required for civil and military nuclear programmes.

■ **Nuclear Reactors****Jonathan Edwards:**[\[115594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 9 November to Question 110780, whether his Department has held discussions with the (a) manufacturers and (b) developers of small modular nuclear reactors (SMRs) on developing the industrial synergies between SMRs and submarine propulsion nuclear reactors.

Nadhim Zahawi:

I refer the Hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 9 November 2020 to Question [110780](#).

■ **Personal Care Services: Coronavirus****Judith Cummins:**[\[115697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether hair, beauty, spa and wellness salons, barbershops and mobile services are classified as (a) non-essential retail, (b) hospitality or (c) personal care in relation to covid-19 restrictions.

Paul Scully:

According to Cabinet Office's [guide](#) for the new national restrictions, they are classed as personal care services. As their guide states, the Government cannot provide comments on individual cases of whether or not a business is permitted to open. It is for each business to assess whether they are a business required to close having considered the guidance and Regulations.

Judith Cummins:[\[115698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the levels of covid-19 transmission in (a) hair, (b) beauty and (c) spa and wellness services.

Paul Scully:

The UK is currently experiencing a public health emergency as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is critical that employers, employees, the self-employed and clients take steps to keep everyone safe.

Incidence rates are growing and the NHS is under increasing pressure. From 5th November to 2nd December, non-essential retail and stores must close including close contact services such as hair, beauty, spa and wellness services. At the end of the period, we will look to return to a local and regional approach, based on the latest data.

Judith Cummins:

[115700]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the disproportionate effect of the extended closure of hair, beauty, spa and wellness services during the covid-19 outbreak on women working in that sector.

Paul Scully:

Our [guidance](#) for the sector has a specific section, 3.3., covering equality in the workplace.

Cabinet Office [guidance](#) behind the new national restrictions has been brought because Government assessed that we had to take action immediately to protect the NHS and to get R decisively below 1.

The Government has, however, enabled click and collected services, as well as training and education ([see guide](#)) to enable COVID-secure businesses in this sector to operate where possible.

■ **Retail Trade: Coronavirus**

Dan Jarvis:

[115673]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what criteria were used to define essential retail in relation to the guidance issued on the additional public health restrictions which came into force on 5 November 2020 in England.

Paul Scully:

The decision to close non-essential retail is part of a wider package of measures to make clear that people should stay at home except for a limited set of exemptions – allowing non-essential retail to remain open would run contrary to that aim. These restrictions have been brought in because we have to limit social contact.

All shops can continue to offer home delivery and click and collect services to customers.

■ **Vaccine Taskforce**

Sarah Owen:

[115829]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, on which dates the Vaccine Taskforce has met since March 2020.

Amanda Solloway:

The Vaccine Taskforce is a unit within the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy consisting of around 200 staff. The steering group of the Vaccines Taskforce meets virtually 3 times weekly. This has been the case since May 2020.

Sarah Owen:

[115830]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will publish the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Vaccine Taskforce.

Amanda Solloway:

The Vaccine Taskforce is a unit within the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy consisting of around 200 staff. The Department would not usually publish minutes of individual internal meetings that are deemed commercially sensitive and whilst Government policy is being developed.

CABINET OFFICE■ **Cabinet Office: Senior Civil Servants****Christian Matheson:**[\[114223\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to his Answer of 3 November 2020 to Question 102103, what mechanism was used to invite expressions of interest for the vacant position of Cabinet Secretary.

Julia Lopez:

I refer the hon. member to the answer given to [PQ111564](#), I have nothing further to add.

■ **Cemeteries: Coronavirus****Mr Clive Betts:**[\[115473\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of allowing cemeteries to remain accessible during the November 2020 covid-19 lockdown to provide connecting footpaths for recreational walking in (a) inner city areas where no alternative is available and (b) other areas.

Penny Mordaunt:

On 5 November, the Government acted swiftly in accordance with growing evidence of virus prevalence to put in place new national COVID-19 restrictions in England. Under these new restrictions, crematoria and burial grounds remain open only for the fundamental purpose of carrying out a funeral or burial; a commemorative event to celebrate the life of someone who has died; or to pay respects to someone who has died. Limiting the use of crematoria and burial grounds allows the bereaved to mourn appropriately while minimising the spread of the virus, and many other outdoor public places remain open for exercise.

From 2 December, we will return to a regional approach and any guidance, including the use of crematoria and burial grounds, will be updated depending on the Local COVID alert level of the area in which you live. For further information on COVID-19 restrictions, please see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>. Please also refer to the [Safer Public Places](#) which provides advice on the safe use of outdoor public spaces.

■ Clothing: Retail Trade

Mr Kevan Jones:

[115502]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government plans to designate the sale of baby clothes as essential retail during the covid-19 outbreak.

Penny Mordaunt:

On 5 November, the Government acted swiftly in accordance with growing evidence of virus prevalence to put in place new national COVID-19 restrictions in England. Guidance on the closing of certain businesses and venues in England is available on the [Government website](#). As stated in the guidance, businesses may continue offering delivery and click-and-collect services (where items are pre-ordered and collected without entering the premises).

■ Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and Prosperity Fund

Sarah Champion:

[115682]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, when his Department plans to publish the 2019-20 annual reports for the (a) Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and (b) Prosperity Fund.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Prosperity Fund Annual Report was published on 5 November 2020 and can be found online. The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) Annual Report was delayed as a result of COVID-19 but will be published in due course.

■ Coronavirus: Information

Barbara Keeley:

[115573]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will take steps to produce comprehensive covid-19 guidance in (a) easy read, (b) BSL videos and (c) other accessible formats.

Barbara Keeley:

[115574]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he is taking to ensure that British Sign Language users without internet access are aware of covid-19 guidance.

Barbara Keeley:

[115575]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the compliance of covid-19 guidance with accessible information standards.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to PQ [107140](#) on 21 October 2020.

It is vital public health information in this pandemic is accessible to all. Covid-19 guidance is provided in alternative formats including Easy Read, British Sign

Language and Audio. Covid-19 press briefings with BSL are published on the 10 Downing Street and UK Government social media channels. The BBC News Channel has live signing for the briefings and has been made available across the UK via Freeview, cable, satellite and online.

We have also used publicly held contact details to communicate with those who may need support, and our on the ground teams have directly spoken to local residents. The Government Digital Service has published detailed accessibility standards and guidelines to help departmental channel owners improve content. We will continue to review this and all Covid-19 communication through regular feedback sessions with disability charities.

■ Government Departments: Internet

Chi Onwurah:

[115654]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 3 November to Question 106998 on Government Departments: Internet, whether the Cabinet Office seeks to achieve diversity of supply of Government (a) hosting and (b) cloud services.

Julia Lopez:

The Cabinet Office seeks to ensure that government organisations choose the right technology to meet their diverse hosting and cloud technology needs. Departments are required to follow the Technology Code of Practice when choosing a cloud provider. Public sector organisations can use the Digital Marketplace frameworks to purchase cloud services, hosting technology and support from a wide range of suppliers including many small and medium enterprises.

■ Infrastructure

Sir Bernard Jenkin:

[114043]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what machinery of government is responsible for identifying what constitutes the UK's critical national infrastructure; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Government defines the UK's Critical National Infrastructure as the critical elements of infrastructure (facilities, systems, sites, property, information, people, networks and processes), the loss or compromise of which would result in major detrimental impact on the availability, delivery or integrity of essential services, leading to severe economic or social consequences or loss of life.

The Government has designated 13 sectors as critical to the daily functioning of the UK. Each sector has a lead government department responsible for the resilience and security of their sectors and for designating the critical elements of infrastructure. The elements of the national infrastructure designated as critical are reviewed periodically. The Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) in the Cabinet Office has a

coordination and assurance role across all sectors and oversees the Government's infrastructure security and resilience objectives.

■ **Slavery: Monuments**

Helen Hayes:

[102888]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the erection of a memorial to the victims of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery.

Julia Lopez:

May I apologise for the delay in answering this question. The UK deplores the human suffering caused by slavery and the slave trade. They are among the most dishonourable and abhorrent chapters in the history of humanity.

Public and private organisations are able to propose, fund, develop and deliver memorials marking incidents and historical moments.

■ **UK Relations With EU**

Angus Brendan MacNeil:

[115535]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, what contingency plans he has with respect to the UK's future relationship with the EU in the event of lorries queuing to cross the Channel after the transition period.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the hon. Member to the [oral statement](#) made by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on 23 September about the Reasonable Worst Case Scenario planning assumptions which were published to support these planning activities.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

■ **Archbishops: Administration of Justice**

Conor McGinn:

[115722]

To ask the hon. Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the appeals process against consistory court decisions to the Provincial Court of the Archbishop.

Andrew Selous:

It is possible to appeal the decision of a consistory court to the provincial court of the Archbishop, with the permission of the consistory court or of the appeal court, provided that the appeal does not relate to a question of doctrine, ritual or ceremonial. The Provincial Courts of Canterbury and York are known by the names 'The Court of Arches' and 'The Chancery Court of York'.

As in a temporal court the test for whether to grant permission to appeal is the same, i.e. whether the appeal has a real prospect of success or there is some other compelling reason why the appeal should be heard.

■ Cemeteries: Irish Language**Conor McGinn:**[\[115721\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what the Church of England's policy is on the use of the Irish language (a) in its services and (b) as inscriptions or engravings on (i) headstones or (ii) other objects on Church property.

Andrew Selous:

There are legal proceedings currently underway on this matter and due to the House of Commons Sub Judice Resolution the Church Commissioners are unable to provide an answer at this time.

■ Cemeteries: Languages**Conor McGinn:**[\[115720\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what the Church of England's policy is on non-English language inscriptions on headstones in its graveyards.

Andrew Selous:

There are legal proceedings currently underway on this matter and due to the House of Commons Sub Judice Resolution the Church Commissioners are unable to provide an answer at this time.

DEFENCE**■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]****Stephen Morgan:**[\[115013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the outcome of the 2020 US Presidential election on future co-operation with the US on (a) NATO and (b) other security matters.

Mr Ben Wallace:

The United States remains our primary ally, with a strong Defence relationship developed over the last century's. We will continue to work with the United States on all of our shared interests, from tackling Covid-19 to countering terrorism, and collaborating closely through our Presidencies of COP26 and the G7 next year. Furthermore, the United States has been the backbone of the NATO Alliance for over 70 years and we look forward to working together on strengthening and driving forward the modernisation of the Alliance.

Stephen Morgan:[\[115014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the quality of accommodation in (a) Stockport and (b) Liverpool for service personnel supporting mass covid-19 testing.

James Heappey:

Service personnel undertaking testing are staying in a range of locations, including regular service accommodation and hotels. A large number of personnel involved in mass testing in Liverpool are accommodated at Pontins in Southport. In all cases, Defence ensures that the standard of accommodation is suitable for our people and that it adheres to relevant public health guidance.

■ Armed Forces: Coronavirus**John Healey:**[\[115475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many covid-19 related Military Aid to Civilian Authority (MACA) requests have been closed since March 2020; and if he will list those closed requests.

James Heappey:

As of 17 November 2020 the Ministry of Defence has tracked 190 Covid-19 related Military Aid to Civilian Authority (MACA) requests as having been closed since March 2020.

For detail of the MACA requests that have been closed, I am attaching a document containing the requested information.

Attachments:

1. MACA [Annex - Details of Closed MACA Requests.pdf]

■ China: National Security**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**[\[115513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the types of threats posed by China; and if he will make a statement.

James Heappey:

The Department keeps the threats from, and opportunities for cooperation with, China under regular review. China's production of an increasingly wide array of advanced weapons systems and its willingness to challenge the international rules-based system to suit its interests present a growing challenge for the UK and its allies.

■ Defence: Space Technology**Stephen Morgan:**[\[115802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on what date he plans to publish a defence space skills strategy.

Jeremy Quin:

Defence is developing its Space Workforce requirements, identifying and developing the necessary skills to meet our ambitions in space. We are also closely working with the UK Space Agency in BEIS to understand how we best coordinate our output with our partners across Government.

■ Integrated Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy Review**Mr Tobias Ellwood:** [\[115510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to publish the Integrated Review.

Mr Ben Wallace:

As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister stated to the House earlier today the full conclusions of the Integrated Review will be announced in the new year.

■ Ministry of Defence: Mass Media**John Healey:** [\[115478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the oral Answer of the Secretary of State for Defence of 21 September 2020, Official Report, column 618, on his undertaking to place the terms of reference for the Tom Kelly independent review in the Library, when he plans to so place those terms of reference in the Library.

Mr Ben Wallace:

A copy of the terms of reference has been placed in the Library of the House.

Attachments:

1. Tom Kelly Independent Review Terms of Reference [20200921-PUBLICATION_Annex_A_ToR_Independent_Review-.pdf]

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]****Daisy Cooper:** [\[908998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what progress he has made on data protection arrangements with Japan; and when he plans to reach an adequacy decision on allowing digital trade to continue with Japan after the end of the transition period.

Chi Onwurah: [\[909033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the Free Trade Agreement with Japan on (a) data protection standards and (b) data flows for UK data.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The UK–Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) is the UK's first major trade deal as an independent trading nation.

CEPA seeks to remove unjustified barriers to data flows to strengthen trade between our two countries. It requires both parties to maintain comprehensive legal frameworks that protect personal information.

CEPA does not alter the UK's existing data protection framework, enshrined in the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR. Under CEPA, the UK may adopt measures restricting data flows to achieve a legitimate public policy objective, including personal data protection and the ability to maintain an independent international data transfers regime. From the end of the transition period, the UK will preserve the effect of the EU's adequacy decision for Japan on a transitional basis, that will continue to provide robust protections for the international transfer of personal data.

■ **BBC: Finance**

Stephen Hammond:

[115571]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with the BBC on holding a public consultation on (a) offering monthly license subscriptions and (b) other future funding proposals.

Mr John Whittingdale:

It is already possible to pay for a TV licence in monthly instalments. More information is set out on the TV Licensing website: <https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/pay-for-your-tv-licence/ways-to-pay>.

The government has no plans to offer a public consultation on TV licence payment plans at this time.

On future funding proposals, the government has committed to maintain the licence fee funding model for the duration of this 11 year Charter period, until 2027.

The Secretary of State has recently written to the BBC and S4C to begin the process of setting the licence fee for at least 5 years from April 2022.

■ **British Athletes Commission: Finance**

Kevin Brennan:

[115497]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what representations he has received on direct funding by his Department of the British Athletics Commission.

Nigel Huddleston:

The issue of direct funding of the British Athletes Commission by DCMS has been raised with the department through correspondence. It was also one of the recommendations made by Baroness Grey-Thompson in her Duty of Care report (2017), commissioned by DCMS. Changing the source of funding for the BAC was not taken forward at the time, as the priority focus was to improve the resourcing of the organisation so that it could provide more effective support to athletes.

In light of this, UK Sport announced in May 2018 that it was increasing its investment in the British Athletes Commission to £1 million over the rest of the Tokyo 2020 cycle, which allowed the British Athletes Commission to increase its capacity threefold. In the current Tokyo cycle to date, the British Athletes Commission has received £1.19m from UK Sport.

My department will continue to work closely with the British Athletes Commission and UK Sport to keep the issue under review.

■ **Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Patrick Grady:

[\[115716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with officials at UNESCO on the UK's (a) participation in and (b) ratification of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Nigel Huddleston:

The UK's cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, brings benefits to communities and individuals in every part of the country. Government is committed to protecting important intangible heritage, including through grants made by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Arts Council and the Cultural Recovery Fund. Ministers in the Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport have not had recent discussions with UNESCO regarding the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, however we remain open to considering ratification when resource allows.

■ **Coronavirus Community Support Fund: Christchurch**

Sir Christopher Chope:

[\[115472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many organisations in Christchurch constituency have applied for funding through the Coronavirus Community Support Fund; and what criteria are used to assess those applications.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The Government has made available an unprecedented £750 million package of support, specifically for charities, social enterprises and the voluntary sector. This will ensure charities and other civil society organisations, including those at risk of financial hardship, can continue their vital work during the Covid-19 outbreak.

£200 million of this package is being administered and distributed by the National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) through the Coronavirus Community Support Fund which is mainly targeting smaller and local VCSE organisations. TNLCF received 7 total applications from Christchurch constituency for the Coronavirus Community Support Fund. 3 were successful, 3 were unsuccessful and 1 was withdrawn by the applicant. Each of the unsuccessful applicants were provided with the results of their application and the reason for being unsuccessful.

Applications to the CCSF are assessed on the extent to which they meet the objectives of the Programme as set out in guidance published on the NLCF website, including among other criteria: Organisations that support people and communities who have experienced disproportionate challenge and difficulty as a result of the COVID-19 crisis; Organisations providing services and support for vulnerable people,

for which there will be increased demand as a result of the COVID-19 crisis; and Organisations which connect communities and support communities to work together to respond to Covid-19.

■ Culture Recovery Fund

Tracy Brabin:

[\[115751\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to allocate the remaining funds in the Culture Recovery Fund.

Caroline Dinéage:

The majority of the CRF funding is now being deployed with over £500 million allocated so far across both capital and recovery grants. A further £188 million has been allocated to the devolved administrations as part of the Barnett formula and £100 million has been directly allocated to national cultural institutions and English Heritage Trust.

Repayable finance awards (which made up £270m of the Fund) are currently under negotiation, with outcomes expected to be announced in the coming weeks, and part of the £120m capital funding is still to be allocated.

Additionally, DCMS has held back a substantial amount of CRF funding with a view to offering critical support when needed - we do not know what will happen next with this pandemic, and this government wants to support these sectors over the long term.

DCMS and its Arms Length Bodies are working closely to identify the ongoing needs of these sectors, and will make decisions as soon as possible about how best to use the contingency funding left within the CRF to provide further support to the sector.

■ Culture Recovery Fund: Cheshire

Mike Amesbury:

[\[92006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many applications for funding from the Culture Recovery Fund were made from the culture and heritage sector in (a) Cheshire West and Chester, (b) Halton and (c) Weaver Vale constituency, and how many of applications were successful.

Mike Amesbury:

[\[92007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much funding from the Culture Recovery Fund has been allocated to the culture and heritage sector in (a) Cheshire West and Chester, (b) Halton and (c) Weaver Vale since that fund was established.

Caroline Dinéage:

The following table includes details of the number of applications received and how many were successful, as well as the total amount of funding requested and how much was allocated for each of the three areas requested. Note this only refers to heritage and arts recovery grants and was correct as of 11 November.

CONSTITUENCY / LOCAL AUTHORITY	NO APPLICATIONS	NO AWARDS	TOTAL APPLIED FOR	TOTAL AWARDED
Cheshire West and Chester (LA)	17	11	£1,980,809	£1,492,15
Halton (constituency)	2	2	£392,660	£392,660
Weaver Vale (constituency)	3	3	£146,000	£146,000

■ Journalism

Jo Stevens:

[\[115715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to ensure that UK-based freelance journalists will be able to operate across European borders after the transition period.

Mr John Whittingdale:

On 1 September 2020, the Government launched a comprehensive communications campaign to help the UK prepare for the end of the transition period. This includes guidance on customs and mobility procedures important to workers and freelancers. My department will continue to engage with the press sector on the specific issues they may face.

We are seeking a reciprocal agreement with the EU that could allow UK citizens to undertake some business activities in the EU without a work permit, on a short-term basis. At the moment, we are unable to comment on the detail of these arrangements as discussions are ongoing.

■ Lord Alfred Douglas

Tim Loughton:

[\[114761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will release the original manuscript of the work of Lord Alfred Douglas entitled *In Excelsis*, written during his time in jail and held in the Public Records Office.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The original text of 'In Excelsis' by Lord Alfred Douglas (file reference EXT 11/75) has been available to the general public for viewing under supervision at The National Archives since 27 November 1997.

The National Archives' reading room service is currently suspended, in line with the new national restrictions in England, although it continues to provide access to its collections and a range of services online.

■ Platinum Jubilee 2022: Finance

Tracy Brabin:

[\[115750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what funding he has made available to support Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

Caroline Dinenage:

The UK Government expects funding for the Platinum Jubilee celebrations in 2022 to come from a range of sources. Every effort will be made to ensure that any activities and programmes for the Jubilee do not impose an unnecessary burden on the taxpayer.

■ Radio: Commercial Broadcasting

Martyn Day:

[\[114967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with Arqiva on an additional relief package for small commercial radio broadcasters.

Martyn Day:

[\[114968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he plans to provide additional support for transmission costs to small commercial radio broadcasters.

Martyn Day:

[\[91987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will make it his policy to support transmission cost relief for small commercial radio broadcasters.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The government fully recognises the vital role that small commercial radio stations have played during the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of the provision of national and local news and information, as well as community engagement and entertainment. We are acutely aware of the ongoing impact of the pandemic on commercial radio revenues, and we are continuing to work with all parts of the radio industry to explore ways to support the ongoing sustainability of stations.

■ Slavery: Monuments

Mr Steve Baker:

[\[115623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to support the erection of a memorial to remember the victims of the Transatlantic slave trade and slavery.

Nigel Huddleston:

It is not normal practice for central Government to fund new memorials and it has no current plans to establish a national memorial to the victims of the slave trade. Many organisations – public and private – are rightly able (subject to the relevant permissions) to freely propose, fund and deliver memorials marking a variety of

incidents and historical moments in a way that they are best-placed to deem appropriate and sensitive.

Many successful memorials are created by a wide-range of authorities and organisations, allowing each one to respond sensitively to the particular circumstances that it seeks to commemorate.

Given the wide range of people and organisations interested in establishing memorials, it is as a general rule, for them to work with the relevant local planning authority to identify a suitable site and obtain the necessary planning permissions

■ Social Media: Harassment

Fay Jones:

[\[115025\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to reduce bullying and harassment on social media.

Caroline Dinenage:

Bullying and harassment online is unacceptable. This government will establish in law a new 'duty of care' on companies towards their users - to ensure companies have robust systems and processes in place to keep their users safe.

This duty of care will have an emphasis on child protection and will increase the protections for all users, including the most vulnerable, from online abuse, bullying and harassment. Under new proposals companies will need to remove illegal content expeditiously and put in place systems to minimise the risk of illegal content appearing on their services.

For content that is legal but harmful, companies will need to make clear what content is acceptable on their services and enforce their terms and conditions consistently and transparently. In addition, companies will need to have effective systems for users to report harmful content.

■ Sports: Coventry

Colleen Fletcher:

[\[114909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to support sports facilities in Coventry during the covid-19 outbreak.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government has provided unprecedented support to businesses through tax reliefs, cash grants and employee wage support, which many sports clubs have benefited from. Sport England has also provided over £220 million to support the sport and physical activity sector. This includes £35m for a Community Emergency Fund (CEF) directly to support community sport clubs and exercise centres through this pandemic.

Sport England has made awards totalling £10,348,040 since 2009 in Coventry consisting of both lottery and exchequer funding to support the provision of sport and physical activity. A further £130,831 has been awarded across Coventry local

authority, via Sport England's CEF, since April this year. This has mainly been for local sports clubs and community sport activity organisations.

■ Sports: Drugs

Kevin Brennan:

[\[115496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of domestic sports men and women being tested for the use of illegal performance enhancing drugs during the covid-19 outbreak.

Nigel Huddleston:

UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) releases its testing figures on a quarterly basis. UKAD's latest quarterly report covering July to September 2020 shows 1,406 tests were conducted. This represents an increase from the 126 tests conducted in the period before, covering April to June 2020. The drop in testing during this period was due to UKAD's decision in March 2020 to significantly reduce its testing programme due to the pause in competitive sport caused by Covid-19.

UKAD has been working closely with medical experts to ensure new testing processes comply with the highest standards of safety and sport-specific considerations in light of Covid-19. UKAD has developed a protocol for its Doping Control Personnel to follow to ensure the safety of its testers and those being tested. This procedure is in line with the World Anti-Doping Agency's guidance for resuming testing, and is fully outlined on UKAD's website.

■ Sports: Governing Bodies

Dan Jarvis:

[\[115675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when Sport England plans to publish the findings of the joint review of code for sports governance.

Nigel Huddleston:

Sport England and UK Sport began their joint review of the Code for Sports Governance in July 2020. Their aim is to publish the initial findings of the review in early 2021.

■ Television Licences: Older People

Alex Cunningham:

[\[115646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will hold discussions with the TV Licensing Authority on the (a) the time taken to process cheque payments from people over 75 and (b) issuing reminder letters to people who have already paid for their TV licence.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The BBC and TV Licensing are responsible for the collection and enforcement of the licence fee, not the government.

The government is therefore not involved in how TV Licensing processes payments, including cheques, or how and when it issues reminder letters.

However, the government expects TV Licensing to collect the licence fee in an efficient and proportionate manner, and to ensure particularly sensitive handling for those aged 75 and over who may be affected by the BBC's changes to the over 75 concession.

■ **Tourism: Coventry**

Colleen Fletcher:

[\[115693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of Government funding for tourism in Coventry in each of the last five years.

Nigel Huddleston:

My Department regularly assesses economic trends in the tourism sector, including those relating to Government support for tourism in regions across England.

Launched in 2016, the £45m Discover England Fund has supported the development of internationally focused tourism products in the West Midlands, including the 'England's Waterways' project.

We are also working with regional partners to maximise the tourism benefits of hosting the UK City of Culture in Coventry and the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The Government has invested over £15 million to support Coventry's year as UK City of Culture, and my Department is working closely with Coventry City of Culture Trust and partners to continue to ensure Coventry's success as host city.

Between April and July, VisitEngland's £1.3 million Destination Management Organisation Resilience Fund supported local tourism organisations in the West Midlands. The West Midlands Growth Company received £29,866 from the DMO Resilience Fund.

We will continue to engage with regional stakeholders to assess how we can most effectively support tourism's recovery from COVID-19.

EDUCATION

■ **Breakfast Clubs: Finance**

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[\[115687\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding his Department provides to support breakfast clubs in England; how many (a) schools that funding is allocated to and (b) children that funding covers; what the cost per child of that funding was in each year since that funding was introduced; and what plans the Government has for that funding after March 2021.

Vicky Ford:

The department is investing up to £35 million into the National School Breakfast Programme. This includes our extension of the programme by a further year until March 2021, with up to £11.8 million being invested during the current 2020-21 financial year. Overall, this money will kick-start or improve breakfast clubs in up to 2,450 schools in disadvantaged areas, making them sustainable in the long run.

Our supplier Family Action has estimated that 280,000 pupils, in more than 1,800 schools, had access to a healthy nutritious breakfast every school day between March 2018 to March 2020. Over this period the government spent £23,672,238.23. More information can be found here: <https://www.family-action.org.uk/content/uploads/2019/07/NSBP-Impact-report-v11-LOWRES.pdf>.

The government is considering how it can support breakfast clubs beyond March 2021 and recently issued a Prior Information Notice to gather evidence in relation to future policy and delivery for breakfast clubs. Future spending remains subject to the Spending Review.

■ Children in Care**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:****[115686]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Education in the Adjournment debate on Children in the Care System: Sibling Contact on 4 March 2020, Official Report, col 957, when the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 are planned to be updated.

Vicky Ford:

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, spoke in the adjournment debate on sibling contact for children living in care in March 2020. The Secretary of State for Education, said, during the debate, the current legislative framework places a duty on local authorities to promote contact between the child and their family members, unless this is not reasonably practical or consistent with the child's welfare. Schedule 2 of the Children and Families Act (2004) requires local authorities to promote contact between a looked-after child and any relative, friend or other person connected with the child (including siblings), as long as it is consistent with the child's welfare and reasonably practical.

Furthermore, we recognise the importance of sibling relationships and have made it clear – in The Children's Act (1989) Guidance and Regulations: Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (2015) - that sibling groups should be placed together where it is appropriate and possible and in the best interests of all children within the group. Where this is not possible, we understand the importance of maintaining an ongoing relationship between children living in care and their siblings, whether they are in care or not. However, we are clear that the child's needs, wishes, and welfare are the most important considerations when making decisions about their care and who they keep in touch with, when and how. For many children, having

contact with family, friends and others is hugely valued, and may help towards a stable and successful placement.

During the debate, the Secretary of State for Education re-affirmed the government's commitment to amending the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations (2020) to make explicit reference to the importance of children living in care having contact with all their siblings, where that is appropriate and consistent with the welfare of all siblings.

Given the circumstances since the debate was held in March 2020, we have been unable to identify an appropriate opportunity to consult on this amendment. However, this remains an important action and we will seek to complete it as soon as we are able to.

■ Dance: Coronavirus

Dame Diana Johnson:

[115533]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether dance schools can open for (a) training and rehearsal without an audience and (b) supervised activities for children during the November 2020 covid-19 lockdown.

Nick Gibb:

Dance can be undertaken in schools that provide a full-time education, during the period of national restrictions, but safety precautions should be undertaken. Advice is provided in the actions for schools during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#music-dance-and-drama-in-school>.

In addition, qualifications in dance can take place in England during this period provided they are conducted in line with the public health guidance on autumn exams: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/responsibility-for-autumn-gcse-as-and-a-level-exam-series/public-health-arrangements-for-autumn-exams>.

Schools may also continue to offer before and after school educational provision to their pupils (including dance), to enable their parents or carers to work, seek work, attend education or training, or where the provision is to support respite care (for vulnerable children). Where schools are offering these activities, they should advise parents that they should only be using them for these purposes.

Providers of supervised activities for children, such as those providing out-of-school activities (including dance classes), may also continue to operate during the period of national restrictions, as outlined in the guidance for education and childcare settings on new national restrictions from 5 November:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-and-childcare-settings-new-national-restrictions-from-5-november-2020#ooss>.

However, providers of these activities should ensure they are only being accessed for face-to-face provision by parents if their primary purpose is registered childcare, or where they are providing other activities for children, where it is reasonably necessary to enable parents to work or

search for work, or to undertake training or education; or for the purposes of respite care.

Providers that continue to operate face-to-face provision during this period should continue to undertake risk assessments and implement the system of controls set out in the protective measures for holiday clubs and after-school clubs and other out-of-school clubs for children during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak guidance:

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

All other out-of-school activities, not being primarily used by parents for these purposes and that can offer remote education, should close for face-to-face provision for the duration of the national restrictions. This will minimise the amount of mixing between different groups of people and therefore reduce the risk of infection and transmission of the virus.

■ Education: Electronic Publishing

Bambos Charalambous:

[115769]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if the Government will reconsider its decision not to conduct an assessment of the academic publishing industry's pricing and licensing practices for ebooks in order to improve access to ebooks for schools and universities during the covid-19 outbreak.

Michelle Donelan:

The government brought forward the zero rate of VAT on e-publications from December. The extension of the zero rate of VAT has been introduced to provide consistency in approach between certain physical and digital publications. This will make e-publications more affordable for schools and universities. The government keeps all taxes under review, including VAT. No assessment of the effect of the academic publishing industry's pricing and licensing practices for ebooks is currently planned.

On 1 October, the department announced a further remote education support package, to help schools and further education (FE) providers meet the remote education expectations set out in guidance and direction.

Many elements of the support package are already in place and more will be available over the coming months to schools and FE providers. These can be accessed through the remote education service on GOV.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>.

The support package includes access to the right technology to deliver remote education, peer to peer training on how to use this effectively, and practical tools, good practice guidance and school-led webinars. This adds to existing support including the resources available from Oak National Academy, which provides video lessons across a broad range of subjects for every year group from reception to year

11: <https://www.thenational.academy/>. Oak National Academy will remain a free optional resource for the academic year 2020/21.

As part of over £195 million invested to support remote education and access to online social care, the department is making over 340,000 laptops and tablets available this term to support disadvantaged children whose face-to-face education may be disrupted.

■ Home Education: Qualifications

Darren Henry:

[115032]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that home-educated students are taken account of when his Department is forming its policy on the sitting of GCSE, AS and A-level examinations due to take place in 2021.

Nick Gibb:

Examinations are the best and fairest way of judging pupils' performance, and it is the Department's intention that next year's GCSE, AS and A level exam series will go ahead.

The Department is working with Ofqual to engage with the sector, including those representing home-educated pupils, to develop contingencies if disruption as a result of COVID-19 affects pupils' ability to sit examinations. Following a period of engagement, more details will be published later in the autumn.

■ Music: Private Tutors

Sir Charles Walker:

[115515]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will amend the guidance on the teaching of music in private homes during the covid-19 outbreak to ensure that it includes the private home of the (a) student and (b) teacher, and if he will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

Music teachers providing one-to-one tuition outside of a school or college setting are advised to provide tutoring online where possible. Where online lessons are not reasonably possible, face-to-face provision is permitted in specific circumstances.

As outlined in the guidance for education and childcare settings on new national restrictions from 5 November, out of school activities such as private tuition may continue to operate during the period of national restrictions, whether in a student's home or a teacher's home. The guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/education-and-childcare-settings-new-national-restrictions-from-5-november-2020#ooss>. Teachers who are operating out of their own homes or private studios should ensure they are only being accessed for face to face provision by parents if their primary purpose is registered childcare, or where they are providing other activities for children, where it is reasonably necessary to enable parents to work, search for work, undertake training or education, or for the purposes of respite care.

Tutoring that is primarily used by home educating parents as part of their arrangements for their child to receive a suitable full-time education (which could include, for example, private tutors) may also continue to operate for face to face provision for the duration of the national restrictions.

Tutors that continue to operate face-to-face provision during this period should continue to undertake risk assessments and implement the system of controls set out in the protective measures for holiday clubs and after-school clubs and other out-of-school clubs for children during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak guidance, available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/protective-measures-for-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>. Providers operating out of other people's homes should also implement the guidance on working safely in other people's homes, which is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes>.

■ Pupil Premium

Wes Streeting:

[115741]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the overall funding for the pupil premium has been increased in line with the increase in the number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals in the UK.

Vicky Ford:

We are monitoring the eligibility for free school meals (FSM) and the pupil premium as part of the normal policy making process. We will collect definitive information on the number of pupils who are eligible for FSM at the October school census.

We are committed to levelling up opportunities to make sure everyone has a fair chance to realise their potential and no-one is left behind. The pupil premium furthers this objective by helping schools improve the academic attainment and wider outcomes of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Since the pupil premium was introduced in 2011, it has provided more than £18 billion of additional funding for schools and has played an important role in contributing to the narrowing of the disadvantaged attainment gaps at age 11 and 16.

Pupil premium allocations for the financial year 2020-21 were published in June, and the first quarterly instalments were paid out in June and July. Announcements on pupil premium funding for the financial year 2021-22 will follow later in the year.

Announcements for future years will be made in due course.

■ Pupils: Attendance

Wes Streeting:

[115740]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for what reason overall school attendance was 89 per cent on 5 November 2020 in England when only 4 per cent of students were recorded as absent for covid-19 related reasons.

Nick Gibb:

There are a number of reasons why a pupil might be absent from school and the rate of absence is likely to vary by phase of schools and throughout the year. In the 2018/19 academic year the overall absence rate was 4.7%. This includes authorised and unauthorised absences.

■ **Pupils: Coventry****Colleen Fletcher:**[\[115692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much (a) revenue and (b) capital funding in cash terms was provided per pupil in state (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools in (A) Coventry North East constituency and (B) Coventry in each of the last ten years.

Nick Gibb:

The revenue funding allocated for schools for the financial years 2010/11 to 2019/20 for Coventry local authority is shown in the table below. Aggregated schools funding is not allocated to primary and secondary schools separately, nor to parliamentary constituencies. Primary and secondary pupil numbers for each local authority in England can be found in the local authority tables for each year through following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-and-pupil-numbers>.

FINANCIAL YEAR	COVENTRY LOCAL AUTHORITY (£MILLIONS)
2010-11	241.9
2011-12	249.8
2012-13	257.6
2013-14	279.6
2014-15	292.0
2015-16	298.0
2016-17	302.2
2017-18	314.2
2018-19	324.5
2019-20	337.2

Data for allocations prior to 2011/12 are not readily available. Most funding allocations are calculated at a responsible body level, and cannot be broken down to per pupil, primary or secondary, and constituency levels. This is because many responsible bodies, such as academy trusts, span local authority boundaries and decisions on investment in individual schools are often taken at a local level.

Basic need funding is allocated to local authorities to provide new school places in their area. The Department provides basic need funding for every place that is needed, based on local authorities' own data on pupil forecasts. These allocations are calculated in line with demographic growth in the local area rather than existing population, so allocations may fluctuate across years. There are now 8,594 more school places in Coventry than there were in 2010.

In addition to this, Coventry has been allocated nearly £4 million through the Special Provision Capital Fund across 2018-21. This funding is intended to help local authorities create new places and improve facilities for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

(ALL VALUES £MILLIONS)	2011- 12	2012- 13	2013- 14	2014- 15	2015- 16	2016- 17	2017- 18	2018- 19	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22
Basic Need allocations	9.9	9.7	12.5	12.5	0	0	3.2	6	8.2	1.9	23.7
Special Provision Capital Fund								0.8	2.4	0.8	

[1], [2]

In addition to basic need funding, the Department allocates condition funding each year to those responsible for school buildings to improve and maintain the condition of the school estate.

For an explanation of condition funding and a breakdown of condition allocations paid to Coventry local authority to invest in maintained schools over the last ten years, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 17 November 2020 to Question [114205](#).

[1] For financial years 2015/16 to 2020/21, the figures above may differ from the original allocations. This is because allocations have been subsequently adjusted to reflect a revised schedule of payments, for example where payments have been modified in order to support local authority cashflow.

[2] This table does not include historic Targeted Basic Need funding – Coventry received £9.2 million through this in 2013-15.

■ **Qualifications: Coronavirus**

Adam Holloway:

[115529]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the Government plans to produce before the end of the autumn 2020 term transparent and standard contingency

assessment plans and processes for GCSEs and A levels in the event that the 2021 examinations may not be safely or fairly held.

Nick Gibb:

Examinations and assessments are the best and fairest way of judging pupils' performance. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State has confirmed that next year's GCSE, AS level, and A level examination series will go ahead.

The Department is working with Ofqual and engaging widely with the education sector to identify any risks to examinations at a national, local, and individual student level, and to consider measures needed to address any potential disruption. For example, if a pupil is unable to sit examinations due to illness or self isolation, or if schools are affected by a local outbreak during the examination season resulting in examination centres not being able to open. Further details will be published later in the autumn.

■ **Remote Education: Coronavirus**

Siobhain McDonagh:

[115470]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answers of 4 November 2020 to Question 109149 on Remote Education: Merton and of 13 November 2020 to Question 109150 on Remote Education: Coronavirus, how many devices (a) had been distributed, (b) had been allocated and (c) were available for allocation to schools by (i) 20 October 2020 and (ii) 24 October 2020.

Nick Gibb:

As part of over £195 million invested to support remote education and access to online social care, over 340,000 laptops and tablets are being made available this term to support disadvantaged children in year 3 to 11 whose face-to-face education may be disrupted. This supplements over 220,000 laptops and tablets and over 51,000 4G wireless routers, which have already been delivered during the summer term.

Laptops and tablets are owned by schools, trusts or local authorities who can lend these to the children and young people who need them most and who may experience disruption to face-to-face education due to COVID-19.

Information on the devices provided this term to schools, local authorities and academy trusts as of 23 October 2020 is published here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/929064/Ad-hoc_stats_note_shipped_data_231020_FINAL.pdf

Devices provided as of 27 August 2020 is published here, which includes 547 devices delivered to Merton Council:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912888/Devices_and_4G_wireless_routers_progress_data_as_of_27_August_2020.pdf

Allocations were originally equivalent to a school's potential need if it fully closed. Attendance data suggests most schools are not closing fully, but instead are supporting small groups of children that are not able to attend school because they are self-isolating. The Department has changed the number of devices allocated to each school to reflect this. In the context of significant global demand for laptops and tablets, this ensures that as many children as possible can benefit from a device at the point at which their face-to-face education is disrupted. If schools are experiencing disruption to face-to-face education and believe they have a need for additional devices, they should contact the Department's service team to request additional laptops or tablets.

Kate Green:

[115644]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many schools in England were told on 24 October 2020 by his Department that their allocation of laptops for disadvantaged pupils had been reduced.

Nick Gibb:

The Department has invested £195 million to support remote education and access to online social care. In addition to over 220,000 laptops and tablets being delivered during the summer term for disadvantaged children who would not otherwise have access, we have supplemented this support by making an additional 340,000 laptops and tablets available in the event that face-to-face education is disrupted as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Since September 2020, over 100,000 of these have already been delivered to schools. More information about the allocation of laptops to date can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/929064/Ad-hoc_stats_note_shipped_data_231020_FINAL.pdf.

The targeting of laptops and tablets through this scheme has continually been reviewed to ensure support is offered in the most effective way, to reflect the numbers of schools that have been disrupted and the number of laptops and tablets available at any time. In the context of significant demand, we have updated our allocation process to more accurately align orders with the number of students typically self-isolating, ensuring as many children as possible benefit from receiving a device this term. On 24 October 2020, the Department communicated this change in allocations to all schools. If schools are experiencing disruption to face-to-face education and believe they have a need for additional devices, they should contact the Department's service team via covid.technology@education.gov.uk to request additional laptops or tablets.

■ Schools: Coronavirus

Theresa Villiers:

[115518]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what advice his Department is providing to schools on parents who wish to keep their children at home in self-isolation because a member of the household has a serious health condition.

Nick Gibb:

Being in nursery, school and college is vital for children and young people's education and for their wellbeing. Time out of nursery, school and college is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development.

Children and young people who live with someone who is confirmed clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend education or childcare even during this period of national restrictions.

Nurseries, schools and colleges have implemented a range of protective measures recommended by the Public Health England endorsed guidance published by the Department which, when followed, creates an inherently safer environment for pupils, staff and their families.

The guidance can be found here:

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

If parents or carers are anxious about their child attending education, we recommend that they discuss this with their school leadership to understand their concerns and provide reassurance regarding the protective measures that have been put in place to reduce the risk of transmission in the setting.

Where children are not able to attend school as they are following clinical or public health advice related to COVID-19, we expect schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. That absence will not be penalised.

Adam Holloway:**[115530]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the Government plans to prioritise school staff for covid-19 testing.

Nick Gibb:

All essential workers continue to have access to priority testing via the online booking portal. This includes school staff, including support and teaching staff and specialist education professionals.

The Department is also supplying COVID-19 test kits directly to schools for staff and students who develop COVID-19 symptoms and face significant barriers to accessing a test through other routes. Test kits will help symptomatic staff who test negative and are not close contacts of confirmed cases to get back to work as soon as they feel well enough. It is for schools to determine how to distribute their test kits in order to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on the education of students.

The Government is committed to introducing mass asymptomatic testing using new technologies to minimise the risk of infection spread within communities. Pilots are already underway for using these in schools and colleges.

Wes Streeting:[\[115738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent information his Department holds on how many schools in England are operating on a rota system whereby not all school years are attending school on each school day.

Nick Gibb:

The Government's priority is to keep education and childcare settings fully open wherever possible. The Contain framework, and the educational tiers within it, is in place to help manage COVID-19 prevalence locally.

We took a national decision to prioritise education and childcare during the current period of national restrictions and schools continue to remain open for all children and young people as they have since the start of the autumn term. We will therefore not be moving up the tiers in any local area during the period of national lockdown – this means no move to rotas in secondary schools.

Any school management issues which are not about managing COVID-19 transmission should be referred to the relevant Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC)'s office. RSC offices will make every effort to support schools to continue to provide face to face education to pupils in their schools.

Schools: Fire Prevention**Margaret Greenwood:**[\[115702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect of school fires on levels of educational attainment.

Margaret Greenwood:[\[115703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the Government plans to publish its response to the Review of Building Bulletin 100: design for fire safety in schools consultation.

Margaret Greenwood:[\[115704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of schools are fitted with effective sprinkler systems in England.

Margaret Greenwood:[\[115705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the number of schools in England with inadequate fire detection systems.

Nick Gibb:

The Government gives the highest priority to the safety of pupils and staff, and to ensuring that the owners of school buildings take the necessary action to protect those buildings.

The Department has not made an assessment of the effect of school fires on levels of educational attainment.

The data held from the Department's Condition Data Collection indicates that 1665 schools in England have sprinkler systems.

The Department is currently updating Building Bulletin 100 (BB100), the department's guidance on fire safety design in schools. A revised version of BB100 is expected to be published in 2021, following a full public consultation. The consultation will give full consideration to the implementation of various fire safety measures, including the use of sprinkler systems.

In the meantime, schools are fundamentally safe environments. All schools must comply with Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which means they must have an up to date fire risk assessment, appropriate fire alarms and regular fire drills. This is to ensure they are as safe as possible and well prepared in the event of a fire.

Sprinklers must be fitted in new schools where they are deemed necessary to keep pupils and staff safe. All new school building projects must also comply with building regulations, including on fire safety, and this must be independently checked by Building Control or an Approved Inspector before buildings are occupied.

■ Secondary Education: Coronavirus

Theresa Villiers:

[115522]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of allowing secondary schools in England to end the autumn 2020 term a week early to help control the spread of covid-19.

Nick Gibb:

It continues to be the Department's aim that all pupils, in all year groups, remain in school full-time. The Government has taken a national decision to prioritise education during the current period of national restrictions in order to avoid any further reduction in face to face education for children and young people.

Returning to school full time has been vital for children's education and wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. This impact can affect both current attainment and children's future ability to learn.

The risk to children of becoming severely ill from COVID-19 is low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school. Senior clinicians, including the Chief Medical Officers of all four nations, still advise that school is the very best place for children to be, and so they should continue to go to school.

The Department published 'Guidance for full opening: schools to support schools' to welcome back all pupils from the start of the autumn term and schools have implemented a range of protective measures to minimise risk of transmission. The full guidance can be viewed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>.

It is important that children are in school, for their education and wellbeing, and to help working parents and guardians. The Department does not currently have plans to ask schools to change their Christmas holidays or close early this term.

■ **Special Educational Needs: Finance**

Stephen McPartland:

[115630]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to announce Additional High Needs funding to March 2024; and whether he plans that funding will be based on an assessment of local need rather than historical spend.

Vicky Ford:

As a part of our major investment in education, the department has announced significant increases to high needs funding. This year, we have already provided an £780 million increase into high needs, which will be followed up by an additional £730 million in the 2021-22 financial year. This means that the high needs budgets will have grown by over £1.5 billion, nearly 25%, in just 2 years.

High needs funding for the 2022-23 financial year will be drawn from the overall core schools budget. As announced last year, the core school budget for the 2022-23 financial year will total £52.2 billion, which is a year-on-year increase of £4.8 billion. We will announce the high needs budget for 2022-23 in due course. Funding for the 2023-24 financial year will be determined in the next Spending Review.

This additional high needs funding will be allocated via the high needs national funding formula. This formula was introduced in the 2018-19 financial year after extensive consultation and was a significant step forward in making the allocation of funding fairer. The formula is based on the population of 2 to 18-year olds in a local authority area, and includes a number of factors which together are intended to reflect the level of need in the area.

■ **Teachers: Coronavirus**

Theresa Villiers:

[115521]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to provide schools in England with additional funding to fund supply teachers needed to cover for staff who are self-isolating as a result of advice from NHS Test and Trace.

Nick Gibb:

The Department's guidance for schools on full opening sets out the options available for schools seeking to manage staffing capacity as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. In addition to using supply teachers and other temporary or peripatetic teachers, schools can also consider using existing staff more flexibly, including support staff and ITT trainees, or volunteers, as would usually be the case. This guidance can be found: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>.

Schools have continued to receive their budgets as usual, which has ensured they have been able to continue to pay for staff and meet their other regular financial

commitments. As stated in our guidance, schools should continue to use their existing resources to manage staffing capacity. Where schools do hire agency workers, we recommend they consider using the Department for Education and Crown Commercial Service's agency supply deal, as this offers a list of preferred suppliers that must be transparent about the rates they charge.

We continue to work with stakeholders and representative bodies to understand the staffing capacity pressures that schools are facing and how we might best support them.

■ Universities: Coronavirus

Fleur Anderson: [\[115834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the cost to the public purse is of his Department's contracts with (a) accountancy and (b) auditing for the purposes of supporting universities to access finances during the covid-19 outbreak.

Michelle Donelan:

Higher education providers are autonomous organisations and are responsible for their own arrangements for in-house and contracted expertise to support their financial management. The Department for Education does not contract with accountancy and audit firms on behalf of providers.

On 16 July my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, announced arrangements for the Higher Education Restructuring Regime which may be deployed as a last resort, if a decision has been made, to support a higher education provider in England at risk of financial failure, when other steps to mitigate the risks or preserve its viability have not proved sufficient.

The department will draw in accountancy and auditing expertise from external firms, on a call-off basis, to support demand-led individual casework as necessary.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture: Pest Control

Geraint Davies: [\[115461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the draft National Action Plan on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides will include a commitment to phase out local authority use of pesticides in urban areas.

Geraint Davies: [\[115462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he has taken to ensure that additional support for UK farmers to undertake integrated pest management will be included in National Action Plan.

Geraint Davies:

[115463]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of (a) the EU biodiversity strategy and farm to fork strategy which commit to a 50 per cent reduction in both the amount and toxicity of pesticides by 2030 and (b) similar targets set by Denmark and France; and what steps he is taking to use the EU's implementation of its strategy to inform UK policy in this area.

Victoria Prentis:

The revised National Action Plan for the Sustainable use of Pesticides (NAP) will be published for public consultation later this year and is applicable to all pesticide users including local authorities. The consultation document recognises action being taken by some local authorities to encourage phase out of pesticide usage and commits to encouraging an approach where non-essential use of pesticides is avoided.

The NAP consultation puts Integrated Pest Management (IPM) at the heart of our approach to minimise the use of pesticides across all sectors and support the uptake of non-chemical alternatives. Steps are being taken to integrate support for IPM approaches within future agri-environment schemes, for example through Environmental Land Management.

Through the NAP, we aim to minimise the risks and impacts of pesticides to human health and the environment, while ensuring pests and pesticide resistance are managed effectively. We are improving UK indicators of pesticide usage and toxicity in order to track progress against this aim. This work includes the development of a pesticide load indicator, building on the Danish model and tailoring it our domestic circumstances. We have been assessing the role of targets to support the ambitions of the NAP. The first step is to establish a robust baseline through improved indicators to ensure that goals are meaningful and drive the greatest benefit. We are aware of the difficulties experienced by France in meeting reduction targets they have set. Despite an ambitious reduction target, their overall pesticide usage has actually increased. The revision of the NAP provides an opportunity to assess the experiences of the EU and other countries, and set our domestic ambitions for the sustainable use of pesticides.

■ Arla Foods

Hilary Benn:

[115481]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with Arla on the relocation of its production capacity to the UK in the event of tariffs being charged on dairy products by the UK and the EU.

Victoria Prentis:

The Secretary of State met the Chief Executive of Arla on 9 October 2019, where the impact of a no deal exit on Arla was discussed.

■ Nitrate Vulnerable Zones

Fiona Bruce: [\[115597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the deadline is for derogation applications for 2021 for farms in Nitrate Vulnerable Zones.

Rebecca Pow:

Due to pressures on government from the pandemic some decisions have had to be delayed. I am currently considering the appropriate way forward on the grassland derogation, but can guarantee that farmers will be given appropriate time and opportunity to make necessary arrangements.

As soon as a decision has been made, farmers will be informed of the application window and deadline.

■ Pet Travel Scheme: Dogs

Kenny MacAskil: [\[115825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many dogs were imported into Great Britain under the Pet Travel Scheme by (a) an individual owner, (b) a rehoming organisation based in the animal's country of origin and (c) a rehoming organisation based in the UK, in each of the last six years.

Kenny MacAskil: [\[115826\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many dogs were imported into Great Britain under the Balai Directive by (a) an individual owner, (b) a rehoming organisation based in the animal's country of origin and (c) a rehoming organisation based in the UK, in each of the last six years.

Victoria Prentis:

The Animal and Plant Health Agency does not hold all of the information requested.

Under the Pet Travel Scheme, carriers complete and submit spreadsheets every month detailing their throughput. This is categorised by species, document type, non-compliance data and whether or not it is an assistance animal. Carriers do not provide information regarding who the animal was imported by.

Animals imported under the Balai Directive are imported on an Intra-Trade Animal Health Certificate issued via the Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES).

TRACES does not record whether the purpose of importation is for rehoming. While TRACES does identify the importer, it does not differentiate which importers are individual owners and which are rehoming organisations.

■ Recycling

Catherine West: [\[115748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of adopting a target of 70 per cent recycling by 2030.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government has not recently assessed the potential merits of adopting a 70% recycling target for 2030. In 2019 we consulted on proposals to improve recycling for households and businesses and published an impact assessment alongside this which set out the benefits of achieving a 65% recycling rate by 2035. This impact assessment concluded that our proposals to ensure a consistent set of materials were collected for recycling from households and non-domestic premises together with other proposals to reform producer responsibility for recycling of packaging and to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers would achieve a 65% recycling rate by 2035.

The Environment Bill sets out the powers and duties necessary to achieve 65% recycling rate by 2035. We will consult on more detailed provisions and an updated impact assessment in 2021.

Catherine West:[\[115749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of a capital investment programme to support reuse, repair, remanufacturing, and recycling of scrap steel, glass, paper and card, plastics and biowaste.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government's Resources and Waste Strategy sets out our intention to move away from the linear 'make, take, use, throw' economic model to a more circular economy, keeping resources in use as long as possible so we extract maximum value from them.

We are investing some £3 billion of grant funding in 24 Private Finance Initiative waste infrastructure projects. Along with disposal of residual waste facilities (such as energy from waste plants), these grants support infrastructure including material recovery, mechanical biological treatment and anaerobic digestion facilities, as well as implementation and expanding kerbside recycling services, which help facilitate improvements in recycling levels.

In addition, £4.7 million of grant funding was announced on 12 June 2019 and made available through WRAP's Resource Action Fund to support new capital infrastructure projects that will help to recycle difficult plastic packaging and textile materials. A further £1 million of grant funding was also announced to provide capital support to increase recycling infrastructure for non-household municipal waste from businesses.

Infrastructure is central to our economic strategy, and the government will shortly publish a National Infrastructure Strategy (NIS) setting out further details on its long-term ambitions, including decarbonisation and levelling up.

The NIS will also formally respond to recommendations, including recommendations on waste, made by the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) in its National Infrastructure Assessment, which is based on detailed consideration of the UK's long-term infrastructure needs.

The NIC's impartial, expert advice is central to the Government's infrastructure decision-making process. The NIC's work was the catalyst for many of the important spending decisions taken at previous fiscal events. The Government will build on this further when we publish the NIS.

■ Salcey Forest

Andrea Leadsom: [115637]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make funding available to support the restoration of the Tree Tops Walk at Salcey Forest.

Rebecca Pow:

This is an operational matter for Forestry England. Forestry England is making plans to restore the Tree Tops Walk at Salcey Forest once the financial impact of Covid-19 restrictions has been mitigated and subject to obtaining any necessary local planning consents.

■ UK Relations with EU

Angus Brendan MacNeil: [115536]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what contingency plans he has with respect to the UK's future relationship with the EU in the event of food shortages in shops after the transition period.

Angus Brendan MacNeil: [115538]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what contingency plans he has with respect to the UK's future relationship with the EU in the event of an interruption in the supply of animal medicines after the transition period.

Angus Brendan MacNeil: [115542]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what contingency plans he has with respect to the UK's future relationship with the EU in the event of a UK-based companies experiencing losses through waste of perishable produce as a result of delays in importing and exporting after the transition period.

Victoria Prentis:

The UK has a highly resilient food supply chain. Our thorough preparations for leaving the EU in 2019, alongside the lessons we have learned during the Covid-19 response, provide a robust foundation for end of Transition Period planning on food supply. We are working alongside industry and across Government, including with the Devolved Administrations, to plan for the end of this year. The Government has well established ways of working with the food industry, which is experienced in dealing with situations that can cause disruptions to supply.

In terms of disruption at the border, the Border Operating Model (www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-border-operating-model) provides greater detail on how the border with the EU will work following the end of the Transition Period and the mechanisms which will seek to mitigate the impact of additional

volumes of traffic. We will, for example, have a contingency measure to prioritise single loads of fresh seafood and day old chicks which met the bar of hitting two out of three of the following criteria: perishability, animal welfare considerations, and economic impact on a specific geographical area. Defra is working very closely with other Government departments and local stakeholders, such as the Kent Resilience Forum, to ensure that those wishing to trade with the EU can do so in the most efficient and effective way possible.

Defra has made regulatory provisions for all veterinary medicines currently authorised for use in the UK via an EU approval system to continue to be authorised in the UK after the end of the transition period. These products can remain on the UK market for sale and supply in their existing packaging.

Defra's close working relationship with the veterinary pharmaceutical industry has enabled the industry to prepare for the end of the transition period, including taking mitigating actions in the event of disruption to supply. These activities include maximising stocks within the UK and diverting supply routes away from the short straits, where the greatest risk of interruption to supply is posed, that being from border disruption. In addition, veterinary medicines are classified as eligible for use of the Government Secured Freight Capacity.

We have well-established mechanisms for dealing with supply issues as and when they arise. Enhanced early warning indicator systems are now in place which will provide early warnings of demand exceeding supply. The prescribing cascade legislation, which for availability and animal welfare reasons permits veterinary surgeons to import veterinary medicines from outside the UK, allows sourcing of products from countries beyond the EU.

Almost all fresh produce (including fruit, vegetables and cut flowers) from the EU will not be subject to any plant health import controls until April 2021. From April, fresh produce will require a phytosanitary certificate and some goods will also require pre-notification. Importantly, there will continue to be no physical checks required at the border until July 2021 for almost all produce. From July onwards physical checks will be undertaken at approved designated Border Control posts on a risk basis. Any required checks will be performed as quickly as possible to minimise delays to the passage of goods and maintain border flow.

The phased approach will allow time for trade to adapt to the new import requirements for EU goods.

GB plant health authorities are undertaking significant recruitment to increase the number of plant health inspectors in order to service the demand for import and export checks and certification. We will have sufficient resources to meet demand from 1 January 2021 and ensure minimal disruption to trade. GB plant health services are currently reviewing their operating hours to make sure that biosecurity standards will continue to be met and strengthened in ways that support trade and the smooth flow of goods while minimising new burdens on businesses.

■ Water Companies: Sanctions

Peter Kyle:

[\[115742\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the level of sanctions available to the Environmental Agency for water and sewerage companies which they assess as having performance significantly below target in multiple Environmental Performance Assessment metrics.

Rebecca Pow:

The Environment Agency (EA) uses a range of enforcement options ranging from warning letters to prosecutions. The EA has brought 44 prosecutions against water companies in the last five years, securing fines of £34 million. £7.9 million has also been donated to environmental and wildlife trusts organisations in the same period through enforcement undertakings. The EA will continue to prosecute water companies which fail to uphold the law or cause serious environmental harm.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

[\[115022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with the permanent members of the UN Security Council on the report of 11 November 2020 from the International Atomic Energy Agency that Iran's stockpile of uranium is over 12 times the limit agreed in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

James Cleverly:

The International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors (which includes all permanent members of the UN Security Council) discussed this report at the quarterly Board of Governors meeting that took place this week (16-20 November). The UK Government remains deeply concerned by Iran's growing uranium stockpile, and Iran's continued nuclear non-compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA). This is why the UK with France and Germany, triggered the deal's Dispute Resolution Mechanism. The Foreign Secretary, along with his French and German counterparts, has called for a ministerial Joint Commission of the JCPoA at which we hope to discuss Iran's urgent return to compliance.

■ Aleksandr Lukashenko

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[114795\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential merits of imposing further sanctions on (a) individuals and (b) companies that financially support (i) Aleksandr Lukashenko and (ii) his family members.

Wendy Morton:

On 29 September, with Canada, the UK implemented sanctions on Alexander Lukashenko, his son and six other members of the Belarusian senior leadership under the Global Human Rights sanctions regime for serious human rights violations linked to the presidential election in August. We welcomed the EU's decision to impose sanctions on other linked officials and will transfer the existing EU Belarus sanctions regime into an autonomous UK sanctions regime at the end of the Transition Period. We remain concerned by the situation in Belarus and will consider future designations carefully, guided by the evidence and objectives of the sanctions regime. It is not appropriate to speculate on future designations.

■ British Institute At Ankara: Seeds**Tim Loughton:**[\[114762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has made to his Turkish counterpart on the seizure of the British Archaeobotanical seed collection from the British Institute in Ankara; and if he will make a statement.

Wendy Morton:

Our Ambassador in Ankara has raised our concerns about this issue with the relevant authorities in the Turkish Government. We will continue to encourage best practice when it comes to preserving the collection.

■ Denmark: Coronavirus**Daniel Zeichner:**[\[114216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how long the restrictions on travel and movement of goods out of Denmark will last.

Wendy Morton:

Following the advice of the Chief Medical Officer, the travel ban introduced on 7 November 2020 on Denmark will be extended for a further 14 days from Saturday 14 November. Measures on freight introduced on 8 November 2020 will also run for an extra 14 days from the date they came into force.

■ Developing Countries: Water**Alex Sobel:**[\[92003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that the provision of (a) water, (b) sanitation and (c) hygiene to developing countries are prioritised within its policies.

Wendy Morton:

The Government is taking steps to ensure that water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) plays a full role in contributing to the manifesto commitment to end preventable deaths. We will do this by supporting global leadership in the sector, strengthening sector systems, and ongoing COVID-19 response activities. Our work on WASH

builds on existing progress - the UK is on track to help over 60 million people gain access to a water supply or basic sanitation by the end of 2020.

■ Ethiopia: Politics and Government

Harriett Baldwin: [\[115632\]](#)

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

Harriett Baldwin: [\[115633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of the political situation in Ethiopia on the humanitarian situation in (a) Ethiopia, (b) Eritrea and (c) Sudan.

James Duddridge:

We are concerned by the ongoing violence between federal and regional forces in the Tigray region and the risk it poses to civilians, and by reports of ethnically-motivated attacks. We are gravely concerned at Amnesty International's report of killings of civilians on 9 November and are investigating. The Foreign Secretary called Prime Minister Abiy on 10 November to raise our concerns and stress the urgent need to prioritise the protection of civilian lives, restore services (including banks and telecommunications) and enable humanitarian access. I also spoke to the Ethiopian Ambassador in London on 18 November to reiterate our concerns. The UK has called for immediate de-escalation in Tigray and is working closely with humanitarian agencies to ensure that aid reaches civilians affected by the fighting.

We are reviewing the impact the conflict is having on the delivery of essential health, food and education services in the region and assessing the humanitarian need. Before the current conflict there were already more than one million highly vulnerable persons across Tigray including refugees, internally displaced persons and chronically food insecure communities. The UN predicts that an additional 800,000 people could be impacted by violence in Tigray, causing internal displacement within Ethiopia and across international borders, notably in Sudan where UNHCR reports more than 27,000 people have now crossed the border. We continue to monitor the situation and are appealing to the Government of Ethiopia and others to ensure humanitarian access to those in need in Tigray and affected areas.

■ Famagusta: Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Theresa Villiers: [\[115520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make representations to his Turkish counterpart condemning the recent visit of President Erdogan to Varosha.

James Cleverly:

The UK continues to follow the situation in Varosha with concern. Prior to the visit of President Erdogan to the island, we made representations to Turkey through our Embassy in Ankara. The Foreign Secretary raised the issue of Varosha during his

call with Turkish Cypriot leader Mr Ersin Tatar on 12 November and will discuss with the Turkish Foreign Minister Cavusolgu on 19 November.

The UK continues to strongly support the numerous Security Council Resolutions covering the issue of Varosha, notably 550 (1984) and 789 (1992). The issue underlines the importance of reaching a comprehensive Cyprus Settlement as a matter of urgency.

■ Food Supply

Justin Madders:

[\[91897\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, if he will make it his policy to ensure that Government policy on food (a) security and (b) supply complies with Article 11 of the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

James Duddridge:

In relation to international food security, the UK Government has a significant portfolio of agriculture projects in poorer countries (£322 million spend in 2018) focused on investing in commercial agriculture and livelihoods and on improving food security and sustainable food supply.

We are adapting our international programmes in agriculture, nutrition and food security in response to the current situation, made worse by COVID-19, to help reduce the scale of a major food security emergency; build resilience; and prepare for sustainable recovery. The UK helped achieve agreement at the G20 this year on actions to the free flow of agricultural products and other essential goods and services in response to COVID-19.

■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Departmental Responsibilities

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[115759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what the planned timescale is for reaching a decision on whether his Department will be a (a) reserved or (b) unreserved department.

James Duddridge:

In line with the Civil Service Nationality Rules, the FCDO will be a reserved department, meaning all roles in the department are open to UK nationals only. The Foreign Secretary has agreed that all existing non-UK national staff can continue to work for the FCDO and will be able to progress in their careers. All future recruitment into the department will be for UK-nationals only.

■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Directors

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[115760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the oral contribution of the Permanent Under-Secretary and Head of the

Diplomatic Service to the Foreign Affairs Committee on 10 November 2020 on having a smaller number of directors in the Department for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to ensure (a) development and (b) diplomatic expertise at that level.

James Duddridge:

When the two organisations merged, some Director roles had significant overlap. We have addressed this as part of the new director structure that will have 42 positions overall. Our new director group will bring together the best of both legacy organisations and fully integrate development and foreign policy expertise. A director-level restructuring exercise is underway and will conclude in December.

■ **Fossil Fuels: Finance**

Dan Carden:

[\[115793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government plans to announce an end to UK funding for fossil fuels overseas to include (a) Overseas Development Assistance and (b) UK Export Finance.

James Duddridge:

Tackling climate change is a key priority for the UK. The Government is committed to working with countries across the world to unlock their renewable energy potential and support their transition away from fossil fuels to cleaner alternatives. We are continuing to work closely with departments and agencies across Government to align future UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) with the Paris Agreement. The Prime Minister announced in January that the Government would end direct ODA, investment, export credit and trade promotion support for thermal coal mining and coal power plants overseas. The Government continues to keep its approach to other fossil fuel investments and financing overseas under review.

■ **Georgia: Consent to Medical Treatment**

Bambos Charalambous:

[\[115768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he plans to hold with his US counterpart on allegations of forced hysterectomies on women in ICE detention facilities in the state of Georgia.

James Cleverly:

Reports of non-voluntary hysterectomies being performed on immigrant women in ICE detention facilities are deeply worrying. We understand that members of Congress have already raised this issue with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). We will continue to monitor the situation including any formal response from DHS.

■ Iran: Nuclear Power

Brendan Clarke-Smith:

[\[92017\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made for the implications of his policies of reports that Iran has installed advanced centrifuges at an underground facility.

James Cleverly:

We remain deeply concerned by Iran's non-compliance with its Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) commitments, particularly its research and development on advanced centrifuges and its growing stockpile of Low Enriched Uranium. We urge Iran to reverse all measures inconsistent with the nuclear agreement. The Foreign Secretary, along with his French and German counterparts, has called for a ministerial Joint Commission of the JCPOA at which we hope to discuss Iran's urgent return to compliance.

■ Iran: Terrorism

Mr Toby Perkins:

[\[115595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has taken steps to condemn the Government of Iran for reportedly plotting to bomb an Iranian opposition rally attended by British citizens in Paris in 2018.

Mr Toby Perkins:

[\[115596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his counterpart in Iran on allegations that country intended to bomb an Iranian opposition party rally in Paris in 2018.

James Cleverly:

We are aware of the ongoing trial of four Iranians in Belgium in relation to the 2018 plot against a conference in Paris. We are deeply concerned by reports that an Iranian diplomat is one of those standing trial in connection with the incident. While the legal process is ongoing, however, it would be inappropriate to comment further and we have not made specific representations to the Iranian Government. The UK strongly condemns the targeting of civilians and welcomes steps taken to hold those responsible to account. We continue to work closely with our European partners on security and counter-terrorism issues. We are not aware at this stage of a link to the UK.

■ Jamaica: Floods

Stella Creasy:

[\[115629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support people affected by flooding in Jamaica.

James Cleverly:

The UK works with regional organisations and Governments of the Commonwealth Caribbean, including Jamaica to strengthen disaster preparedness, help with

recovery and build resilience. This includes access to rapid funding for disaster surge response through the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency; the Caribbean Catastrophic Risk Insurance Facility, an insurance mechanism which makes pay-outs to Caribbean Governments impacted by a disaster; and the UK financed Global Risk Financing Facility which provided £14.85 million to help Jamaica strengthen financial resilience to tropical cyclones, excess rainfall, and earthquake disasters and will enable early action after disasters.

While there has been no request to the UK Government for humanitarian support in Jamaica related to flooding, these funds are available for the Government of Jamaica to draw on if that is required.

■ **Loujain al-Hathloul**

Wayne David:

[\[115494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has made to his Saudi Arabian counterpart on the release on medical and compassionate grounds of Loujain al-Hathloul.

James Cleverly:

Our close relationship with Saudi Arabia allows us to raise our concerns about human rights, including on political detainees, in private and in public. We have expressed significant concerns about reports of continuing arrests and arbitrary detentions in Saudi Arabia. Our Ministers, Ambassadors and Embassy in Riyadh have raised concern over the continued detention of Women's Rights Defenders, including Loujain al-Hathloul, at senior levels with the Saudi authorities. We have consistently pressed for due process, raised concerns about the use of solitary confinement, lack of family contact and allegations of torture. I most recently raised the women's rights defenders' cases with the Saudi Ambassador to the UK on 16 November. We continue to raise concerns and are monitoring the situation closely.

The UK signed a statement at the UN Human Rights Council on 15 September. It noted our human rights concerns in Saudi Arabia, regretted the continued detention of Women's Human Rights defenders and called for the release of all political detainees.

■ **Overseas Aid**

David Linden:

[\[115781\]](#)

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, which Government departments applied for those 13 projects in financial year 2018-19 that were covered by an Overseas Security and Justice Assessment; and how many of those projects each of those Government departments applied for.

James Cleverly:

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

David Linden:

[\[115782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 23 October 2020 to Question 106362 on Overseas Aid, which Government departments applied for the 16 projects covered by Overseas Security and Justice Assessments in financial year 2019-20; and how many projects each of those Government departments so applied for.

James Cleverly:

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

David Linden:

[\[116620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 23 October 2020 to Question 106363 on Overseas Aid and pursuant to his oral contribution of 22 October 2020, column 492WH that his Department listens to concerns raised by colleagues from both sides of the House about the need for greater transparency on the Integrated Activity Fund and Gulf Strategy Fund, if he will publish a list of the titles of the 44 projects delivered by the Integrated Activity Fund in 2018-19.

James Cleverly:

As stated on 22 October, we will publish a programme summary covering activities funded by the Gulf Strategy Fund in 2020/21. We do not disclose information related to individual Integrated Activity Fund projects to maintain the confidence and confidentiality of implementers and our Gulf partners.

■ Overseas Aid: Audit

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[114270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has undertaken an assessment of the adequacy of audit arrangements for UK aid since his Department's reorganisation; and if he will make a statement.

Wendy Morton:

We have a wide range of measures in place to protect UK aid, to ensure that it reaches those for whom it is intended. Ensuring appropriate use of funds and achieving value for money has always been a core objective of all spend on Official Development Assistance. The Prime Minister was clear in his statement to the house on 16th June that delivering maximum value for the British taxpayer will continue to be a key objective of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

We are ensuring that controls are in place to provide at least the same level of assurance that was present in the departments prior to the merger regarding appropriate and effective use of UK taxpayers' funds and will continue to do so. Material value contracts will continue to be subject to an annual independent external audit throughout. My Internal Audit team also continue to provide assurance through

a recalibrated, coordinated audit plan for the organisation as well as the usual National Audit Office annual audits of departmental accounts.

■ Overseas Aid: Gulf States

David Linden:

[\[115780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 27 October 2020 to Question 106364 on Overseas Aid, how many projects for each of the financial years (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19 and (d) 2019-20 his Department applied for under the Integrated Activity Fund; what the titles of those projects were; how many of those projects were approved; and how many of those projects were subjected to Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessments.

James Cleverly:

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

■ Peru: Politics and Government

Catherine West:

[\[115746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Peruvian Government on recent civil unrest in that country.

James Cleverly:

Events have been moving very quickly in Peru following the removal of former President Vizcarra by Congress on 9 November. Our Embassy in Peru issued a statement on 13 November expressing concern over developments. On 15 November, following serious unrest and continued concerns over excessive use of force by the authorities and the deaths of two young men caught up in the protests, our Ambassador issued a further communication offering condolences to the families and calling for a formal investigation. Following a vote in Congress on 16 November, Francisco Sagasti was appointed as President on 17 November.

■ Race in the Workplace Review

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[114272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when he plans to publish the MacGregor Review of consular cases.

Nigel Adams:

As part of our ongoing commitment to improving our consular services, Dame Judith Macgregor conducted a review of how we handle complex consular cases last year. I wrote to the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee earlier this week to let him know that a copy of Dame Judith's review has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

■ Saudi Arabia: Detainees

Wayne David:

[\[115495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the answer of 12 November 2020 to Question 111563, if he will raise the detention and treatment of all political detainees in Saudi Arabia at the G20 Summit and press for their immediate release.

James Cleverly:

I raised a number of Human Rights issues, ahead of the G20, with the Saudi Ambassador to the UK on 16 November. Saudi Arabia remains a Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office human rights priority country.

■ Saudi Arabia: Foreign Relations

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[114811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make representations to the Saudi Arabian Government on (a) releasing prisoners of conscience in that country, (b) committing to undertake an in-depth assessment of the circumstances of the death of Jamal Khashoggi and (c) ending that country's role in the conflict in Yemen.

James Cleverly:

Our close relationship with Saudi Arabia allows us to raise our concerns about human rights, including on political detainees, in private and in public. The UK signed a statement at the UN Human Rights Council on 15 September. It noted our human rights concerns in Saudi Arabia, regretted the continued detention of at least five women's human rights defenders, arrested in 2018, and called for the release of all political detainees. I most recently raised our concerns about the cases of the women's rights defenders with the Saudi Ambassador to the UK on 16 November. We continue to raise concerns and are monitoring the situation closely.

The UK has always been clear that Khashoggi's murder was a terrible crime, and that Saudi Arabia must ensure such an atrocity can never happen again. The Foreign Secretary raised the issue during his visit to Riyadh in March this year. The UK has sanctioned twenty Saudi nationals involved in the murder under the global human rights regime.

The UK is deeply concerned by the ongoing conflict and humanitarian crisis in Yemen. We fully support the peace process led by the UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, and urge the parties to engage constructively with him. A political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and to address the worsening humanitarian crisis.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE■ **Brain: Tumours****Seema Malhotra:**[\[109372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that consultants are able to access the £40 million of funding allocated for brain tumour research projects through the National Institute for Health Research.

Edward Argar:

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including brain tumour research. As with other Government funders of health research, the NIHR does not allocate funding for specific disease areas. The level of research spend in a particular area, is driven by factors including scientific potential and the number and scale of successful funding applications.

The Department works closely with research funding partners such as Cancer Research UK, the Medical Research Council, and brain tumour charities, who fund research into new scientific discoveries.

■ **Care Homes: Coronavirus****Steve McCabe:**[\[55850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average waiting time is for a care home that has (a) over and (b) under 50 beds with no suspected covid-19 outbreak to receive covid-19 home testing kits.

Helen Whately:

The data is not held in the format requested.

■ **Carers: Coronavirus****Paula Barker:**[\[95247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government plans to recognise and financially compensate Shared Lives carers for the additional care that they have provided to vulnerable adults during the covid-19 outbreak; and whether he plans to issue guidance to local authorities on that recognition and compensation.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 29 September 2020]: We are grateful for everything that Shared Lives carers do and the compassion and dedication they show in providing care and support to thousands of people.

We understand that many Shared Lives carers have seen their usual pattern of providing care change as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and have shown flexibility and resilience in responding to this situation.

The £546 million extension of the Infection Control Fund which came into place in October contains £126.8 million in support for community care providers. This

includes Shared Lives services which are providing Care Quality Commission-regulated personal care.

Our aim is to ensure carers feel supported the Department has worked with Shared Lives Plus and local government during the pandemic to ensure that local commissioners can take appropriate action to support Shared Lives carers during this time.

■ **Contact Tracing: Computer Software**

Mr Steve Baker:

[\[105362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will prioritise the further development and deployment of a personal covid-19 risk calculator through the NHS App which takes into account an individual's (a) age, (b) co-morbidities, (c) occupation, (d) household size, (e) deprivation, (f) ethnicity, (g) Body Mass Index, (h) blood group and (i) any other factors; and if he will make a statement.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 22 October 2020]: The app is designed to the highest standards of data privacy and data security and does not collect any personal information.

We will continue to evaluate the app and improve it in response to feedback.

■ **Coronavirus**

Sir Christopher Chope:

[\[112993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the proportion of the population that has immunity to covid-19; and if he will make a statement.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 12 November 2020]: The proportion of people in the United Kingdom who are immune to COVID-19 is unknown at present. Government-funded research is ongoing to understand immunity to the virus and whether immunity impacts the chance of transmitting the virus through other means. For example, the large-scale SIREN study is monitoring healthcare workers for reinfections.

■ **Coronavirus: Chesterfield**

Mr Toby Perkins:

[\[83753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people took covid-19 tests at the Chesterfield covid-19 testing centre on 6 August 2020.

Helen Whately:

On 6 August, there were 102 pillar 2 tests for COVID-19 processed in Chesterfield.

■ Coronavirus: Contact Tracing

Rachel Reeves: [\[95618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, who the Senior Responsible Owner is for the NHS Track and Trace programme.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 30 September 2020]: The Senior Responsible Officer for NHS Test and Trace is Jonathan Marron, Director General for Prevention, Community and Social Care.

Rachel Reeves: [\[95619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, under what formal status Baroness Harding heads NHS Test and Trace programme in the absence of a formal ministerial or special advisor role.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 30 September 2020]: Ministers frequently make appointments to a wide variety of roles governed by a huge variety of arrangements and have done over successive administrations.

There is no set process for these appointments but in making these appointments – which are often of a type referred to as ‘direct appointments’ – general public law principles apply.

Appointees are expected to adhere to the Nolan Principles.

Rachel Reeves: [\[95620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) professional rules and (b) behaviour code apply to Baroness Harding in her role as head of the NHS Test and Trace programme.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 30 September 2020]: Baroness Harding adheres to the Nolan Principles, the basis of the ethical standards expected of public office holders, in her role as Head of NHS Test and Trace.

■ Coronavirus: Disease Control

Dr Julian Lewis: [\[110286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an exception to the Rule of 6 covid-19 policy by allowing a higher overall total when applied to families with three or more children.

Nadia Whittome: [\[112138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of having different social distancing restrictions for single parents with young children who are not able to meet another person outside without their children under existing rules.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 5 November 2020]: Until 3 December, tiers requirements will not apply because of the new national restrictions. As part of the national restrictions, however, we continue to recognise providing informal social care to relatives and vulnerable people is of the highest importance.

People may meet with a maximum of one person from another household outdoors for the purposes of exercise and recreation. Children under school age, as well as those dependent on round-the-clock care, such as those with severe disabilities, who are with their parents will not count toward the limit on meeting two people outside. People can continue to exercise outdoors as a household or support bubble.

Esther McVey:[\[112049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate his Department has made of the proportion of the UK population who have been infected with covid-19 to date.

Helen Whately:

The cumulative proportion of the United Kingdom population who have been infected with COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic is not definitively known. Government-funded population studies aim to understand the prevalence and rate of COVID-19 infection, and how the virus is spreading across the UK.

Antibody studies from the Real-time Assessment of Community Transmission (REACT) Study estimate that 3.36 million people were infected with COVID-19 in England to end June 2020. Other surveillance studies such as COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS) and REACT provide estimates at a given time. Most recent estimates of the population in England who have had COVID-19 are 1.20%, from 31 October to 6 November, and 1.30%, from 16 October to 2 November, for CIS and REACT respectively.

Sarah Olney:[\[91907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will make an assessment of expanding the rule of six for Christmas day 2020.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 11 November 2020]: It is too early to determine what restrictions will be required or put in place during the Christmas period. The scientific data will determine what rules should be in place including any provisions for Christmas.

■ Coronavirus: Rotherham**Sarah Champion:**[\[91049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the daily testing capacity of covid-19 testing sites in Rotherham was in the week commencing 7 September 2020; and how many tests were conducted at those testing sites on each day of that week.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 21 September 2020]: We publish data on the number of pillar 2 tests processed in each local authority weekly alongside the Test and Trace statistics publication at GOV.UK at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nhs-test-and-trace-statistics-england-weekly-reports>

The total number of pillar 2 tests processed in Rotherham in the week commencing 7 September was 5,114, with a daily average of 730.

■ Coronavirus: Screening

Mr Peter Bone:

[106933]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of the proportion of covid-19 test results that are false positive.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 2 November 2020]: In June 2020 the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies published a briefing paper on the impact of false positives and false negatives in the United Kingdom's COVID-19 reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction testing programme, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gos-impact-of-false-positives-and-negatives-3-june-2020>

The briefing paper states that the UK operational false positive rate is unknown.

Mr Peter Bone:

[106934]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of the proportion of covid-19 tests that are false negative.

Helen Whately:

In June 2020 the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies published a briefing paper on the impact of false positives and false negatives in the United Kingdom's COVID-19 reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction testing programme, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gos-impact-of-false-positives-and-negatives-3-june-2020>

The briefing paper states that the UK operational false positive rate is unknown.

Mr Marcus Fysh:

[107040]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the operational false positive test rates are of PCR testing for covid-19 identified in quality assurance processes; and how such (a) quality assurance processes and (b) results have changed over time.

Helen Whately:

In June 2020 the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies published a briefing paper on the impact of false positives and false negatives in the United Kingdom's COVID-19 reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction testing programme, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gos-impact-of-false-positives-and-negatives-3-june-2020>

The briefing paper states that the UK operational false positive rate is unknown.

Mr Marcus Fysh:**[110863]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the (a) sensitivity and (b) specificity of the different methods and products used in testing for covid-19 infection; and by what methodologies each of those assessments were so made.

Helen Whately:

On-going assessment of quality, sensitivity and specificity are monitored using quality control materials. Public Health England and the National Health Service have a national quality assurance network and issues with assay performance are managed through an alert system which may result in informing appropriate authorities such as the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency.

When independently introducing new tests into service, laboratories assess the performance of assays including sensitivity and specificity according to the manufacturers stated performance in the Instructions for Use. The standard methodology is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/smi-q-1-commercial-and-in-house-diagnostic-tests-evaluations-and-validations>

Rosie Cooper:**[41928]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 27 April 2020 to Question 34319 on Coronavirus: Screening, which suppliers the Government (a) is working with and (b) has entered into contracts with.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 6 May 2020]: The Government has established partnerships with industry, academia, local government and others to deliver its testing programme - from companies supplying testing kits and supplies to logistics and processing partnerships.

The Department plans to make summaries of all contracts it enters into available on GOV.UK via the contractor finder service.

Peter Aldous:**[45159]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to make covid-19 testing kits available to close relatives of extremely vulnerable people that are presenting symptoms.

Helen Whately:

Testing is available to all symptomatic people across the whole of the United Kingdom. Anyone with any of the three main coronavirus symptoms should self-isolate and access a test as soon as possible, this includes those who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable.

Where a person is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms but cannot order a test for themselves, there is the ability for a member of their family or community to order a test on their behalf. Should their condition worsen they should call 111, their own general practitioner or in the event of a medical emergency, 999.

Andrea Jenkyns:[\[47367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people have received results from being tested for covid-19.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 20 May 2020]: As of 14 October 2020, a total of 7,654,018, or one in eight people in England have received a COVID-19 test at least once since the launch of NHS Test and Trace on 28 May 2020.

Rachael Maskell:[\[66923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason the release of Pillar 2 local authorities was delayed.

Helen Whately:

All upper tier local authorities now have access to record level, including sex, age, occupation and postcode, test and case data. This data also includes individual case data across pillar 1, National Health Service and Public Health England (PHE) laboratories, and pillar 2, commercial laboratories, of the testing programme.

PHE has been routinely sharing data with Directors of Public Health to support outbreak management, including pillar 2 data. On 24 June, PHE started providing daily individual-level, test data, enabled through a data sharing agreement with Directors of Public Health. This contains additional information such as full postcode, age and ethnicity where available. Prior to this, there were dashboards made available by NHS Digital that included high level pillar 2 data to support local authorities.

Data sharing agreements of this type are complex and need robust information governance and protection protocols to safeguard people's data. This data sharing process was developed as quickly as possible within this framework, to ensure accurate and regular data reporting to Directors of Public Health for both pillars of the testing programme.

Jonathan Ashworth:[\[83822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the criteria are for deciding whether a mobile covid-19 testing unit should be (a) opened and (b) closed in an area; and whether local authorities are consulted on those decisions.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 7 September 2020]: Mobile testing units have been spread across the United Kingdom, with consideration given to population, geography and need. The day to day operations for the majority of these testing units will be locally directed by those who understand their communities best. An additional number of units will serve as a strategic reserve, to be deployed to wherever they are needed at short notice.

The deployment process is overseen centrally by the Department and where they are deployed is informed by regional bodies organised into regional coordination groups.

Peter Kyle:[\[87604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish local data on the number of people requesting covid-19 tests using the Government portal who are told that none is available.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 14 September 2020]: The Government does not publish the data requested.

Julian Sturdy:[\[90122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure covid-19 test capacity matches local demand.

Helen Whately:

The Department uses local data and intelligence to establish demand and based on this information offers capacity through its delivery channels of home testing, mobile testing and walk-through and drive-through testing to support the requirement of the area. The Department is continuing to work to boost capacity which has now increased to over 500,000 tests a day.

Rachael Maskell:[\[99660\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason .xls files instead of .xlsx or non-Excel files are being used to transfer covid-19 test data.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 12 October 2020]: A standardised Excel format was used for the purpose of transferring files securely between different parts of the system.

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination**Mr Steve Baker:**[\[91875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress he has made on the National Prioritisation Framework for a covid-19 vaccine.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 11 November 2020]: The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) are the independent experts who provide advice to Government on which vaccine(s) the United Kingdom should use, and which groups to prioritise.

The JCVI and the sub-committee are currently reviewing evidence on risk factors associated with serious disease and mortality from COVID-19. Following a review of the evidence the Committee will develop advice on prioritisation of population and risk groups for any future COVID-19 vaccination programme.

For further information, JCVI's interim advice on prioritisation is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/priority-groups-for-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-advice-from-the-jcvi-25-september-2020>

The minutes of JCVI committee meetings and statements on COVID-19 vaccination are available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/joint-committee-on-vaccination-and-immunisation>

■ **Deloitte: Coronavirus**

Stella Creasy:

[62429]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 11 June 2020 to Question 48980 on Deloitte: Coronavirus, whether his office was involved in the negotiation of the contract with Deloitte to perform covid-19 testing.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 25 June 2020]: The process of contract negotiation is not a process that routinely involves the Secretary of State or his office directly. Officials working on his behalf will act on his authority to negotiate a contract that best meets the needs of the service being proposed.

A summary of Deloitte's contract with the Department will be published in due course.

■ **Demonstrations: Coronavirus**

Hilary Benn:

[114777]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether public (a) demonstrations, (b) marches and (c) picketing are permitted under The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2020.

Sarah Olney:

[91908]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will exempt the practice of peaceful protest from covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 17 November 2020]: The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2020 place necessary and proportionate restrictions on movement, gatherings and businesses. They do not restrict anyone's right to hold or express their views, or to do so in a way that could be construed as a protest, provided these Regulations are adhered to. Similarly, picketing is permitted,

provided the statutory restrictions and code of practice on picketing are followed, as well as the Coronavirus Regulations.

■ Dental Services: Protective Clothing

Alex Norris:

[\[38975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the findings of the recent survey by the British Dental Association on the availability of personal protective equipment to dentists.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 27 April 2020]: Dentists normally purchase personal protective equipment (PPE) through dental wholesale suppliers. We are not aware of wholesalers reporting difficulties in obtaining PPE for onward sale for dentists. However, for PPE which is needed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic for National Health Service dentistry, the Government has made supplies available free of charge for dental contractors. A dedicated PPE portal has been developed to deliver these items. As of 4 November, over 5,100 NHS dental and orthodontic providers in England have registered with the PPE portal and over 36 million items have been delivered.

■ Depressive Illnesses

Jeremy Hunt:

[\[91858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people in England have been diagnosed with (a) depression and (b) anxiety since March 2020.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 11 November 2020]: NHS Digital collects information in the mental health services dataset on people of all ages in contact with secondary mental health services in England who have a recorded diagnosis of a mental disorder, or who have been referred for talking and psychological therapies for conditions such as depression or anxiety.

However, NHS Digital has advised that recording levels of such diagnoses in the dataset are currently too low for any meaningful interpretation.

■ Health Services: Ethnic Groups

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[\[91865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the ability of the (a) NHS and (b) CQC to ensure that BAME populations in deprived areas with (a) heart failure and (b) other long term conditions are represented in (A) audits, (B) guidelines, (C) clinical trials, and (D) medical research.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 11 November 2020]: The specific assessment mentioned in the question has not been made. NHS England and NHS Improvement launched the

independent NHS Race and Health Observatory with NHS Confederation this year, which will work to identify and tackle the specific health challenges facing black, Asian and minority ethnic populations in deprived areas. NHS England and NHS Improvement has a programme of work on cardiac conditions, and in common with NHS Long Term Plan objectives, this has a focus on reducing health inequalities, including using data from clinic audits to review and improve NHS services.

■ Health Services: Private Sector

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[96906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the cost to the public purse is of private sector health contracts since March 2020.

Edward Argar:

As of the beginning of November 2020, 937 contracts worth an estimated £17.8 billion have been awarded by the Department and its executive agencies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic for a wide range of products and services, including personal protective equipment, the Test and Trace initiative, ventilators, IT, logistics and medicines.

■ Heart Diseases: Coronavirus

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[91862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what representations his Department has received from the British Society for Heart Failure on changes in the level of patients who are developing heart failure through not presenting at hospital with heart attack symptoms during the covid-19 outbreak.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 11 November 2020]: The Department has not received any representations from the British Society for Heart Failure regarding this specific issue.

With a rise in COVID-19 activity, we have been clear that non-COVID-19 services will be maintained as far as possible and clinically urgent patients should continue to be treated first.

Throughout the summer and autumn of 2020, the National Health Service has run an ongoing media campaign 'Help us to help you', encouraging patients to seek urgent medical help when they are unwell, including clear messaging for patients with heart attack symptoms to call 999.

One of the ambitions of the NHS Long Term Plan is to raise awareness of the symptoms of heart failure and to ensure early and rapid access to diagnostic tests and treatment. This work remains a priority for NHS England and NHS Improvement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[91863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to accommodate a potential increase in cases of heart failure arising from delayed

presentation and treatment for heart attack symptoms during the covid-19 outbreak; and what advice he has sought from heart failure specialists to inform his policy on that matter.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 11 November 2020]: With a rise in COVID-19 activity, we have been clear that non-COVID-19 services will be maintained as far as possible and clinically urgent patients should continue to be treated first. In October 2020 NHS England and NHS Improvement provided service protection plans to regional teams to ensure that critical services, such as cardiac surgery for severe valvular disease patients, are maintained as far as possible.

NHS England and NHS Improvement promoted service restoration as a priority, including heart failure diagnostic and treatment services, as soon as the peak of the first wave of the pandemic began to decline.

In partnership with NHS England and NHS Improvement, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has also developed heart disease guidelines and evidence summaries with support from clinical specialists, the specialist societies and Royal Colleges, to help the National Health Service and social care respond quickly to the ongoing challenges of the pandemic.

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[\[91864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what research his Department is undertaking to identify the most vulnerable people to heart failure as a result of covid-19; and what community outreach measures are in place to ensure accessibility to treatment for the BAME patients who are vulnerable to heart failure.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 11 November 2020]: The Department has not undertaken the specific research. However, NHS Digital, the National Institute for Cardiovascular Outcomes Research and the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership with NHS England and NHS Improvement, have been working on data collation and analysis on the impact of COVID-19 on cardiovascular disease services.

The use of national datasets enabled by this work will help inform decisions around those who are most at risk of heart failure as a result of COVID-19. This work will also increase our understanding of the longer-term impacts of COVID-19 on cardiovascular disease and inform future policy.

■ Infant Mortality

Jeremy Hunt:

[\[91859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many (a) stillbirths and (b) neonatal deaths occurred in the NHS in each month from 2015 to 2020.

Jeremy Hunt:

[\[91860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many (a) stillbirths (b) neonatal deaths occurred in the NHS in each month from 2015 to 2020.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 11 November 2020]: This information is not collected centrally.

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

Daisy Cooper:

[111630]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 lockdown restrictions on the mental health of children and young people (a) living in a household that has fallen behind with financial payments, (b) living in a household that is domestically volatile and (c) attending school settings that do not provide face-to-face mental health support services within the educational setting.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

The 'Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2020 - Wave 1 follow up to the 2017 survey', published on 22 October 2020, found that:

- children aged 5-16 years with a probable mental disorder were more than twice as likely to live in a household that had fallen behind with payments than children unlikely to have a mental disorder; and
- among 11-16 year old girls, 63.8% with a probable mental disorder had seen or heard an argument among adults in the household, compared with 46.8% of those unlikely to have a mental disorder. The association was not evident in boys.

The report is available at the following link:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2020-wave-1-follow-up>

Tim Farron:

[114128]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to page 20 of the NHS mental health implementation plan 2019-20 to 2023-4, what the timeline is for introducing a comprehensive offer for 0-25 year olds that reaches across mental health services for children and young people and adults in South Lakeland.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

[Holding answer 16 November 2020]: The Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Transformation Programme for Lancashire and South Cumbria has as its goal to define an integrated emotional and mental health offer for 0-25 year olds. The initial phase of the programme has resulted in a redesigned model of emotional and mental health services based on the THRIVE model for 0-19 year olds, which has been co-produced with service users and carers. Phased implementation of this model is planned to begin from February 2021.

From April 2021, the intention is to commence work to define the offer for 0-25 year olds that reaches across mental health services for children, young people and young adults, providing an integrated approach across health, social care, education and the voluntary sector.

■ Mental Health: Children

Rushanara Ali:

[91885]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on children's mental health and wellbeing of banning youth sport during the November 2020 covid-19 lockdown.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

We recognise how critical sport and physical activity is for children and young people's physical and mental wellbeing and their personal and social development. Schools remain open and children can participate in physical education and sport where it is part of the curriculum or part of the core timetable of the school.

Unfortunately, most organised children's sport outside school activity has had to cease temporarily during this second period of lockdown, but sport and physical activity is permitted as part of other supervised activities, such as wraparound care or childcare facilities, where it is necessary to enable parents or carers to work, seek work, attend education or training, or for respite care.

■ Neurology: Health Services

Simon Hoare:

[98725]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has to (a) increase provision of rehabilitation services for people with (i) neurological conditions and (ii) multiple sclerosis who have become deconditioned as a result of covid-19 lockdown restrictions and disruption of healthcare services and (b) provide additional provision of those services to meet the needs of people recovering from covid-19.

Edward Argar:

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, NHS England and NHS Improvement advised in-person consultations should only take place when absolutely necessary. Providers have been rolling out remote consultations using video, telephone, email and text message services as a priority, including for those with neurological conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

In-person rehabilitation services should now be resumed. The Association of British Neurologists published guidance on recommencing neurology services in the recovery phase of the pandemic, assessing which services and patients require urgent prioritisation. NHS England and NHS Improvement have also provided prioritisation advice for restarting community services, which aims to meet the needs of people with neurological conditions safely and effectively. This guidance can be found at the following links:

cdn.ymaws.com/www.theabn.org/resource/collection/65C334C7-30FA-45DB-93AA-74B3A3A20293/20.05.20_ABN_Restarting_Neurology_Services_post_COVID_v1.pdf

www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/covid-19-prioritisation-within-community-health-services-with-annex_19-march-2020/

■ NHS Trusts: Coronavirus

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[60757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS Trusts in England are piloting routine PCR covid testing for staff.

Helen Whately:

We have made testing available to all symptomatic National Health Service staff as a priority. We are also testing those who are asymptomatic in specific circumstances where appropriate. For NHS workers specifically, NHS England has recently published guidance on when testing of this nature might be appropriate, including where an incident has taken place, an outbreak or where high prevalence has been established.

Following a pilot with 34 trusts, the NHS is now rolling out regular testing of asymptomatic patient-facing NHS staff to include all trusts, using lateral flow testing devices.

■ NHS Trusts: Food

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[113128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that the recommendations of the NHS Hospital Food Review are adopted by NHS hospital trusts.

Edward Argar:

On 26 October the National Health Service Hospital Food Review was published and the Government announced that an expert group of NHS caterers, dietitians and nurses will lead on reviewing and implementing the recommendations for tastier, more nutritious food for patients, staff and visitors.

■ NHS: Computer Software

Chi Onwurah:

[\[102071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which part of (a) PHE or (b) Serco was using the old Excel format which led to NHS TEst and Trace reporting error; and whether his Department has undertaken an audit of the use of obsolete applications in the NHS.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 16 October 2020]: Public Health England has taken action to ensure that all software is maintained with necessary updates. The IT incident related to a failure in the process for moving files between different IT systems and was not caused by a failure to update software. Increased testing volumes meant that some Excel files used in the transfer process exceeded the file size threshold and so were not uploaded. The appropriateness of IT systems used continues to be regularly reviewed and improvements made where needed.

■ Protective Clothing

Jonathan Ashworth:

[94429]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many (a) full-length surgical gowns, (b) FFP3 masks, (c) pairs of gloves, (d) visors and (e) surgical masks were in the stockpile of personal protective equipment on the most recent date for which that information is available; and how many of those items were in that stockpile in September 2019.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 28 September 2020]: We have stabilised the United Kingdom personal protective equipment (PPE) supply chain. Since 25 February 2020, the Department has distributed over 4.9 billion PPE items for use by health and social care services in England, which includes gowns, gloves, visors and surgical masks. We have around 32 billion PPE items on order and this month, we will have a four month stockpile of all COVID-19 critical PPE in place, with a tremendous contribution from UK manufacturers.

‘Personal protective equipment (PPE) strategy: stabilise and build resilience’, published on 28 September and available on GOV.UK, sets out how the Government is moving beyond the emergency COVID-19 response to stabilise and build resilience. We are confident we have secured enough supply for this winter period and that we have the processes and logistics in place to distribute PPE to where it is needed.

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.

Justin Madders:

[95111]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many items of (a) surgical masks, (b) FFP3 masks, (c) gowns, (d) gloves and (e) eye protection are stockpiled; and what estimate he has made of how long those stockpiles of personal protective equipment will last.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 29 September 2020]: We have stabilised the United Kingdom personal protective equipment (PPE) supply chain. Since 25 February 2020, the Department has distributed over 4.9 billion PPE items for use by health and social care services in England, which includes gowns, gloves, visors and surgical masks. We have around 32 billion PPE items on order and this month, we will have a four month stockpile of all COVID-19 critical PPE in place, with a tremendous contribution from UK manufacturers.

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■ Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust: Health Services

Daniel Kawczynski:

[101260]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to allocate £533 million to Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS trust to enable it to develop the outline business case for the Future Fit Scheme.

Edward Argar:

We are pleased to confirm that £6 million funding has been approved in principle to allow Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust to develop their plans and produce a business case for this scheme.

The business case process is led by the Trust and includes a number of stages. The Trust are currently at Strategic Outline Case (SOC) stage. The SOC should include a range of options, including option/s within the original allocation (£312 million) and will go through a necessary process of assurance.

The Department will continue to work closely with the Trust to understand how the right support can be provided centrally, including any further early funding, to develop an affordable case for the scheme and to maximise the impact of this funding.

Once the final Full Business Case has been developed and approved, full funding for the build will be provided subject to the usual approval procedures.

■ Social Services: Protective Clothing

Jonathan Ashworth:

[32258]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which social care providers have received additional stocks of personal protective equipment for staff since 1 January 2020.

Jo Churchill:

Since the start of the pandemic, we have provided an emergency supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) to the adult social care sector through the PPE portal, Local Resilience Forums (LRFs), the National Supply Disruption Response, as well as by supplying PPE to wholesalers for onward sale to the adult social care sector. Recognising the increase in cost and demand for PPE this year, in the recently published Adult Social Care Winter Plan the Government committed to the provision of free PPE for adult social care providers for COVID-19 needs until March 2021.

Since 25 February 2020 the Department has distributed over 4.9 billion PPE items for use by health and social care services. This includes 252 million items to designated wholesalers for onward sale to adult social care providers, as well as 209 million items to LRFs. Since 28 September 2020 over 33.8 million items of PPE have also been distributed to local authorities that no longer use LRFs.

As of 18 November, over 19,500 adult social care providers, including care homes and domiciliary care providers, have registered with the PPE portal to receive free PPE to meet the increased need arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Up to and including 15 November, we estimate that over 310 million items have been delivered to adult social care providers through the PPE portal. This includes over 190 million items to adult residential care providers and over 120 million items to adult domiciliary care providers via the portal.

■ **Suicide: Bereavement Counselling**

Jeremy Hunt:

[91857]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress the Government has made on the establishment of suicide bereavement support services.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

Under the NHS Long Term Plan, we have set out our plans to invest £57 million to support local suicide prevention plans and establish suicide bereavement support services in all areas of England by 2023/24.

We have committed that all local systems will have suicide bereavement support services providing timely and appropriate support to families and staff by 2023/24 and have provided funding to 40% of local systems in 2020/21 for them to establish and deliver such services. This is in line with the planning and delivery expectations set out in the Mental Health Implementation Plan 2019/20-2023/24.

HOME OFFICE

■ **Asylum: Glasgow**

Chris Stephens:

[115724]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the review of asylum support and accommodation provided in Glasgow has been completed; and when she plans to publish the findings of that review.

Chris Philp:

We are committed to improving accommodation and support services experienced by asylum seekers, as evidenced by the evaluation of the provisions in Glasgow during the pandemic and our commitment to act on the findings.

The evaluation is nearing completion, and the sharing of the relevant actions will be considered once the evaluation has been concluded.

■ Asylum: Hotels and Military Bases

Chris Stephens:

[115723]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers were in (a) full board hotels and (b) full board barracks in the UK on 30 October 2020; and how many hotels are being used for that purpose as of 16 November 2020.

Chris Philp:

The current global pandemic has presented us with significant challenges when it comes to the provision of asylum accommodation, including sourcing sufficient suitable accommodation to meet demand.

The use of hotels and wider government facilities are a short-term measure and we are working to move people to longer-term dispersal accommodation as soon as it becomes available.

The latest published Immigration Statistics detail the number of asylum seekers accommodated in each local authority area, which includes those in hotel and wider government facilities. These statistics can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets#asylum-support>.

The Home Office does not publish a breakdown of these statistics which disaggregates the type of accommodation being used to accommodate asylum seekers.

■ Asylum: Housing

Patrick Grady:

[99002]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her timescale is for moving asylum seekers in (a) Glasgow and (b) elsewhere in the UK from the hotel accommodation to which they were transferred back to appropriate accommodation.

Chris Philp:

It is Home Office policy to move people into suitable Dispersed Accommodation (DA) once their claim for support has been assessed

The current global pandemic has presented significant challenges in relation to the provision of asylum accommodation. To mitigate these challenges, we have had to source sufficient accommodation to meet demand, including hotels.

Hotels are utilised as contingency accommodation on a temporary basis, whilst pressures in the system are addressed and hotel use will be discontinued as soon as the Home Office is able to do so. There are currently 5,168 asylum seekers accommodated in Glasgow, of which a peak of 405 were in hotels at one point, but this has now been reduced to 237 and we are aiming to get to zero as soon as practicable.

Availability of DA is crucial to plans and timelines for reductions in hotel use. A comprehensive plan for the cessation of asylum support for ineligible cases has been

established with input from Local Authorities, Other Government Departments and Stakeholders to assist in this regard.

180 Local Authorities out of 414 across the United Kingdom currently allow asylum seekers to be dispersed in their area. In Scotland, only Glasgow City Council has agreed to allow the dispersal of asylum seekers within their Local Authority area. We would encourage Local Authorities across the United Kingdom, including Scotland to participate so that we can reduce the number of people accommodated in hotels and create an equitable system of asylum dispersal.

We will continue to work with Local Authorities across the UK to increase the number of DA properties available to our accommodation service providers. In Glasgow we attend fortnight partnership boards with Glasgow City Council and Scottish Government to discuss DA procurement and hotel reduction.

■ Asylum: Interviews

Tim Farron:

[\[109253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which external supplier is providing staff to deliver her Department's proof of concept pilot for the outsourcing of asylum interviews.

Tim Farron:

[\[109254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what criteria will be applied to evaluate the success of the proof of concept pilot for the outsourcing of asylum interviews.

Tim Farron:

[\[109255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's proof of concept pilot on the outsourcing of asylum interviews, what comparative assessment her Department plans to make of the (a) timeliness and (b) quality of asylum interviews conducted by outsourced staff and by staff of her Department.

Tim Farron:

[\[109256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's proof of concept pilot on the outsourcing of asylum interviews, whether asylum claimants interviewed under that proof of concept pilot will be informed that they are being interviewed by a third party rather than an employee of her Department.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office is exploring many options to reduce the number of outstanding asylum claims. Alongside seeking temporary resource from within the Home Office and other government departments, we are also exploring with third-party suppliers, through a proof of concept, to test the viability of whether they can deliver the support required as a temporary, short term measure. Asylum interviews have not been outsourced.

At this stage we are only exploring the potential feasibility of using third party resource to support asylum interviewing, however the name of the third-party supplier who is assisting with the proof of concept is commercially sensitive at this stage.

Any future service, beyond a proof of concept, would be subject to an appropriate commercial process subject to any recommendations being agreed to do so. Any future service would increase interview throughput, help rebalance the system, but also speed up decision making, reduce the number of outstanding cases and support costs.

The Home Office will evaluate the success of the proof of concept pilot by conducting an evaluation once we have completed the proof of concept exercise. The evaluation will include a lessons learnt exercise, inform findings and conclusions on any future service requirement.

To ensure external suppliers are suitably equipped to carry out the role, third-party interviewing officers will complete a bespoke training package, delivered by the qualified asylum operations training team, that has been designed specifically to meet their needs. Anyone who conducts asylum interviews receives thorough training to ensure they are fully equipped for the role. The Home Office is not planning to disclose to a claimant if they have been interviewed by a third party rather than a Home Office employee as we expect the experience to equal the existing high standards already in place.

To guarantee governance and accountability, mechanisms are in place for the oversight of third-party interviews, the department has a quality assurance process which assesses the quality of decisions, interviews and the application of Home Office policy.

■ Asylum: Legal Aid Scheme

Tim Farron:

[115578]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 5 November 2020 to Question 109252 on Asylum: Legal Aid Scheme, what guidance she has issued to Migrant Help on advising asylum seekers housed at the (a) Napier Barracks in Folkestone and (b) Pengally Training Camp in Pembrokeshire on where they can access legally aided immigration advice.

Chris Philp:

The Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) service, operated by Migrant Help is a single integrated and national service for asylum seekers.

The AIRE service will provide advice and guidance to service users on the asylum process, their rights and signposting different services.

It will also provide asylum seekers with a single point of contact, independent from the accommodation providers and the Home Office, to report issues.

AIRE are contracted to provide information on the availability of legal advice and representation and signposting of Service User's to the Legal Aid Agency, where appropriate upon induction into temporary accommodation.

We are working with Migrant Help to pilot additional measures for legal aid signposting in temporary accommodation, including Napier and Penally.

■ Bail

Alex Cunningham:

[115651]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what number and proportion of suspects in criminal cases have been bailed to return in each of the last five years.

Kit Malthouse:

Since April 2017 the Home Office has collected information on the numbers of individuals released on pre-charge bail by police forces in England and Wales. These data are published as part of the annual 'Police Powers and Procedures' statistical release, available in Annex B here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/935355/police-powers-procedures-mar20-hosb3120.pdf

Data are not available on the proportion of suspects in criminal cases that have been bailed to return.

The police retain the ability to use pre-charge bail where necessary and proportionate, including to protect witnesses and victims.

■ Churches: Theft and Vandalism

Jim Shannon:

[91968]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with police forces on steps they are taking to protect churches from (a) theft and (b) vandalism during lockdown.

Kit Malthouse:

Throughout the pandemic, the police have managed resource to be able to respond to new local pressures as well as maintaining their response levels to existing types of crime including those affecting religious properties. Forces will continue to work with local communities' groups on prevention measures and opportunities to stop unnecessary crimes from happening.

The Government is committed to cutting crime and is investing in prevention to ensure that every opportunity is taken to stop unnecessary crimes from happening. The Government is helping to protect churches from hate crime through the Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme. The 2020-21 round launched on 16 June with an uplift to £3.2 million- double the amount awarded last year. Over the last four years we have awarded 183 grants worth approximately 3 million to places of worship across England and Wales - with 76 churches receiving funding.

■ Crime: Retail Trade

Bambos Charalambous:

[114284]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effect on levels of incidence of crime of the density of shops selling alcohol.

Kit Malthouse:

Research commissioned by Public Health England assessing the relationship between the density of alcohol-selling outlets, consumption and alcohol-related harm has shown mixed results. While there is some evidence of a positive relationship between the density of alcohol-selling outlets and levels of crime this is only one of many possible factors.

Consideration of the possible impact on local levels of crime of a high density of shops selling alcohol is a matter for licensing authorities. These decisions are often based on a wide range of factors including local intelligence provided by the police on alcohol-related crime.

A licensing authority may complete a cumulative impact assessment to help it to limit licences granted in areas where there is evidence to show that the number or density of licensed premises in the area may be contributing to problems that are undermining licensing objectives.

■ Dangerous Dogs

Andrew Rosindell:

[91954]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps Police Forces are taking to protect the welfare of dogs seized under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 given the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the time taken for court cases to be heard and the extended periods of time in kennels.

Kit Malthouse:

Every police force must have a good, robust strategy and policy for dealing with dangerous dogs. The policy must include identifying secure kennels that can be contracted by police should it be necessary for a dangerous dog to be seized prior to any prosecution. The welfare of any dog seized is also a factor the police need to consider, and they should note their duty to ensure the welfare of animals under their control (s9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006).

Advice and Guidance for enforcers of the dangerous dog law can be found here-
https://ukhomeoffice.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/PROC1170/_layouts/15/guestaccess.aspx?e=lUMGpi&share=EWo-7Fafr4RDvYyYsznCEigBnzGLkpB3Vbm_QH8PTu710Q

■ Drugs: Organised Crime

Sajid Javid:

[\[114138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to tackle county lines drug trafficking in Worcestershire.

Kit Malthouse:

This Government is determined to crack down on the county lines gangs who are exploiting our children and have a devastating impact on our communities.

That is why we are investing £25m to boost efforts to tackle county lines. Our overall package launched in October last year includes: expanding the National County Lines Co-ordination Centre; increased disruption on the rail networks by the British Transport Police County Lines Taskforce; police intensification in three key exporting areas (including in the West Midlands region and Metropolitan and Merseyside Police areas); investment in new technology; and increased support for victims. Our funding has also supported operations across England and Wales, including with West Mercia Police.

Our investment is already delivering results. Following the £5m we invested in 2019-2020, the Metropolitan Police, Merseyside, West Midlands and British Transport Police closed nearly 140 deal lines, seized cash and drugs with a total value of over £3 million, and made over 100 weapons seizures between November 2019 and March 2020.

The most recent county lines 'week of intensification', which all police forces took part in and was co-ordinated by NCLCC, took place in September and resulted in over 1,000 arrests, drugs worth more than £1m seized and over 1,500 vulnerable individuals safeguarded.

■ Entertainments: Licensing

Dr Luke Evans:

[\[114337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of extending the time limit on entertainment licences from 28 days to 56 days in 2021.

Kit Malthouse:

A premises licence which gives permission for licensable activities defined as entertainment can allow those activities to take place on every day of the year. Temporary event notices (TENs) permit licensable activities to take place on unlicensed premises. TENs can also be given for licensed premises where the proposed event would not be permitted under the terms of the licence.

The maximum total duration of the events authorised by TENs in relation to individual premises is 21 days in a calendar year. The TENs system is intended as a light touch process. In the light of this, it is right that the numbers and duration of temporary events in each year are limited as they are.

■ Extradition

Stella Creasy: [\[91962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she plans to take to expand the application of the Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Act 2020 to EU member states after 21 December 2020; what the timescale is for expanding the application of that legislation; what step she is taking to ensure that UK authorities have the power to arrest based on Interpol Red Notices issued by EU member states after 31 December 2020.

James Brokenshire:

The Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Act 2020 ('The Act') provides UK law enforcement agencies with the power of arrest on an international arrest alert (typically in the form of an Interpol Notice) which has been certified by the National Crime Agency. The Act was amended at Third Reading in the House of Commons on 8 September to add EU Member States to the Schedule of countries within scope of this power.

The Act will be commenced at the end of the Transition Period and its provisions were drafted to allow commencement for the EU Member States only should it prove to be necessary and not if there is an agreement which provides for the continuation of a warrant-based system after 31 December.

■ Fireworks: Antisocial Behaviour

Bill Esterson: [\[114847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of trends in the level of anti-social behaviour in relation to the discharge of fireworks in (a) Sefton, (b) North West England, (c) England and Wales.

Bill Esterson: [\[114849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of the Chief Constable of Lancashire's recommendation for the public sale of fireworks to be banned.

Kit Malthouse:

There is a comprehensive regulatory framework already in place for fireworks that controls the sale, availability and use of fireworks, as well as setting a curfew and noise limit. The Government remains committed to promoting the safe and considerate use of fireworks through the effective legislative framework and through non-legislative measures – a position also recommended by the Petitions Committee in its 2019 inquiry into fireworks (HC103).

The Government launched a public awareness campaign for the 2020 fireworks season. The focus of the campaign was to educate people on how to buy, use, store and dispose of fireworks safely; ensure retailers know and understand their responsibilities when selling fireworks; and, promote the considerate use of fireworks,

so that people and animals can be better protected from any negative effects that may be caused by fireworks.

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 provides the police, local authorities and other local agencies with a range of tools and powers that they can use to respond quickly and effectively to anti-social behaviour. The latest police recorded incident data released on 28 October showed a continued fall in anti-social behaviour (ASB) as of June 2020 (down 33% since 2012/13). A regional assessment of trends in the level of anti-social behaviour in relation to the discharge of fireworks was not included.

■ High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention

Royston Smith:

[113600]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of a waking watch in tackling fire safety in high-rise residential buildings.

James Brokenshire:

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, it is for the Responsible Person to ensure appropriate fire safety measures are in place within their building. This can include, where relevant, ensuring that there is a waking watch in place, that this is tested and works. Local Fire and Rescue Services and other enforcers of the Fire Safety Order can take action where appropriate if the responsible person fails to comply with their duties under the order.

The revised guidance simultaneous evacuation guidance produced by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) reflects best practice and can be located at <https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/Simultaneous-evacuation-guidance>.

The guidance encourages greater use of more cost-effective measures such as alarm systems to replace or reduce dependency on waking watch wherever possible. This is further supported by the publication of the costs of waking watches on 16 October, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-safety-programme-waking-watch-costs>

■ Immigrants: Finance

Stephen Timms:

[112977]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the transparency data on no recourse to public funds applications to change conditions of leave for quarter 3 of 2020.

Stephen Timms:

[112978]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 2 October to Question 85927, whether the data on no recourse to public funds applications

to change conditions of leave can meaningfully be broken down further; and if she will make a statement.

Chris Philp:

Data relating to 'no recourse to public funds applications to change conditions of leave' was published on 30 July.

The Home Office is committed to updating this data quarterly, as it does for most other statistics relating to the immigration system, and we will release it as part of the next quarterly migration transparency data publication. Our statisticians keep this data under review and will look to provide additional breakdowns of the statistics where possible.

■ **Immigrants: Sleeping Rough**

Tim Farron:

[\[115576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has in place to support non-UK nationals who are experiencing rough sleeping to ensure that they do not face deportation when new rules come into force in December 2020.

Tim Farron:

[\[115577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure non-UK nationals who are experiencing rough sleeping will not face deportation.

Chris Philp:

The new Immigration Rules make provision for the refusal or cancellation of permission to stay in the UK on the basis of rough sleeping. The new rule will apply on a discretionary basis to non-EEA citizens from 1 December 2020 and to newly arriving EEA citizens from 1 January 2021. The provision will be used sparingly and only where individuals have repeatedly refused support offers such as accommodation and are engaged in persistent anti-social behaviour.

A person is expected to leave the UK if their leave is cancelled or refused. If they do not choose to leave voluntarily we may enforce their removal. They will not be subject to deportation action which is reserved for foreign national offenders with serious and persistent criminality as well as for reasons of national security.

■ **Immigration: Health Services**

Margaret Ferrier:

[\[114914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will waive the Immigration Health Surcharge for British Nationals (Overseas) who apply for UK visas from January 2021.

Kevin Foster:

The bespoke new Hong Kong British National (Overseas) Visa route recognises our historic and moral commitment to British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) citizens in Hong Kong, giving them the option to live in the UK if they decide that is an appropriate choice for them.

It is reasonable to expect BN(O) citizens coming to the UK to show they can support themselves when they arrive. It is only right that they contribute towards our brilliant NHS through the Immigration Health Surcharge. The Immigration Health Surcharge offers excellent value to BN(O) citizens given the comprehensive access to the range of NHS services it provides.

■ **Police Community Support Officers: West Midlands**

Colleen Fletcher:

[114907]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of PCSOs in (a) the West Midlands and (b) Coventry in each year since 2010.

Kit Malthouse:

The Home Office collects and publishes data on the size of the police workforce by Police Force Area in England and Wales on a biannual basis in the 'Police workforce, England and Wales' statistical bulletin.

Data are collected at Police Force Area level only, and lower levels of geography such as Coventry are not held by the Home Office.

The latest available data on Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) numbers covers the situation as at 31 March 2020 each year since 2007. These can be found on both a full-time equivalent (FTE) and headcount basis in the Open Data Tables published alongside the 'Police Workforce, England and Wales' statistics, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables>

■ **Police: West Midlands**

Colleen Fletcher:

[114208]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of police officers in (a) the West Midlands and (b) Coventry in each year since 2010.

Kit Malthouse:

The Home Office collects and publishes data on the size of the police workforce by Police Force Area in England and Wales on a biannual basis in the 'Police workforce, England and Wales' statistical bulletin.

Data are collected at Police Force Area level only, and lower levels of geography such as Coventry are not held by the Home Office.

The latest available data comparable to figures published on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis covers the situation as at 31 March 2020 each year since 2007. These can be found on both an FTE and headcount basis in the Open Data Tables published alongside the 'Police Workforce, England and Wales' statistics, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables>

More recent data covering the situation as at 30 September 2020 are available. However, these are collected on a headcount basis only and are not comparable to FTE figures published in Home Office statistical releases such as 'Police workforce, England and Wales'.

These more recent data are available in the supplementary tables accompanying the new 'Police Officer Uplift' bulletin published by the Home Office in response to the UK government's manifesto pledge to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers by March 2023, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-officer-uplift-statistics>

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Royston Smith:

[114958]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many residential high-rise buildings that applied to the Building Safety Fund do not meet fire safety standards as a result of building design quality on the part of the building developer.

Christopher Pincher:

The Building Safety Fund is aimed at making sure those living in buildings covered by the fund are safe by remediating unsafe non-Aluminium Composite Material cladding systems that do not meet fire safety standards. The Department is continuing to work with building owners to progress applications for the Building Safety Fund and published registration statistics on 30 September, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remediation-of-non-acm-buildings#building-safety-fund-registration-statistics>.

Royston Smith:

[114959]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made regarding the potential liability of developers that have sold flats in high-rise private residential buildings that do not meet fire safety standards.

Christopher Pincher:

Matters of liability are specific to individual buildings, and the Department is not in a position to make individual assessments of the facts and circumstances surrounding each individual building.

Royston Smith:

[114960]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking in relation to developers that have sold flats in high-rise private residential buildings that do not meet fire safety standards.

Christopher Pincher:

The Department has ongoing engagement with developers and building owners of private sector high-rise residential buildings with unsafe cladding. This has led to the remediation of over half of high-rise residential buildings with unsafe Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding being funded by the developer, freeholder or through warranty claims, without passing the costs onto leaseholders. Furthermore, the Private Sector ACM Remediation Fund and the Building Safety Fund for the remediation of buildings with unsafe non-ACM cladding both require applicants to demonstrate that they have taken all reasonable steps to recover the costs of replacing the unsafe cladding from those responsible through insurance claims, warranties or legal action.

Royston Smith:[\[114961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department has issued to leaseholders who plan to take action against the developer of their private high-rise residential buildings, whose homes were already not fire safe when the developer sold them their homes.

Christopher Pincher:

Matters of liability and any related action are specific to individual buildings, and the Department cannot comment or provide any specific guidance on these. However, the Government provided additional funding to the Leasehold Advisory Service (LEASE) to provide independent, free, initial advice to leaseholders on building safety issues to ensure they are aware of their rights and are supported to understand the terms of their leases.

■ Buildings: Energy**Mr Toby Perkins:**[\[114139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what representations his Department has received on the compatibility of U-values and energy ratings for doors and their fire safety rating.

Christopher Pincher:

We are not aware of any representations that have been made on this specific issue. We are in regular discussions with relevant industry bodies and consult widely before making any changes to ensure that the standards we set are achievable.

Mr Toby Perkins:[\[114140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he plans to review legislation regarding energy efficiency standards for doors to address the potential conflict between energy efficiency and fire safety.

Christopher Pincher:

We are currently undertaking technical reviews of both Part B (Fire safety) and Part L (Conservation of fuel and power) of the Building Regulations and are in regular

discussions with relevant industry bodies. We consult widely before making any changes to ensure that the standards we set are achievable.

■ Council Housing: Evictions

Abena Oppong-Asare:

[115840]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department has issued guidance to local authorities on banning the eviction of people living in local authority housing during the November 2020 covid-19 lockdown.

Christopher Pincher:

On 16 November we changed the law in England to ensure bailiffs do not enforce evictions over this period of national restrictions or the Christmas period. This means that no eviction notices may be served until 11 January and, given the 14 day notice period required, no evictions are expected until 25 January at the earliest. The only exceptions to this are for the most serious cases, such as anti-social behaviour and perpetrators of domestic abuse in social housing.

Guidance for landlords, including local authority landlords, is published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-and-renting-guidance-for-landlords-tenants-and-local-authorities>.

Guidance for social landlords on understanding the possession action process is published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding-the-possession-action-process-guidance-for-landlords-and-tenants>.

We will aim to provide further guidance regarding the operation of the exemptions shortly.

■ Council Housing: Sales

Dr Dan Poulter:

[114824]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he plans to extend the time frame in which local authorities can spend the capital receipts from the sale of council and social housing during the covid-19 outbreak.

Christopher Pincher:

To support local authority house building during this unprecedented time, we extended the deadline for local authorities to spend receipts arising from sales of their homes by an additional six months. This has enabled many of them to catch up with their spending plans and deliver replacement social housing.

We are currently looking into requests for further extensions and will inform authorities of the outcome as soon as possible.

■ Housing: Construction

Jim Shannon:

[114185]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that (a) all new homes are built to high

standards; (b) those standards do not negatively affect the health and wellbeing of their occupants; and whether he plans to review the regulatory framework of the built environment to promote and improve health and wellbeing in communities.

Christopher Pincher:

It is a priority for this Government to build more high quality, environmentally friendly homes. We have committed to review the roadmap to the Future Homes Standard to ensure that implementation takes place to the shortest possible timeline. We have already consulted on a meaningful and achievable interim increase to the energy efficiency standards for new homes as a first step towards the Future Homes Standard. We will be publishing the Government response to this consultation as soon as possible, which will include a roadmap to the Future Homes Standard.

The National Planning Policy Framework encourages developments that promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. It says that planning policies should assess the need for different types of open space in each area, and then seek to accommodate it. In their report the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission made nature one of their priority themes and noted that green spaces should be integral to the urban fabric. MHCLG welcomes their recommendations and looks forward to responding to their report in due course.

The *Planning for the Future* White Paper includes a proposal by Government to enable more and better green spaces in development. The consultation closed on 29 October 2020 and we are currently considering the responses received. The Government will publish a response in due course which will set out any decisions and associated proposed implementation.

The supporting National Design Guide recognises that well-designed homes and buildings support the health and wellbeing of their users and all who experience them. The forthcoming government guidance on local Design Codes will set out more detailed parameters for key elements of successful design.

Colleen Fletcher:

[114911]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many homes have been built on land that was previously (a) green belt and (b) brownfield in each of the last five years.

Christopher Pincher:

The department publishes statistics on the estimated percentages of new residential addresses created on Green Belt land, and those created on previously-developed land.

The most recent available figures are for 2013-14 to 2017-18 and are given in: (a) Live Table P310 for Green Belt land; and (b) Live Table P300 for previously-developed land. These are available on the department's website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-land-use-change-statistics>.

■ Housing: Standards

Jim Shannon:

[\[114186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what plans the Government has to establish an inter-Departmental Government committee to tackle the spectrum of health issues that result from or are exacerbated by living in homes which are unhealthy.

Christopher Pincher:

We recognise the increased importance of good quality, safe and decent homes and will continue to work to improve housing standards and support vulnerable people.

We have made a great deal of progress in recent years to help improve housing standards:

- We have given local authorities strong powers to deal with dangerously damp conditions in the private rented sector (strengthened in the Housing and Planning Act 2016).
- We have introduced the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2019 - empowering social and private tenants to take their landlords to court, and are committed to improving the energy performance of all properties - because warm homes mean a reduction in damp.
- The Government has recently announced the new Green Homes Grants, through which landlords and home owners will be able to apply for vouchers of up to £5,000 to help fund energy works, with low income households eligible for up to £10,000 of full subsidy, meaning that hundreds of thousands of homes could be warmer and safer this winter.
- We have announced a comprehensive review of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System to ensure it properly reflects the physical and psychological harm caused by poor standards.

The Decent Homes Standard requires homes to be free of serious hazards that could cause harm to health. In the social housing White Paper, we announced a review of the Standard to ensure it is the right ask of the social housing sector today.

My Department has taken the lead on many aspects of this work. There is extensive cross-Government work on healthy homes and buildings – from planning and place-making to design, delivery and standards and support. Officials across all policies areas regularly engage industry and local government when developing, delivering and reviewing policies. MHCLG recognises that the responsibility for ensuring homes and buildings are safe and decent is a shared one - lying with product designers, developers, building owners and managers and local authorities as well as central Government and devolved administrations.

Dr Luke Evans:

[\[114338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has set a date for issuing Part L of the Building Regulations and the Future Homes Standard.

Christopher Pincher:

We have committed to review the roadmap to the Future Homes Standard to ensure that implementation takes place to the shortest possible timeline. The Department has already consulted on a meaningful and achievable interim increase to the energy efficiency standards for new homes as a first step towards the Future Homes Standard. We will be publishing the Government response to this consultation as soon as possible, which will include a roadmap to the Future Homes Standard.

Sarah Olney:

[\[115756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when he plans to begin the consultation into improvements to Part L of the building regulations.

Christopher Pincher:

We have committed to review the roadmap to the Future Homes Standard to ensure that implementation takes place to the shortest possible timeline. We have already consulted on a meaningful and achievable interim increase to the energy efficiency standards for new homes as a first step towards the Future Homes Standard. We will be publishing the Government response to this consultation as soon as possible, which will include a roadmap to the Future Homes Standard.

■ Local Government: Churches

Andrew Selous:

[\[115509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the effect of the Church of England's statement on Local Authority Investment in Church Property, published March 2018, on his Department's implementation of the (a) Local Government Act 1894 and (b) Local Government Act 1972.

Luke Hall:

The Government recognises and values the important work which churches carry out for their communities. We would encourage local authorities and churches to work together closely to consider the wishes and priorities of local people, as well as how to make the best use of public resources. It is important to ensure that any additional public funding given to local churches, and any consequences for council tax or precepts are considered carefully given the current financial pressures on local council taxpayers.

■ Members: Correspondence**Mr David Lammy:**[\[114770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the letter from the hon. Member for Tottenham dated 14 October 2020, whether he plans to provide a date and time for a meeting on the Tottenham Hale Village.

Christopher Pincher:

The Department has now received the letter from the Hon. member for Tottenham and a response will be sent shortly.

■ Private Rented Housing: Coronavirus**Caroline Lucas:**[\[114816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will take steps to (a) write off rent arrears built up by private tenants during the covid-19 outbreak and (b) establish a facility to protect landlords' minimum amount of rental income required for basic subsistence; and if he will make a statement.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government has no plans to write off COVID-19 related rent arrears. During this period, tenants should continue to pay their rent and abide by all other terms of their tenancy agreement to the best of their ability. Where tenants are unable to pay their rent or if rent arrears have accrued, landlords and tenants should work together to agree a suitable repayment plan. We encourage landlords to offer support and understanding to tenants who may see their income fluctuate during this period.

Our generous support package is supporting landlords by helping tenants to sustain tenancies and continue to pay their rent throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

This comprehensive package includes a range of support for businesses to pay staff salaries, including through the furlough scheme which has now been extended to March 2021. We have also strengthened the welfare safety-net with an over £9 billion boost to the welfare system, including an extra £1 billion to increase Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates so that they cover the lowest 30 per cent of market rents. For those renters who require additional support, there is an existing £180 million of Government funding for Discretionary Housing Payments made available this year, an increase of £40 million from last year, which is for councils to distribute to support renters with housing costs.

Furthermore, where landlords do find themselves in coronavirus-related hardship, mortgage lenders have agreed to offer payment holidays of up to six months, with applications now open until 31 January 2021.

■ UK Shared Prosperity Fund**Helen Hayes:**[\[115744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of a one year spending review on the

proposed UK Shared Prosperity Fund; and what the timetable is for the Shared Prosperity Fund to open.

Luke Hall:

The Government is committed to creating the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to succeed European structural funds and provide vital investment in local economies. The fund will bind together the whole of the United Kingdom, tackling inequality and deprivation in each of our four nations.

We will set out further details on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund following the Spending Review.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Ben Bradley:

[\[909003\]](#)

What progress she has made in securing a free trade agreement with the US.

Elizabeth Truss:

The fifth UK-U.S. Free Trade Agreement negotiating round finished 30 October. I'm happy to report that substantial progress has been made, with almost all chapter areas are now in the advanced stages of talks, and a significant proportion of legal text has been agreed across multiple chapters.

Greg Smith:

[\[909006\]](#)

What progress has been made in discussions with her Israeli counterpart on an agreement for further trade cooperation with Israel beyond the trade continuity deal.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

Britain's trading relationship with Israel is already strong, totalling £5bn in 2019. As my Rt Hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said recently, we are now able to 'start scoping, probing for talks for a new higher level ambition trade agreement'. Next year's United Kingdom-Israel Trade and Partnership Joint Council - alongside our plans to host a United Kingdom-Israel Trade and Investment Conference - will drive forward these discussions to deliver significant benefits for British business.

■ Data Protection: Japan

Chi Onwurah:

[\[91964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent assessment she has made of the potential effect of the data flow provisions of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement on (a) data adequacy discussions with EU and (b) data flow agreements with the (i) US and (ii) other countries.

Greg Hands:

[Holding answer 18 November 2020]: The UK is committed to maintaining high standards of protection for personal data, including when it is transferred across

borders. Data provisions in Free Trade Agreements including the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) are separate but complementary to the UK's adequacy process and international data protection frameworks.

Through CEPA, we have agreed to avoid unjustified restrictions on the free flow of data between the UK and Japan, and committed to maintaining a legal framework that provides for the protection of personal information. CEPA only addresses data flows between the UK and Japan and does not address onward transfers to other jurisdictions.

Chi Onwurah: [\[91965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent assessment she made the combined potential effects of Articles (a) 8.84 on Cross-border transfer of information by electronic means and (b) 8.80 on Personal information protection of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement on the enforceability of UK data protection rights in respect of data that has left the UK.

Greg Hands:

I refer the Hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne Central to the answer I gave today, UIN: 91964.

■ Department for International Trade: Third Sector

Emily Thornberry: [\[91958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 23 October 2020 to Question 104706, how many civil society round table meetings have been held as at 13 November 2020; what different subjects were covered at each of those meetings; and how many different civil society organisations were represented at each of those meetings.

Greg Hands:

The information requested has been published in line with the usual Transparency requirements and is available on gov.uk. Meetings held since July 2020 will be available on gov.uk upon publication.

■ Exports: Japan

Emily Thornberry: [\[111445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the key reasons are for the reduction in the projected increases in the (a) volume and (b) percentage of UK exports under the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in the (a) policy paper on UK-Japan free trade agreement: the UK's strategic approach published on 13 May 2020 and (b) UK-Japan CEPA: final impact assessment published on 22 October 2020.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[111446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the UK-Japan CEPA: final impact assessment published on 22 October 2020, what the reasons are for the difference in the projected increase in exports for (a) Japanese companies and (b) UK companies under the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[111447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the UK-Japan CEPA: final impact assessment published on 22 October 2020, what estimate she has made of the proportion of the projected £13.04bn in increased imports from Japan over the next 15 years that will replace or substitute for domestic sales by UK producers and service companies.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[111448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she has made an assessment of the potential effect on local economies in the UK of the potential substitution of Japanese imports for domestic production by UK producers and service companies under the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[111449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the UK-Japan CEPA: final impact assessment published on 22 October 2020, if she will make an estimate in (a) in monetary and (b) percentage terms of the potential contribution of additional exports of UK goods and services to Japan to the forecast increase in national GDP under the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement over the next 15 years.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[111450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will make a comparative assessment of the projected increases for (a) UK exports and GDP under the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. and (b) a scenario of rolling over the terms of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement in (i) monetary and (ii) percentage of growth terms.

Greg Hands:

In response to the Rt Hon. Member's questions, I refer her to my Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade's letter of 11 November 2020 on these issues. A copy has been deposited in the House library.

■ Foreign Investment in UK

Andrew Griffith:

[\[114357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what comparative assessment she has made of the level of inward investment into (a) the UK and (b) other European countries.

Graham Stuart:

Latest ONS figures report that the UK's inward Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock reached £1.5 trillion in 2018, a new record. According to UNCTAD, the UK held the 2nd highest FDI stock in the world in 2019, after the USA.

The Financial Times FDI Report found that the UK hosted more greenfield FDI projects than any other European country in 2019, with 1,271 landed ahead of Germany at 702 and Spain with 658.

Health Services: Protective Clothing**Fleur Anderson:**[\[115833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she is taking to remove trade barriers to imports of medical scrubs.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

To make sure that those working on the frontline can access vital equipment easily, the United Kingdom introduced a temporary zero tariff rate on products deemed critical in the fight against COVID-19 in March.

This relief, which applies retrospectively to goods imported since 30th January 2020, waives the tariff and VAT on these products, including medical scrubs, personal protective equipment (PPE) and other medical supplies from non-EU countries. A list of goods that the relief can be claimed on can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-commodity-codes-list) in the 'COVID-19 Commodity Codes List'.

Iron and Steel: UK Trade with EU**Jessica Morden:**[\[909021\]](#)

What steps her Department is taking to support UK steel exports to the EU after 31 December 2020.

Graham Stuart:

My Department and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy worked closely with industry to engage with the European Commission to provide a tariff-free quota allocation for UK steel exports into the EU from 1 January 2021. The European Commission announced the creation of a UK allocation on 30 October. As a result, the UK steel industry will avoid an £80m tariff bill in the first half of next year, according to UK Steel estimates.

Newcastle United Football Club: Saudi Arabia**Chi Onwurah:**[\[115653\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 13 November to Question 113092, whether her Department supports Saudi Arabia's proposed takeover bid for Newcastle United.

Graham Stuart:

Whilst we welcome all overseas investment, the takeover bid has always been a commercial matter for the parties concerned. It is not for the Government to comment on the buying and selling of football clubs.

■ Origin Marking: Japan

Emily Thornberry: [\[111451\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what estimate she has made of the timescale for the examination and opposition procedure for the UK's proposed geographical indications under the provisions of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Emily Thornberry: [\[111452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what form the examination and opposition procedure for the UK's proposed geographical indications will take under the provisions of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Emily Thornberry: [\[111454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the provisions of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement on trade in food, drink and agricultural products were shared in draft form with the (a) Trade and Agriculture Commission and (b) the Trade Advisory Group covering Agri-Food.

Emily Thornberry: [\[111455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she plans to make the positions adopted on (a) net neutrality and (b) data localisation in the negotiations on the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement explicit objectives in future trade negotiations.

Emily Thornberry: [\[111456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the operation of the provisions on free flows of data between the UK and Japan under UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement will be conditional on the UK's negotiation of a corresponding data adequacy agreement with the EU before 1 January 2020.

Emily Thornberry: [\[111457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what comparative assessment she has made of the differences between the provisions of the (a) UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and (b) EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement on public subsidies.

Emily Thornberry: [\[111458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what substantive changes to the equivalent provisions in the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement has been made

to the sectors reserved from further liberalisation have been made under Annexes I and II to Annex 8-B of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Emily Thornberry: [\[111459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the intended purpose is of Article 13.7.1 of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Emily Thornberry: [\[111460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the potential effect on the operation of cumulation and rules of origin clauses in the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in the event that (a) these are not reflected in the UK-EU free trade agreement and (b) no such agreement is reached before the end of the transition period.

Emily Thornberry: [\[111461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to Article 8.4 of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of (a) inclusion and (b) exclusion of audio-visual services from that Agreement.

Greg Hands:

In response to the Rt Hon. Member's questions, I refer her to my Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade's letter of 11 November 2020 on these issues. A copy has been deposited in the House library.

■ Overseas Aid: Gulf States

David Linden: [\[115779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 27 October 2020 to Question 106364 on Overseas Aid, how many projects for each of the financial years (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19 and (d) 2019-20 her Department applied for under the Integrated Activity Fund; what the titles of those projects were; how many of those projects were approved; and how many of those projects were subjected to Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessments.

Graham Stuart:

I refer the Hon. Member for Glasgow East to the answer my Hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Trade gave to the Hon. Member for Dundee West on 9 November 2020, UIN: 111560.

The Integrated Activity Fund provides funding in support of a range of programmes across the Gulf Region, including but not limited to, activities focusing on education, sport and culture, and healthcare. The Department for International Trade has been involved in several such projects, all of which are in line with international standards and aim to share the UK's expertise and experience.

It is Government policy not to disclose specific information related to the Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessments that accompany these bids due to their

sensitive nature. This ensures that officials can be candid in their assessments and accurately consider the proposed assistance.

■ **Riot Control Weapons: USA**

Sarah Olney:

[\[115754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department has made a further assessment of the evidence of whether UK anti-riot equipment was used during the US Black Lives Matter protests in 2020.

Mr Ranil Jayawardena:

Officials in the Export Control Joint Unit have carried out two reassessments of whether the events in the United States – since George Floyd was killed on 25th May 2020 – give rise to a clear risk under Criterion 2a of the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria (the “Consolidated Criteria”) that crowd control equipment exported to the US might be used for internal repression.

The first reassessment was completed in July and it was determined that no clear risk that such equipment might be used for internal repression existed. The second reassessment was completed in September 2020 and this concluded likewise.

Given the broad list of end-users covered by the licences, the reassessments assumed that it was possible that crowd control equipment exported from the United Kingdom was and/or could be sold to and used by police forces involved in these or similar protests, whether or not this was the case; accordingly, this supersedes an assessment on whether such equipment was actually used.

It is important not to lose sight of the fact that the US remains a beacon for freedom, opportunity and democracy. The US maintains the rule of law and has robust institutions. Further, there is democratic oversight, accountability and extensive public scrutiny, including by an active civil society and free press.

■ **Trade Agreements: Japan**

Emily Thornberry:

[\[112008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to Article 8.4 of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Trade Agreement, what the process of Parliamentary scrutiny would be in the event that audio-visual services were added to the Article.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[112009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, for what reasons the potential impact of investor state dispute settlement mechanisms are not covered in UK-Japan CEPA: final impact assessment published on 22 October 2020.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[112010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what plans she has for (a) monitoring and (b) reviewing the environmental impact of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement through periodic sustainability impact assessments.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[112011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent assessment she has made of the potential effect of the provisions of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement on relating to dialogue with civil society organisations on the (a) frequency of joint dialogues and (b) public availability of submissions to those dialogues.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[112012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what plans she has for the practical operation of the tariff rate quota system for the goods listed in paragraphs 1 to 10 of Sub-Section 2 of Annex 2-A, Part 3, Section B of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[112013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether her Department has made a forecast of the proportion of available quotas that will be used by EU exports of the goods listed in paragraphs 1 to 10 of Sub-Section 2 of Annex 2-A, Part 3, Section B of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in each of the next five years.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[112014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what comparative forecast her Department has made of the potential change in demand for UK exports to Japan of the goods listed in paragraphs 1 to 10 of Sub-Section 2 of Annex 2-A, Part 3, Section B of the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic partnership Agreement (a) over the next five years and (b) the under a scenario of continuing the terms of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement.

Greg Hands:

In response to the Rt Hon. Member's questions, I refer her to my Rt Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade's letter of 11 November 2020 on these issues. A copy has been deposited in the House library.

JUSTICE

■ Administrative Law Independent Review

Alex Cunningham:

[\[114864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will ensure that submissions to the Independent Review of Administrative Law are published.

Alex Chalk:

The Independent Panel for Administrative Law is currently cataloguing and analysing the responses to the call for evidence which is crucial for their ongoing deliberations. As the panel is independent, it remains a matter for the panel to determine how it intends to treat the evidence received in its report. Once the Government receives

the panel's report, the Government will then determine when and how it responds including publication and the underlying evidence in due course.

■ Care Proceedings

Alex Cunningham:

[114866]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of care proceedings cases have not been heard within the six month limit in each of the last three years.

Alex Chalk:

Information relating to the time to the first definitive disposal for care proceedings is published by the Ministry of Justice on a quarterly basis. The table below details the latest published statistics on the total number of disposals in care proceedings, the mean and median disposal duration (in weeks), and the proportion of disposals made within 26 weeks, in each of the last three years.

The number of disposals relates to the number of children subject to a disposal outcome. The following outcomes are considered as disposals for the purposes of these statistics:

- The making of a Care Order, Supervision Order, Residence order or Special Guardianship Order;
- A decision by the court to make no order; and
- The withdrawal of an application.

The latest Family Courts Statistics Quarterly publication can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-court-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2020>

YEAR	TOTAL DISPOSALS	MEAN DISPOSAL	MEDIAN DISPOSAL	% DISPOSED IN 26 WEEKS	
		DURATION (WEEKS)	DURATION (WEEKS)		
2017		26,221	28.2	25.3	57%
2018		25,849	30.4	26.4	49%
2019		23,837	33.2	29.6	41%

■ Courts: Coronavirus

Alex Cunningham:

[114858]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many cases of covid-19 have been confirmed among the (a) staff, (b) judiciary and (c) users of each court.

Alex Cunningham:**[114859]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many cases of covid-19 have been confirmed among tribunal (a) staff, (b) judiciary and (c) users by tribunal.

Chris Philp:

Since 18 August we have recorded all confirmed positive incidents of COVID-19 affecting HMCTS buildings centrally. We take swift and robust action for each suspected or positive case. There should be no assumption that a positive case indicates that there has been transmission within a court or tribunal building. 98% of our 341 buildings are open and operational. HMCTS employs around 18,800 staff and there are around 19,400 judicial office holders.

Between the 18 August and 12 November confirmed positive COVID-19 cases reported to HMCTS are as follows:

Across the courts:

A) HMCTS staff – 276

B) Judiciary – 45

C) Court users – 89

Across the tribunals:

A) HMCTS staff – 19

B) Judiciary – 4

C) Tribunal users – 1

The following two tables provide a more detailed breakdown of the specific HMCTS locations and numbers.

TABLE 1: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT COURT LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND COURT USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

Court location	Staff	Judiciary	Court users
Aylesbury Crown Court	0	1	
Basildon Combined Court	1	0	0
Birkenhead County Court	8	1	0
Birmingham CJC	8	0	1
Birmingham Crown Court	2	0	1
Birmingham CTSC	1	0	0

TABLE 1: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT COURT LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND COURT USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

Birmingham Magistrates' Court	7	0	0
Blackburn Family Court	4	0	0
Blackburn Magistrates' Court	0	0	1
Blackpool County Court	1	0	0
Blackpool Magistrates' Court	1	0	1
Bolton Combined	3	0	2
Bradford and Keighley Magistrates Court	1	0	0
Bradford Combined	3	1	0
Bristol CFJC	6	0	0
Bromley County Court	1	0	0
Bromley Magistrates'	0	1	1
Bury St Edmunds - South East & London Divorce	7	0	0
Bury St Edmunds Maintenance enforcement centre	1	0	0
Cambridge County Court	0	1	0
Cannock Magistrates' Court	0	0	1
Canterbury Combined Court	2	0	1
Cardiff Crown Court	2	0	4
Cardiff Magistrates'	1	0	2

TABLE 1: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT COURT LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND COURT USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

Court			
Carlisle Combined	1	0	0
Chelmsford Magistrates' Court	0	1	0
Chester CJC	5	0	1
Chester Crown Court	0	0	2
Chester Magistrates' Court	2	0	0
Chesterfield Justice Centre	1	1	0
Clerkenwell and Shoreditch County Court	2	0	0
Colchester Magistrates' Court	0	2	0
Coventry Magistrates' Court	0	0	0
Croydon Magistrates' Court	0	1	0
Darlington County Court	4	0	0
Derby Combined	2	0	0
Derby Magistrates' Court	1	1	0
Doncaster Justice Centre North	1	0	3
Dudley Magistrates' Court	0	1	0
Ealing Magistrates' Court	0	1	0
East London Family	1	0	0

TABLE 1: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT COURT LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND COURT USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

Court			
Gateshead Law Courts	1	0	0
Gloucester County & Family Court	1	0	0
Gloucester Twyver House	1	0	0
Grimsby Combined Court	0	0	2
Grimsby Magistrates' Court	1	0	0
Guildford Combined Court	0	1	0
Harrogate Justice Centre	1	0	0
Harrow Crown Court	0	0	1
Hendon Magistrates' Court	1	0	0
High Wycombe law courts	0	1	0
Highbury Corner Magistrates' Court	1	2	0
Hull Combined Court Centre	2	0	2
Hull Magistrates' Court	0	0	1
Inner London Crown Court	0	1	1
Ipswich Magistrates' Court	1	0	0
Isleworth Crown Court	0	0	1
Kingston Crown Court	1	0	1

TABLE 1: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT COURT LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND COURT USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

Kirklees Magistrates' Court	2	0	0
Lavender Hill Magistrates'	0	1	0
Leeds Combined Court	4	0	2
Leeds Magistrates'	2	0	1
Leeds, Ailsa House	5	0	0
Leicester Crown Court	1	0	1
Leicester Magistrates'	1	0	1
Lewes Combined Court	1	0	0
Leyland Family Court	0	1	0
Liverpool - Queen Elizabeth 2 Law Courts	8	0	4
Liverpool - St Georges Hall (ACTC)	1	0	0
Liverpool CFC	5	1	0
Llanelli Law Courts	0	0	1
London Central Criminal Court	2	0	0
London Central Family Court	5	0	0
London, City of London Magistrates'	0	1	0
London, Prospero House	1	0	0
London, Rolls Building	1	0	0
Loughborough CTSC	1	0	0
Luton Crown Court	1	0	0

TABLE 1: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT COURT LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND COURT USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

Luton Justice Centre	0	0	1
Luton Magistrates' Court	2	0	1
Maidstone Combined Court	0	0	1
Manchester CJC	16	1	0
Manchester Crown Minshull Street	0	0	1
Manchester Crown Square	5	0	2
Manchester Magistrates' Court	8	3	1
Mansfield Magistrates' and County	1	0	0
Medway County Court	2	0	0
Merthyr Combined	3	0	0
Milton Keynes Magistrates' Court	0	0	1
Newcastle CFC	3	0	1
Newcastle Combined Court	5	0	1
Newcastle Probate Registry	1	0	0
Newport Crown Court	1	0	0
Newton Aycliffe Magistrates' Court	1	0	0
North Shields CFC	1	0	0
North Staffordshire Justice Centre	0	1	1
North Tyneside	0	1	1

TABLE 1: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT COURT LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND COURT USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

Magistrates' Court

Norwich Combined Court	1	1	1
Nottingham Crown Court	4	0	2
Nottingham Justice Centre	5	0	1
Oxford Combined Court	0	0	3
Oxford Magistrates' Court	0	0	1
Peterborough Combined Court	3	0	0
Peterlee Magistrates' Court	0	0	1
Plymouth Combined Court	4	0	0
Poole Magistrates' Court	0	0	1
Port Talbot Justice Centre	1	1	0
Portsmouth Combined Court	1	0	0
Portsmouth Magistrates'	0	0	1
Portsmouth Magistrates'	0	0	0
Preston Combined Court	4	1	3
Preston Magistrates Court	1	1	1

TABLE 1: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT COURT LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND COURT USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

RCJ - Criminal Appeal Office	1	0	0
RCJ Rolls building	1	0	0
RCJ/QBD	1	2	0
Reading Crown Court	0	1	0
Reading Magistrates' Court	1	0	0
Reedley Family Hearing Centre	3	0	0
Salford CCMC	8	0	0
Scarborough Justice Centre	1	0	1
Sefton Magistrates'	0	0	1
Sheffield Combined Court	7	0	3
Sheffield Family Hearing Centre	1	0	0
Sheffield Magistrates' Court	4	0	3
Southampton Combined	0	1	0
Southampton Magistrates' Court	1	0	1
Southend Combined Court	1	0	0
Southwark Crown Court	2	0	0
St Georges Hall (ACTC)	1	0	0
St Helens County Court	1	0	0

TABLE 1: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT COURT LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND COURT USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

Stafford Combined Court	1	0	0
Staines County Court	0	1	0
Staines Magistrates' Court	0	1	0
Stevenage Magistrates' Court	0	0	1
Stockport Combined Court	0	0	1
Stoke CTSC Bennett House	4	0	0
Stoke on Trent Combined Court	2	0	0
Stratford Magistrates' Court	1	0	0
Swansea CJC	2	0	0
Swindon Magistrates' Court	1	0	0
Tameside Magistrates' Court	2	1	1
Taunton Combined Court	1	0	0
Taunton Magistrates' Court	1	0	0
Teesside Combined Court	3	0	1
Teesside Magistrates' Court	3	0	0
Telford Justice Centre	0	1	0
The Lowry	0	0	1
Truro Combined Court	0	0	0

TABLE 1: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT COURT LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND COURT USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

Truro Crown Court	0	0	1
Uxbridge Magistrates' Court	0	0	1
Walsall Magistrates' Court	3	0	0
Warrington Combined Court	2	0	0
Westminster Magistrates' Court	1	0	0
Wigan Magistrates' and County Court	1	0	2
Willesden Magistrates' Court	0	5	0
Wimbledon Magistrates' Court	2	0	1
Wirral Magistrates' Court	1	0	1
Wolverhampton Combined Court	1	1	0
Woolwich Crown Court	1	0	0
Worcester Justice Centre	0	0	0
Wrexham County Court	3	0	0
Wrexham Magistrates' Court	1	0	0
Yeovil County, Family & Magistrates	0	0	1
York Crown Court	0	0	0
TOTALS	276	45	89

TABLE 2: SHOWS BREAKDOWN OF POSITIVE COVID-19 CASES IDENTIFIED AT TRIBUNAL LOCATIONS FOR STAFF, JUDICIARY, AND TRIBUNAL USERS BETWEEN 18 AUGUST AND 12 NOVEMBER.

Tribunal location	Staff	Judiciary	User
Birmingham ET	1	1	0
Bradford, Phoenix House	3	0	1
Glasgow Tribunal Centre	2	0	0
Harmondsworth Tribunal Hearing Centre	0	1	0
Hatton Cross IAC	1	1	0
Leeds ET, City Exchange	1	0	0
Leeds York House	1	0	0
Liverpool SSCS	1	0	0
London, Fox Court	1	0	0
London, Field House	0	1	0
London, Victory House	2	0	0
Manchester ET	2	0	0
Manchester Tribunals Hearing Centre	3	0	0
Plymouth, St Catherine's Tribunal Hearing Centre	1	0	0
TOTALS	19	4	1

All data is internal and not subject to the same level of checks as official published statistics. Although care has been taken when processing and analysing this, the details may be subject to revisions inherent in any large-scale manual system.

Alex Cunningham:

[114865]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans his Department has to introduce Nightingale courts with secure docks.

Chris Philp:

We have added vital capacity by opening 16 Nightingale courts to provide 29 extra court rooms, 10 of which are being used for non-custodial jury trials. These additional courtrooms free up room in existing courts to hear criminal cases such as jury trials that need the cells and secure dock facilities that our existing courts can provide.

We are considering further Nightingale courts, including sites that can potentially provide for custodial cases, however no final decisions have been made. HMCTS will engage with prisoner escort services on any proposed custodial facilities, to ensure that all security and safety requirements are met.

The HMCTS Criminal Courts Recovery Plan has been published, and can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/court-and-tribunal-recovery-update-in-response-to-coronavirus>.

Non-secure work can move from existing Crown Courts and Nightingale Courts, freeing up secure space for criminal trials.

■ Courts: Domestic Abuse

Mr David Lammy:

[114772]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many specialist domestic violence courts have been in operation in each of the last 10 years.

Chris Philp:

Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) does not hold data on how many Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVC) have been in operation in each one of the last 10 years.

Mr David Lammy:

[114774]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the annual cost is of running specialist domestic violence courts.

Chris Philp:

Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS), does not hold information on the annual cost of running Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVCs) as the cost is shared across Criminal Justice Agencies and other stakeholders.

■ Courts: Video Conferencing

Alex Cunningham:

[114867]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many police forces in England have opted out of the use of video links to courts.

Chris Philp:

The National Police Chiefs' Council has confirmed that all forces should withdraw from the use of video remand hearings by the end of December 2020. Currently, 13 police forces in England have withdrawn.

■ Forced Marriage: Prosecutions**Mary Kelly Foy:****[115815]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people have been successfully prosecuted for predatory marriage under section 121 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Alex Chalk:

The Ministry of Justice has published information on prosecutions and convictions in the Outcomes by Offence data tool up to December 2019. Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888664/outcomes-by-offence-tool-2019.xlsx

Search 'Offence' for '36.1 Forced marriage'. The number of prosecutions and convictions can be viewed in the table.

■ Funerals: Coronavirus**Dan Carden:****[115789]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what additional financial support he plans to provide to funeral directors to help them manage attendance requests from self-isolating relatives of the deceased during the covid-19 outbreak.

Alex Chalk:

The Government has announced a wide series of measures to support businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic, such as the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, business rate relief and other measures, for which it has been open to funeral directors to apply. We continue to assess the impacts of COVID-19 and keep the funeral sector's needs under review.

The Government recognises the importance of balancing the needs of the bereaved to mourn with the need to minimise the spread of COVID-19 infection. To support the management of this balance, we have published *Guidance for arranging or attending a funeral during the coronavirus pandemic* which, while recognising the importance of these rituals and gatherings, details the actions which are important in reducing the spread of infection. The guidance is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

■ Juries: Coronavirus

Alex Cunningham:

[\[114860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many cases of covid-19 have been confirmed among jurors by court.

Chris Philp:

Since 18 August until Friday 12 November there have been 28 confirmed positive test results for Covid-19 reported among jurors in 16 locations across HM Courts & Tribunals Service's estate. During this period the Jury Central Summoning Bureau transferred approximately 52,000¹ people to the courts for jury service. There are currently jury trials running in 79 Crown Courts, 5 Nightingale Courts and 4 other existing court locations.

Table – Number of confirmed Covid-19 among jurors by court.

BRISTOL CROWN COURT	1
Cardiff Crown Court	2
Chester Crown Court	3
Cardiff City Hall	1
Harrow Crown Court	1
Inner London Crown Court	1
Leicester Crown Court	1
Liverpool Queen Elizabeth 2 Law Courts	2
Maidstone Combined Court	5
Newcastle Combined Court	2
Preston Combined Court	1
Reading Crown Court	3
Sheffield Combined Court	1
Snaresbrook Crown Court	1
Southwark Crown Court	1
Teeside Combined Court	2
Total	28

We take swift and robust action for each suspected or positive case. There should be no assumption that a confirmed case indicates that there has transmission within a court building and not all confirmed cases relate to the same empanelled jury.

Before restarting jury trials all courts have completed a Jury Trial checklist in addition to the risk assessments we have completed in all open courts and tribunals. Public Health England have reviewed our arrangements and they have confirmed that our standards meet their guidance.

All data is internal and not subject to the same level of checks as official published statistics. Although care has been taken when processing and analysing this, the details may be subject to revisions inherent in any large-scale manual system.

¹ This includes jurors who may be excused, deferred or released by the court before serving, and that random selection means that not all jurors get on a trial.

■ **Magistrates: Job Satisfaction**

Alberto Costa:

[\[114940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the effect on the morale of magistrates of HM Courts and Tribunals Service's decision to no longer deliver certificates of service to magistrates.

Chris Philp:

The issuing of long service certificates was paused temporarily in March due to Covid-19. Since July 2020, Judicial Office have been processing all outstanding long service certificates.

In addition to certificates for twenty years' service, in October 2020, we introduced long service certificates to recognise both ten- and 30- years' service within the magistracy. The implementation of these have been backdated until January 2020.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Remote Working**

Alex Cunningham:

[\[114861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of (a) HM Courts and Tribunals Service, (b) HM Prison and Probation Service and (c) Crown Prosecution Service staff are working from home.

Alex Chalk:

On the 13th November 2020, for HMCTS, 5,439 staff which equates to 28% of their headcount were working from home. HMPPS do not record this information and the CPS is an independent department that is superintended by the Attorney General, thus the AGO should be approached for information relating to the CPS.

Alex Cunningham:

[\[114862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of staff in agencies sponsored by his Department are working from home.

Alex Chalk:

On the 13th November 2020, for the agency of the Office of the Public Guardian, 1,340 staff, which equates to 81% of their headcount were working from home. For the agency of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, 200 staff which equates to 94% of their headcount that would have been working on that day, were working from home. For the agency of the Legal Aid Agency, 1,159 staff which equates to 93% of their headcount were working from home.

Prison Sentences**Sir Charles Walker:**[\[115517\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the abolition of Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (IPP) in 2012, whether everyone given an IPP sentence has had their sentence transmuted into a determinate sentence; and if will make a statement.

Chris Philp:

As the abolition of the IPP sentence was not applied retrospectively, those who had already been sentenced to and were serving an IPP sentence continued to serve the sentence itself either because they had not yet served the minimum term of imprisonment or, where they have served the minimum term, because the independent Parole Board had determined that their risk remained too high for them to be safely managed in the community. Therefore, no offender who received an IPP sentence has had the sentence transmuted into a determinate sentence.

Prisoners on Remand**Alex Cunningham:**[\[114863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the extension to custody time limits on the number of people being held in pre-trial custody.

Chris Philp:

The most recently publicly available data on the remand population covers the period to 30 September 2020 and therefore would not demonstrate any potential effect of the extension to custody time limits.

CTL extensions are being routinely granted amongst those who were remanded before the SI came into force. As such the changes will not necessarily lead to a substantial increase in the remand population. However, the MoJ and HMPPS will continue to assess any anticipated impacts to effectively manage the number of prison places available.

Prisoners' Release**Colleen Fletcher:**[\[114908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to support prisoners on release in (a) the West Midlands and (b) England.

Lucy Frazer:

We are working collaboratively with other government departments and interested parties. Through the Rough Sleeping Strategy, the Government is investing up to £6.4m in a pilot to provide improved accommodation support through a new partnership approach between prisons, probation providers and Local Authorities (LA) to plan, secure and sustain accommodation for prisoners on their release.

The National Probation Service has improved commissioning rates and set minimum levels of funding for their commissioning of TTG services from CRCs for those people leaving non-resettlement prisons. This TTG service includes providing help to prison leavers with finding accommodation on their release.

The CRCs are currently working to a TTG Exceptional Delivery Model which identifies the minimum requirement for TTG delivery during the COVID-19 period taking into account the necessary restrictions to prison regimes. During the period of COVID-19, we set up seven divisional Homelessness Prevention Teams (HPTs) to deal with the urgent issues presenting in relation to securing accommodation for those being released from prison, initially as part of the End of Custody Temporary Release (ECTR) scheme and latterly in accordance with their Conditional Release Date (CRD). These teams have been very successful in securing improved accommodation outcomes and building new local partnerships with local authorities and housing partners.

A critical part of the HPTs success has been the exceptional funding scheme agreed with HMT to fund the provision of accommodation to individuals released from prison and at risk of homelessness. This emergency approval was for a limited time and ran from 18th May, closing to new entrants on 31st August as the public health and public protection risks warranted it. However, in light of the recent Government announcements relating to the introduction of the new three-tier COVID alert level system, and the national restrictions in England and Wales HMPPS considered the public health benefits of reinstating the emergency accommodation scheme. It has been agreed to reinstate the scheme until 21st January 2021, subject to regular review.

■ Prisons: Coronavirus**Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[114122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether (a) directly and (b) non-directly employed prison staff who are instructed to (i) self-isolate in response to track and trace or (ii) shield are entitled to full pay; and if he will make a statement.

Lucy Frazer:

Directly employed prison staff who are instructed to self-isolate or shield will receive special leave with full pay. This is consistent with the approach taken for all Ministry of Justice employees.

There are two main types of non-directly employed prison staff - agency workers and sessional workers.

Agency workers are employees of their respective agency, therefore there is no entitlement to HMPPS occupational sick pay or paid special leave. This is consistent with Agency Worker Regulations 2010. Where an agency worker is shielding in line with public health guidance, they will be able to access the Job Retention Scheme through their employer, the agency. Agency workers required to self-isolate in response to track and trace are eligible for Statutory Sick Pay.

Where someone is classed as a sessional worker, there is no obligation to provide them with work, or for them to accept it. Typically, these workers will be in prisons, in roles such as chaplains. A decision by HMPPS was taken early on to pay sessional workers who were unable to work during the first wave of Covid-19, either due to shielding, self-isolating or where work had temporarily ceased.

This approach ensures parity across all types of non-directly employed prison staff.

■ Prisons: Crimes of Violence

Colleen Fletcher:

[\[114210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of trends in the level of violence and self-harm in prisons in (a) the West Midlands and (b) England; and what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the incidence of violence and self-harm in those prisons.

Lucy Frazer:

The attached table shows the number of assaults and self-harm incidents by prisoners in custody in the West Midlands and England, from January 2019 to June 2020.

Levels of self-harm fell 15% in the most recent quarter (April to June 2020) in England and Wales and violence fell by 37% over the same time period and by 19% in the 12 months to June 2020. Levels of self-harm and violence also fell in prisons in the West Midlands over the most recent quarter.

Statistics for the 12 months to June, and particularly those for the April to June quarter, relate to the exceptional period since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restricted regimes prisons put in place in order to safely manage the risks of infection during the pandemic. This affects the comparability of the statistics with earlier periods.

With a small number of tragic exceptions, the decisive action we took at the beginning of the pandemic has meant tens of thousands of officers and prisoners have been kept safe in the face of perhaps the greatest challenge ever to face the service.

We are under no illusions about the impact of the measures which were put in place to protect lives and we have made prisoners' wellbeing our priority. We've enabled continued family contact through more than 1,500 secure mobile phones and secure video calls and provided a range of in-cell activities to mitigate the impact of isolation. We continue to work closely with the Samaritans who are providing support for

Listeners - selected prisoners trained to provide emotional support to their fellow prisoners and who continue to offer their phone service for emotional support.

More widely, we are spending £100 million to bolster prison security, clamping down on the weapons, drugs and mobile phones that fuel violence and crime behind bars. This is funding tough measures including x-ray body scanners and phone-blocking technology. We are giving officers tools like PAVA pepper spray and body-worn cameras to make their jobs safer.

We recognise the need to remain vigilant to the risks to prisoners and staff as impacts of the virus continue.

Attachments:

1. Table [Copy of PQ 114210 ~ table.xlsx]

■ **Prisons: Education**

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[114109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will list the key performance indicators specified by Prison Education Framework contracts.

Ms Lyn Brown: [\[114110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of key performance indicators within the Prison Education Framework have been met by each prison education provider in each prison in each of the last four quarters; and if he will make a statement.

Lucy Frazer:

The Prison Education Framework (PEF) contract has three Service levels that relate to: the completion of accredited courses and accredited outcomes; other course completion rates; and for the actions and targets of Teacher Quality Management Plans (TQMP) plans being met.

While regimes have been restricted due to Covid-19, only the service level relating to TQMP is operating at present in a revised format. The service levels relating to the completion of accredited courses and accredited outcomes and that relating to other course completion rates had been due to start this April, but due to Covid-19 have not yet commenced.

To comply with the restrictions around social distancing and to minimise contact between people in prisons HMPPS issued (on 24 and 28 March) temporary Operational Guidance to all prison governors to help them reduce the spread of COVID-19 in prisons. These measures included the stopping of all non-essential activities and all face to face education delivery.

Our National Framework, which provides a roadmap for easing restrictions in prisons has been guided by public health advice alongside an operational assessment of what can be achieved in custodial settings while keeping staff and those in our care safe. Not all establishments will move at the same pace. Prisons must demonstrate

readiness and gain agreement from local health authorities, before easing restrictions.

The most recent available information on approved PEF provider TQMP plans is provided, by individual prison in the attached table. Overall performance, for all providers is also displayed below.

REPORTING PERIOD	PERCENTAGE OF TQMPS APPROVED
April to June 2019	98%
July to September 2019	88%
October to December 2019	83%
January to March 2020	87%

Attachments:

1. Table [PQs 114109 & 114110 - Data on TQMP completion v2.xlsx]

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[114111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to ensure the involvement of (a) prison educators, (b) education unions and (c) other stakeholders in the development of the Prisoner Education Service.

Lucy Frazer:

We have engaged with a variety of stakeholders on our plans for the future of prison education and will continue to do so. This year we carried out consultation with education providers, the University and College Union and Ofsted as part of our work to improve the delivery of careers guidance, to help ensure prisoners are able to identify realistic career goals and complete relevant education while still in custody.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[114112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2020 to Question 98913 on Prisons: Education, which suppliers have accepted offers of supplier relief from his Department; and how much relief has been provided by his Department to each of those suppliers.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[114113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2020 to Question 98913 on Prisons: Education, what recent assessment his Department has made of the (a) capacity and (b) capability of Prison Education Framework providers to deliver their contractual requirements.

Lucy Frazer:

We've recently reviewed all Prison Education Framework (PEF) providers to look at their ability to deliver education services under the current Covid- 19 restrictions.

Currently PEF and Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) suppliers continue to be paid 'on profile', a fixed amount of the annual value each month as required under the original contract. This is based on the full contract value and has helped maintain supplier cash flow during this period. The relief period is part of the 2nd PEF contract year which finishes at the end of March next year. After this point, HMPPS will work with suppliers to reconcile the profile payments made against the value of the actual delivery and relief that is due for undelivered education under the contracts. As of 16 November, 47 suppliers have accepted offers of relief, however, it is not appropriate to provide the suppliers' details as this is commercially confidential information. It will not be possible to reach a figure for the total relief provided until the process of reconciling the payments has been completed.

All education providers are now submitting revised curriculum plans, in consultation with each prison establishment, to better reflect their ability to deliver services during this difficult time and to meet the needs of their learners.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[114114]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2020 to Question 98913 on Prisons: Education, when he plans for Prison Education Framework providers to return to full delivery of their services.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[114115]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2020 to Question 98913 on Prisons: Education, what estimate he has made of the number of teaching hours lost by each Prison Education Framework provider as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Lucy Frazer:

While regimes have been restricted, we have been working with all Prison Education Framework (PEF) and Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) providers to support prisons. This has allowed us to help to enable learning to continue through a blend of in cell activity, distraction material and learning packs.

The information requested in relation to teaching hours is not collected as it is not a requirement of the current contracts to capture this information.

We recognise the impact restrictions brought in to control the spread of infection have on services in prisons and that these restrictions must be proportionate to the risk posed. We will continue to keep them under active review. Our National Framework, which sets out in detail how we will take decisions about managing coronavirus-related restrictions in prisons, was published on GOV.UK on 2 June:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-national-framework-for-prison-regimes-and-services>

Our plan for easing restrictions in prisons, or re-introducing them where necessary, continues to be guided by public health advice alongside an operational assessment of what can be safely implemented, ensuring that we can keep staff and prisoners safe.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[114116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2020 to Question 98913 on Prisons: Education, what assessment he has made of the effect of changes to Prison Education Framework provider staffing levels on levels of service delivery by those providers.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[114117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2020 to Question 98913 on Prisons: Education, what assessment he has made of the reasons for there being a potential erosion of service delivery by Prison Education Framework providers.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[114118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 13 October 2020 to Question 98913 on Prisons: Education, what steps he has taken to tackle the potential erosion of service delivery by Prison Education Framework providers.

Lucy Frazer:

As previously stated, all Prison Education Framework (PEF) providers are contracted to provide a service and, so long as they provide this, the staffing of the service and the PEF providers' management of their staff is a matter for them and not the MoJ.

Since the introduction of restrictions due to Covid-19 we have been working with all PEF and Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) providers to support prisons. This has allowed us to enable learning to continue via in cell activity, distraction material and learning packs. PEF providers are now submitting revised curriculum plans, in consultation with each establishment, to ensure delivery of their services during this difficult time and to meet the needs of their learners.

All PEF provider delivery and performance is regularly monitored via monthly and quarterly management meetings.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[114119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Written Statement of 13 October 2020, Official Report HCWS506, Adult Skills and National Retraining Scheme Update, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the scope of the National Skills Fund to include prison education.

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[114120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Written Statement of 13 October 2020, Official Report HCWS506, Adult Skills and National Retraining Scheme Update, whether the National Skills Fund will be used to invest in prison (a) staff, and (b) in-cell technology.

Lucy Frazer:

Education in prison is funded by HMPPS and helps individuals develop the skills they need to unlock their potential, gain employment, and become assets to their communities. My officials continue to work with colleagues in the Department for

Education to ensure that prisoners are well prepared to take advantage of community education provision on release.

■ Prisons: Telecommunications

Ms Lyn Brown:

[114121]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of prisoners in the (a) adult male, (b) adult female and (c) youth estate have access to (i) in-cell telephony and (ii) in-cell intranet; and if he will make a statement.

Lucy Frazer:

Currently there are just over 36,500 cells across the public estate with live in-cell telephony. There are 13 private prisons, nearly 11,500 cells, which also have live in-cell telephony. Across both the public and private prisons, 63% of the estate has in-cell telephony. Please note for (a) and (c) figures are not fully reflective due to some locations having both adult male and YOI.

This data only refers to cabled in-cell telephony. Since March 2020 we have deployed over 1000 secure mobile pin-phones to ensure that those sites without in-cell telephones have been able to maintain contact with family and friends.

In cell telephony:

(a) In 47% of adult male prisons the roll out is completed (figures based on 94 closed male prisons)

(b) All of the closed female estate will have in-cell telephony by March 2021. Currently at 63%, in five of eight sites, the roll out is currently complete.

(c) All of the closed youth custody estate has in-cell telephony. These four sites are: Cookham Wood, Feltham, Wetherby and Werrington

In-cell intranet

Access to in-cell intranet requires in-cell technology, we provide this through in-cell laptops. There are currently two prisons which have in-cell laptops, these are HMP Wayland and HMP Berwyn.

■ Recorders

Alex Cunningham:

[115648]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when the number of Recorder sitting days will be restored to pre covid-19 levels.

Chris Philp:

We are continuing to work to maximise capacity across the whole Courts and Tribunals system. Recorders will play a key role to ensure that we deliver as many sitting days as possible in order to provide access to justice. Data relating to sitting days will be published in the first half of 2021 as part of the regular Official Statistics relating to Civil Justice.

Alex Cunningham:

[115649]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much his department has spent on Recorder sitting days in each of the last 10 years.

Chris Philp:

Spend on Recorders is available for the last 5 years, financial year 2015/16 onwards. Historical costs on Recorders prior to this cannot be separately identified in our current reporting system.

RECORDER SALARY COSTS	£
2015-16	19,050,272
2016-17	19,047,793
2017-18	19,046,187
2018-19	14,918,592
2019-20	9,579,481
Total	81,642,324

*The identifiable costs for Recorders are basic salary. Any associated pension and employer national insurance contributions are reported in totality and Recorder costs cannot be separately identified in our current reporting system.

■ **Remand in Custody: Coronavirus**

Alex Cunningham:

[115650]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the number of cases in which pre-trial custody has been extended under the provisions in Prosecution of Offences (Custody Time Limits) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020.

Chris Philp:

The Ministry of Justice publishes information on remands found in the 'Remands: Magistrates' Court' and 'Remands: Crown Court' data tools available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888658/remands-magistrates-court-tool-2019.xlsx

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888657/remands-crown-court-tool-2019.xlsx

Centrally held information does not identify length of time an individual is remanded in custody.

■ Trials

Alex Cunningham:

[\[115647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of criminal trials have been listed without a firm date in each quarter of the last three years on each of the seven regional circuits.

Chris Philp:

Listing is a judicial matter and approaches vary from court to court. There is no national data set available on how cases have been listed, therefore management information is not sufficiently reliable for reporting purposes.

■ Wills

Mary Kelly Foy:

[\[115814\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department has made an assessment of whether the automatic revocation of wills upon marriage provides a potential incentive for predatory marriage.

Alex Chalk:

The principle in English and Welsh law that marriage has the effect of revoking wills is long established. The issue of whether marriage or civil partnership should invoke automatic revocation of the wills of those involved is being considered as part of a wider current review by the Law Commission on reforming the law of wills.

That review is also examining whether there should be new rules introduced which protect the person making the will from undue influence.

The Government will review the case for reforming the current law when it has received the recommendations in the Law Commission's final report.

■ Young Offender Institutions

Peter Kyle:

[\[114977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to improve contact between children in young offender institutions and their (a) parents, (b) carers and (c) friends.

Lucy Frazer:

During the COVID-19 pandemic it is more important than ever that children are able to speak to family, friends and carers given this will be a particularly unsettling period for many children in custody.

There has been a focus within the Youth Custody Service (YCS) on delivering essential activities such as regular phone calls (with young people having been allocated additional free phone credit and phone lines being opened for longer periods) and 'Enhanced SECURE STAIRS'. This integrated framework of care jointly led by NHS England and NHS Improvement and the YCS provides the foundations on how the YCS works with children, underlining the vital role of social interaction and

the importance of connectivity while adhering to the guidance on physical distancing. The Youth Estate has also been prioritised for in-room telephony installation and have used technology to facilitate virtual visits to enable all children and young people to stay in touch with their loved ones, and additional funding has been received for the roll out of secure in-room technology across public sector YOIs. Children and young people also have the opportunity to write and send letters, as well as having access to advocacy services and charities such as Barnardo's and Childline.

Following publication of the National Framework for Prison Regimes and Services on 2 June, key aspects of regime delivery restarted across under 18 Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) from mid-July including social visits and the Custody Support Plan (CuSP) – providing children with a personal officer to work with on a weekly basis in order to build trust and consistency - as we continue to look to maintain regime in a manner that is safe and sustainable. During this period, it has been the priority of the YCS to maintain social interaction with children and their family: that is why, following the further national restrictions announced in England, face-to-face social visits with family (and contact with corporate parents and professionals) will continue for children in custody, ensuring sustained mental health and wellbeing. Where face-to-face visits are not possible, children and young people will still be able to continue contact virtually with their loved ones.

■ Young Offenders: Housing

Peter Kyle:

[\[114975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to accelerate the identification of accommodation for children released from custody.

Lucy Frazer:

I recognise that stable accommodation is a key factor in the substantial wraparound support that children require upon their release from custody. My department is working across government to explore options for improving the provision of accommodation.

To plan for the effective resettlement of children who are released from custody, the Youth Custody Service is reviewing its casework model. This will lead to a new Resettlement Framework and improvements to the multi-agency working that is required to support children in preparing for their release.

■ Youth Custody

Peter Kyle:

[\[114971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to page 65 of Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons' Annual Report 2019-20, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the statement from the inspector that there has been a strategic failure in the delivery and governance of children's custody.

Lucy Frazer:

I welcome Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons' Annual Report 2019-20 and take very seriously the report's assessment of youth custody highlighted by the Hon. member.

In the short to medium term, the Youth Custody Service is carrying out a reform programme designed to create a child-focused youth estate. For example, the new youth justice specialist role continues to be embedded within the YCS, with funding for every prison officer in youth custody services to take up a foundation degree in youth justice. The YCS has also commissioned a programme of research, in collaboration with academics, to evaluate and learn lessons from the impact and response to Covid-19. The results will inform its recovery planning.

In the longer term, we aim to replace the existing estate with a network of secure schools and similar smaller units, drawing on evidence that smaller, more therapeutic units operated by child-focused providers are more effective in reducing reoffending and improving outcomes for children in custody. We are making progress toward the planned opening of the first secure school in 2022.

Peter Kyle:[\[114978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing a right to review for children held in custody cells for more than 20 hours per day.

Lucy Frazer:

Following the H M Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) thematic report on separation in under-18 Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) published in January, and the subsequent publication of the Separation Taskforce's report in June, we have committed to establishing a new system and approach for separation, with work now progressing. This work and policy will include a range of aspects, including review of decisions and representations.

This is in addition to immediate actions taken in response of the HMIP thematic report, including: the introduction of additional resources to ensure robust management and improve national and local oversight; the introduction of a national single point of contact to review oversight arrangements for separation, ensuring local accountability is in place across establishments and feeding in centrally; and a new approach to ensure separation data for public sector YOIs is captured centrally on a monthly basis.

NORTHERN IRELAND**■ Coronavirus: Northern Ireland****Colum Eastwood:**[\[115847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what additional support his Department is providing to assist the Northern Ireland Executive in acquiring covid-19 vaccines.

Mr Robin Walker:

The UK Government is working with several potential vaccine suppliers with the ambition to roll out an immunisation programme on a UK-wide basis as soon as regulatory approval is granted. We have secured early access to over 350 million vaccine doses through a portfolio of promising new vaccines to ensure we are in the best place, and we are taking every possible step to ensure we can move as quickly as possible to deploy a vaccine if and when one is found to work.

We have invested over £140m into manufacturing any successful vaccine and an enormous amount of planning and preparation has taken place across Government to be able to quickly roll out the vaccine, including ensuring we have adequate provision, transport, PPE and logistical expertise to do so.

Once any vaccine is approved, the Government will distribute these equitably amongst the four nations, for the Devolved Administrations to then administer roll out to the public.

The UK Government has been in constant communication with the NI Executive over the progress on the acquisition, and potential approval, of any vaccine to assist in planning and preparation for their roll out. The UK Government stands ready to assist the Devolved Administrations concerning a vaccine roll out.

PARLIAMENTARY WORKS SPONSOR BODY**■ Palace of Westminster: Repairs and Maintenance****Geraint Davies:****[114768]**

To ask the right hon. Member for East Hampshire, representing the Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body, what assessment of air quality has been made as part of the plans for refurbishing the Palace of Westminster.

Damian Hinds:

An initial desk-based assessment of existing data regarding air quality in the vicinity of the Palace of Westminster has been conducted as part of the Restoration and Renewal Programme, and a further assessment will be conducted to provide more accurate and up to date data. These assessments will inform the development of the designs and business case for the restoration works.

The Sponsor Body has agreed a strategic objective to mitigate the environmental impact of the Programme during the construction phase and to minimise the impact in relation to the Palace's future operation, in line with its statutory obligations. This objective has been endorsed by the Commissions of both Houses and will be kept under review as the Programme progresses.

TRANSPORT■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:****[114999]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what oversight and governance arrangements are in place for his Department to scrutinise decisions by Network Rail on the expenditure of its research and development and Intelligent Infrastructure budgets.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

While the Department for Transport provides funding to enable Network Rail to conduct its own research and development and improve asset management through the Office of Road and Rail's final determination every five years, it does not issue guidance or scrutinise decisions taken in this area.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[115000]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what guidance he has issued to Network Rail on testing the availability of existing solutions from suppliers before investing in new technologies.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

While the Department for Transport provides funding to enable Network Rail to conduct its own research and development and improve asset management through the Office of Road and Rail's final determination every five years, it does not issue guidance or scrutinise decisions taken in this area.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[115001]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made with the deployment by Network Rail of the Hubble vegetation management tool since it was awarded First of a Kind funding by his Department through Innovate UK in 2019.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Hubble was funded and supported by Network Rail's Anglia Route and trialled on its Southern Route. Other Network Rail routes are able to use Hubble or other technology solutions as appropriate.

Hubble was a recipient of First of a Kind (FOAK) funding from my Department. Funding under FOAK is not a guarantee that products will be taken into service. Network Rail and operators determine which products best meet their operational needs.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[115002]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment has been made by (a) his Department and (b) the Network Rail Earthworks Management Taskforce of the role that the Hubble vegetation management system could have in the early detection of flooding on the railways caused by extreme weather events.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The scope of the independent Earthworks Management Taskforce led by Lord Robert Mair CBE FREng FRS includes examining new technologies and innovations.

Network Rail will use the task force findings to better manage its earthworks portfolio.

The task force will report in due course.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:[\[115004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent progress has been made on implementing technology to help passengers socially distance while travelling on rail services during the covid-19 outbreak.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Rail operators are working hard to facilitate social distancing between passengers wherever possible, in line with Public Health England advice. Measures include the installation of clear floor markings and of perspex screens between ticket vending machines; newer rolling stock also displays loading information, so passengers can identify emptier carriages when boarding. People should seek to book tickets online wherever possible and to plan ahead, and operators are highlighting on their websites the services that are quieter or busier to enable travellers to make informed decisions.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:[\[115005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department has taken to ensure the safety of key workers who travel to work by train during the covid-19 outbreak.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

We have been clear that our priority remains the safety of staff and passengers. We have issued comprehensive guidance to transport operators, including rail operators, on keeping trains clean and ensuring staff and passengers are able to maintain good hand hygiene. Public transport, including rail transport, continues to be instrumental in keeping the country moving, even with the tougher restrictions having come into force. This is why rail operators continue to do everything they can to deliver the services passengers need, so that those who need to travel can do so with confidence.

■ A27: Repairs and Maintenance**Tim Loughton:**[\[114748\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the estimated total cost is of the recently announced preferred route for the A27 Arundel bypass; and what the expected timescale is to completion.

Rachel Maclean:

The total cost for delivery of the A27 Arundel Bypass preferred route (Grey, Option 5BV1), which was announced on 15 October 2020, will be between £320 and £455 million, as set out at the further public consultation in 2019. This figure is subject to

the development of the scheme through detailed design and ongoing commercial discussions.

Construction will commence in 2023/24 and will take approximately 36 months.

■ Airlines: Coronavirus

Sarah Olney:

[115753]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that airlines are providing swift refunds to passengers in the event of disruption due to the covid-19 pandemic.

Robert Courts:

The Department has been clear that airlines and travel agents should not deny consumers their legal right to a refund, if it is requested and this should be done in a timely manner. The Civil Aviation Authority is routinely reviewing the refund policies and practices of all UK airlines, as well as a number of international airlines that operate flights to and from the UK. The CAA has utilised its review to influence airlines to change their processes and practices in order to improve performance in providing refunds. The CAA's actions have led to an improved quality of service and performance from most airlines. The CAA continues to work with carriers to drive down waiting times, while recognising the challenges businesses are facing.

■ Cycling and Walking

Fiona Bruce:

[115598]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what guidance he has published for councils wanting to put in places measures under the Active Travel Scheme.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Government has announced ambitious plans for cycling and walking and has committed an unprecedented £2 billion of funding for active travel over the next 5 years. The details are set out in the Prime Minister's Gear Change plan, published in July and can be viewed here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-plan-for-england.

The Department has also published design advice for cycling infrastructure which can be found in Local Transport Note 1/20 'Cycle Infrastructure Design' which is at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120.

To support the Active Travel Fund, the Department has also published additional Network Management Duty guidance on reallocating road space. This clearly sets out what the Department expects local authorities to do in making changes to their road layouts to encourage cycling and walking. This guidance is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/reallocating-road-space-in-response-to-covid-19-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities.

Fiona Bruce:

[115600]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what his Department plans to achieve under the Active Travel Scheme.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department is making up to £225 million available to local authorities through the Active Travel Fund in 2020/21. The Fund supports the Prime Minister's long term vision for cycling and walking, "Gear Change", published in July. This funding will support the delivery of high quality infrastructure that will encourage more people to walk and cycle for shorter journeys. Increasing cycling and walking can help tackle some of the most challenging issues we face as a society – improving air quality, combatting climate change, improving health and wellbeing, addressing inequalities and tackling congestion on our roads.

■ **Cycling and Walking: Finance**

Fiona Bruce:

[115599]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what powers local residents have to influence plans introduced under the Active Travel Scheme.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department has set new conditions on local authorities receiving funding through the Active Travel Fund, requiring them to ensure schemes are properly consulted on and that the views of local residents and businesses have been taken into account. This includes requiring authorities to undertake appropriate surveys with local residents to inform the design and implementation of schemes. The updated Network Management Duty guidance published alongside the Tranche 2 allocations makes clear the importance of engaging with local communities to ensure schemes deliver for all. The guidance is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reallocating-road-space-in-response-to-covid-19-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities>

■ **Cycling and Walking: South Northamptonshire**

Andrea Leadsom:

[115638]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to promote active travel; and if he will allocate funding to support the creation of a cycleway and footpath through Syresham and surrounding villages in South Northamptonshire constituency.

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 includes 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. As part of this, the Department announced £175 million of active travel funding for local authorities on 13 November, including £1.3 million for

Northamptonshire. Further decisions on funding for active travel schemes will be taken as part of the Spending Review. Decisions on which local schemes to support with this funding will be matters for local authorities.

■ Dangerous Driving

Colleen Fletcher:

[\[114910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with the Home Secretary on hit-and-run collisions involving (a) pedestrians, (b) cyclists and (c) motorcyclists in (i) Coventry, (ii) the West Midlands and (iii) England.

Rachel Maclean:

The Secretary of State for Transport has had no recent discussions with the Home Secretary on hit-and-run collisions in these areas.

■ Driving Tests: Coronavirus

Alberto Costa:

[\[91985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of extending the two-year period for passing a practical driving test from the date of a successful theory test for people waiting to take practical driving tests during the covid-19 outbreak.

Rachel Maclean:

The two-year validity period of the theory test certificate is set in legislation and the Government has taken the decision not to lay further legislation to extend it. The primary reason is that the two-year validity is in place to ensure that a candidate's theoretical knowledge and hazard perception skills are up to date at the critical point they drive on their own for the first time. Extending the validity would provide less reassurance that this is the case. Those whose certificate previously expired and have since passed the theory test will now have a further two years in which to pass the practical test.

■ Greater Manchester Combined Authority: Finance

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[115526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 16 November 2020 to Question 114087 on Transport for Greater Manchester and Transport for London: Finance, how much funding his Department has allocated to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority in each of the last 10 years.

Rachel Maclean:

Payments to Greater Manchester Combined Authority and associated bodies (Transport for Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority and Greater Manchester Public Transport Executive) over the last 10 years amount to £1.709.5bn.

FINANCIAL

YEAR	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	TOTAL
Amount (£m)	171.1	266.2	188.9	139.4	180.3	178.4	113.2	66.4	65.3	133.3	207.0	1,709.5

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line: Environment Protection

Dr Lisa Cameron:

[114225]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the environmental impact of HS2.

Andrew Stephenson:

An environmental statement has been prepared for each phase of HS2, which sets out a detailed assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of building and operating the railway, as well as proposed ways to avoid, reduce, mitigate and monitor the environmental effects.

The Environmental Statement for Phase 1 is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase-one-environmental-statement-documents>

The Environmental Statement for Phase 2a is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase-2a-environmental-statement>

The Working Draft Environmental Statement for Phase 2b is available here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-working-draft-environmental-statement>

In April this year, the Government published a Full Business Case for HS2, which included a section on decarbonisation and sustainability. This is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hs2-phase-one-full-business-case>

Following the launch of construction of Phase One, HS2 Ltd will begin publishing an annual environmental sustainability report, from 2021 onwards, which will provide updates on a range of environmental impacts, such as carbon and biodiversity, alongside the associated mitigation measures being delivered as part of the HS2 Green Corridor initiative.

■ Quarantine: Coronavirus

Daniel Kawczynski:

[115550]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether people who have recently recovered from covid-19, and who have a recent positive antibody test, can be exempt of quarantine measures, upon entering the UK.

Robert Courts:

There is currently no exemption for those with a recent positive antibody test.

For those planning to travel into England, they should check the current travel corridor list to see whether they need to isolate for 14 days. They will still be required to abide by the new national restrictions set out here even if they do not need to self-isolate on arrival.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>.

The Government is actively working on the practicalities of using testing to release people from self-isolation earlier than 14 days. The Global Travel Taskforce is working at pace to consider how testing, technology and innovation can drive a recovery for international travel and tourism, without adding to infection risk or infringing on our overall NHS test capacity.

■ **Railway Stations: Parking**

Tom Tugendhat:

[114251]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether, as part of Emergency Measures Agreements with Train Operating Companies, his Department will review the use and function of Network Rail goods yards to create more off-street parking options at rural stations.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Emergency Measures Agreements between the Department and Train Operators were designed to bring stability and certainty to the rail industry. Following the expiry of the EMAs in September, the department agreed Emergency Recovery Measures Agreements with the rail industry. These agreements are between the Department and Train Operators, they do not stipulate Network Rail Land utilisation.

At present, Network Rail do not currently have any plans to review the use and function of goods yards to create more off-street parking options at rural stations. The Network Rail property team are however, assessing parking at Network Rail managed stations, this is focusing on opportunities regarding capacity and the potential introduction of electric vehicle charging stations.

■ **Railway Stations: Taxis**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[115778]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 2 November 2020 to Question 107101 on Railway Stations: Taxis, whether his Department has had discussions with (a) train operating companies or (b) Network rail on refunds or price reductions for taxi permits issued at railway stations.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department has had no discussions with Network Rail regarding refunds or price reductions for taxi permits. Whilst the Department has not had discussions with train operating companies on specific proposals for refunds or price reductions, several have raised potential financial support to taxi drivers accessing railway stations at this time. The Department is considering its policy in this area.

■ Railway Stations: West Midlands**Colleen Fletcher:****[114209]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of trends in rail passenger usage of (a) Coventry station and (b) all stations in the West Midlands in the last five years; and what effect the covid-19 outbreak has had on rail passenger numbers at those stations.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) estimates the number of passengers travelling to and from railway stations by rail within Great Britain. The estimates for Coventry station and the total for all stations in the West Midlands are presented in the table below:

	COVENTRY	WEST MIDLANDS STATIONS
2018/19	8,207,914	167,321,566
2017/18	7,682,920	156,714,634
2016/17	7,377,584	150,596,866
2015/16	6,921,432	143,158,798
2014/15	6,252,888	132,420,618

Please note there have been methodological changes over the recording of these statistics so yearly figures may not be directly comparable.

Source: ORR Estimates of Station Usage (

<https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/statistics/usage/estimates-of-station-usage/>)

As the latest data is 2018/19, the published estimates of station usage data does not cover the period affected by COVID-19. Currently, all official statistics provide only insight into the national affect that COVID-19 has had on passenger journeys. The Department for Transport publishes the 'Travel use during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic' statistics which shows the use of all modes of transport nationally and is updated weekly. These statistics can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/transport-use-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic>

[Due to the number of rows in the 'Travel use during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic' dataset, it is not possible to insert the entire data table here].

■ Railways: West Midlands**Stuart Anderson:****[114328]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the merits of Network Rail's proposal in the Traction Decarbonisation Network Strategy to electrify the Birmingham-Black Country-Shrewsbury route.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department will consider the recommendations of TDNS carefully and will develop individual electrification schemes where appropriate, ensuring that they are deliverable and provide value for money for taxpayers.

■ Tunnels: Stonehenge**Tim Loughton:****[114749]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what representations he has received from archaeological groups on objections to the Stonehenge Tunnel; and what plans he has to address the objections.

Rachel Maclean:

The Secretary of State's decision to approve the A303 (Amesbury to Berwick Down) Development Consent Order was issued on 12 November 2020. The reasons for the decision are set out in the decision letter published on the Planning Inspectorate's website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-west/a303-stonehenge/>. It includes consideration of the representations made by archaeological groups and other Interested Parties.

TREASURY**■ Business: Coronavirus****Tom Tugendhat:****[114254]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what additional support, beyond the Discretionary Grant Fund scheme, he will provide to businesses ineligible for Government grants or loans, during the November 2020 covid-19 lockdown.

Kemi Badenoch:

During this difficult time for the country, the Government is acutely aware of the extreme disruption to people's lives, jobs, and businesses due to the necessary actions to tackle COVID-19.

The Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund closed to new applicants on 28 August. However, the Government recognises that businesses which are legally required to close due to national or local restrictions, including those which were introduced on 5 November, will need additional support. This is why we have announced the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) scheme, which will provide businesses in England which are legally required to close with grants of up to £3,000 per four-week closure period, depending on their rateable value.

Through the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open), local authorities which were subject to restrictions on socialising between 1 August and 5 November will also receive additional funding so that they can make grants of up to £2,100 per month of closures to hospitality, leisure and accommodation businesses which were able to remain open but which experienced a severe reduction in demand due to restrictions on socialising.

On top of this, we have provided Local Authorities with a further £1.1 billion across England via the Additional Restrictions Grant. Local Authorities have discretion on how to use this funding to support businesses in their areas, but we encourage them to set up discretionary grant schemes to support businesses which can remain open, but which are nonetheless severely affected by the enhanced COVID-19 restrictions.

Businesses across the country should also be able to benefit from others measures in the Government's unprecedented package of support for businesses, including:

- The extension to 31 March of the CJRS, through which employees will receive up to 80% of their usual salary for hours not worked up to a maximum of £2,500 per month;
- Support for the self-employed via the SEISS, which will provide the self-employed with grants worth up to 80% of trading profits, covering November to January;
- The extension of the application deadline for loan guarantee schemes to the end of January 2021;
- An adjustment to the Bounce Back Loan Scheme rules to allow those businesses who have borrowed less than their maximum (i.e. less than 25% of their turnover) to top-up their existing loan; and
- Help for businesses in repaying loans from Government-backed schemes through the Pay as you Grow scheme and allowing lenders to extend the terms of CBILS loans to up to 10 years.

■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Anneliese Dodds:

[115807]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of the number of (a) men, (b) women and (c) other gender identities who have made claims under the extended Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Jesse Norman:

HMRC have published statistics on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). These include information on the employments supported by the CJRS broken down by the employees' gender. The statistics can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmrc-coronavirus-covid-19-statistics>. The statistics do not show other gender identities because HMRC do not hold that information.

HMRC will publish statistics on the CJRS extension in due course. The date of publication will be pre-announced on GOV.UK. HMRC continue to monitor the use of these statistics and make improvements as necessary.

■ **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Public Sector**

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[115621\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether public sector workers who are clinically extremely vulnerable, and who cannot work from home, are eligible to be furloughed under the extended Job Retention Scheme.

Jesse Norman:

Where employers receive public funding for staff costs, and that funding is continuing, the Government expects employers to use that money to continue to pay staff in the usual fashion, and correspondingly not to furlough them through the CJRS. In a small number of cases, for example where organisations are not primarily funded by the Government and whose staff cannot be redeployed to assist with the coronavirus response, the extended CJRS may be appropriate for some staff.

BEIS Safer Workplaces guidance advises that workers who can work effectively from home should do so over the winter. Specific to clinically extremely vulnerable workers, the guidance also outlines steps employers can take to suit their and their employees' unique circumstances, including changing roles or adjusting work patterns. Employers can be furloughed under the CJRS when they are unable to work because they are shielding in line with public health guidance.

Furthermore, the Government has ensured that employees who were on an employer's PAYE payroll before 31 October 2020 can be claimed for under the CJRS extension. Therefore, those who started work after the initial CJRS began and are required to shield will be supported. In cases where their employer chooses not to furlough them under the CJRS and does not have other suitable policies in place, Statutory Sick Pay is available as a safety net.

■ **Customs: EU Countries**

Sir Christopher Chope:

[\[115471\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when definitive advice will be available for removal companies on the customs documentation they will need from their customers in order to facilitate the transfer of their goods to destinations in the EU which are their new country of domicile; and whether there will be a central point to which that customs paperwork should be submitted.

Jesse Norman:

The management of EU import and export procedures is the responsibility of the customs authorities of the Member States. It is important that businesses and individuals confirm the processes at their port of arrival and any conditions or procedures that may apply, such as the time limit goods may remain in the EU

without the payment of duty. More information can be found online at https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/home_en.

From 1 January 2021 export declarations and exit Safety and Security declarations will also be required for all goods moving from the UK to the EU. More information on export declarations can be found online at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-full-export-declaration>.

■ **Employment: Females**

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[114074]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential long-term effects of the covid-19 outbreak on women's (a) pay and (b) employment.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government continues to monitor the impact of Covid-19 on women and men in the labour market; however, the economic evidence of the impact of the pandemic is still emerging and inconclusive.

The Government has provided unprecedented support to protect and support jobs. For claims received up to 31st July 2020, 4.5 million jobs held by women had been supported by the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme since its introduction. The latest data shows that at the end of August, 1.6 million jobs with a female employee were still being supported by the furlough scheme across the UK. In the Plan for Jobs, the Government announced a wide-ranging package of measures to support jobs which will help women across the country, including almost £900m to double the number of work coaches to 27,000 this year and the £2bn Kickstart Scheme, which will create hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people (16-24) at risk of long-term unemployment across Great Britain.

Since the Covid-19 outbreak, we know women have seen a smaller fall in employment than men, both in relative and absolute terms. Compared to the quarter ending February 2020, there were 200,000 fewer women employed in the quarter ending September 2020, whereas there were 370,000 fewer men employed. This implies a fall of 1.3% in female employment and 2.1% fall in male employment. The gender employment rate gap is at its lowest level on record at 6.6 percentage points.

Between April 2019 and April 2020, women's median weekly pay increased by 2.5%, while men's median weekly pay fell by 0.7%. The gender pay gap is also at its lowest level since records began, falling to a record low of 15.5%, from 17.4% last year.

■ **Equal Pay: Coronavirus**

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[114073]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that progress in closing the gender pay gap is not adversely affected by the covid-19 outbreak.

Kemi Badenoch:

While evidence of the economic impact of the pandemic is still emerging, we know between April 2019 and April 2020, women's median weekly pay increased by 2.5%, whereas men's median weekly pay fell by 0.7%. The UK's gender pay gap has fallen to a record low of 15.5% from 17.4%, while the gender employment rate gap is at its lowest level on record at 6.6 percentage points.

The Government is committed to levelling up and making the UK a country where equality of opportunity exists for everyone. Coronavirus is the biggest challenge the UK has faced in decades and the government has taken unprecedented steps to protect and support jobs.

The Government has protected 4.5 million jobs held by women through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. The government also introduced one of the most generous self-employed coronavirus support schemes in the world. Around 760,000 claims have been received from self-employed women for the first Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) grant and figures so far show 660,000 claims have been received by women for the second grant.

Some sector-specific support has helped to support women's employment by helping some of the hardest hit sectors in which women are overrepresented. For example, the government extended the temporary reduced rate of VAT (5%) to goods and services supplied by the tourism and hospitality sectors from 12 January to 31 March 2021. These are sectors that disproportionately employ women.

■ Hospitality Industry: VAT**Judith Cummins:**[\[115699\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has had discussions on extending the reduction in VAT for the hospitality sector until March 2021 to hair, beauty, spa and wellness services.

Jesse Norman:

The temporary reduced rate of VAT was introduced on 15 July to support the cash flow and viability of over 150,000 businesses and protect 2.4 million jobs in the hospitality and tourism sectors, and will run until 31 March 2021. This relief comes at a significant cost to the Exchequer, and there are currently no plans to extend the scope to include other sectors.

The Government has announced a significant support package to help businesses through the winter months, which includes an extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, an extension of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme grant, and an extension of the application window for the government-backed loan schemes.

■ Multinational Companies: Taxation

Dan Carden:

[\[115791\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to allocate additional resources to HMRC to support the investigation of multinational companies that report profits in other countries to reduce the amount of tax they are required to pay in the UK.

Jesse Norman:

The Government continues to take significant steps, domestically and internationally, to ensure multinationals pay the right amount of tax on their activities in the UK.

Through shared G20 and OECD initiatives to tackle Base Erosion and Profit Shifting, the UK remains at the forefront of multilateral action, reforming tax standards to realign taxation of profits with economic activities taking place across borders.

In order to further combat profit-shifting by multinationals, the Government introduced the Diverted Profits Tax in 2015, the Corporate Interest Restriction in 2017 and the charge on Offshore Receipts in respect of Intangible Property in 2019.

The Government has made significant investment to ensure non-compliance is tackled in all its forms. At Budget 2020, the Treasury provided HMRC with £63 million of additional funding in 2020-21 to tackle non-compliance, which is forecast to generate £4.7 billion of additional tax revenue over the next five years.

■ Plastics: Taxation

Ian Murray:

[\[115602\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of the plastic packaging tax on businesses that produce 100 per cent compostable and bio-based packaging; and if he will make a statement.

Ian Murray:

[\[115603\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the £200 per tonne plastic packaging tax will apply to 100 per cent compostable packaging; and if he will make a statement.

Kemi Badenoch:

On 12 November, the Government published the summary of responses to the recent consultation on the detailed design and implementation of the Plastic Packaging Tax. This included confirming the consultation proposal to include compostable and bio-based plastic packaging in the scope of the tax. As set out in the consultation, all packaging, including that which is 100% compostable, will be in scope of the tax if plastic is the predominant material by weight.

As set out in the summary of responses to the consultation, the Government believes that alternative plastics can play a role in addressing plastic waste if used in the right circumstances. However, further evidence is needed on the impact of widespread adoption of such materials, and it is right to include them within scope of the tax at this stage. As part of the Bioeconomy Strategy, the Government is working with industry and the research community to better understand the impact of using bio-

based, biodegradable and compostable plastics. Following the conclusion of the Bioeconomy Strategy, the Government will consider further the treatment of these plastics in relation to Plastic Packaging Tax.

The Government carefully considered the impacts of the tax when making the decisions set out in the summary of responses to the consultation. More information on impacts is available in the Tax Information and Impact Note -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-a-new-plastic-packaging-tax/introduction-of-a-new-plastic-packaging-tax>

■ Self-employment Income Support Scheme

Drew Hendry:

[115727]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of extending eligibility for the Self Employment income Support Scheme to people for whom self-employment makes up over half of their income following the loss of other employment during the covid-19 outbreak.

Jesse Norman:

Unlike for employees, self-employed income is not reported monthly, but at the end of each tax year on the individual's Income Tax Self Assessment return. To protect the Exchequer from fraudulent activity, this means that the most reliable and up-to-date record of self-employed income is from 2018-19 tax returns.

The self-employed are very diverse and have a wide mix of turnover and profits, with monthly and annual variations even in normal times, and in some cases with substantial alternative forms of income too. The design of the SEISS, including the eligibility requirement that an individual's trading profits must be at least equal to their non-trading income, means it is targeted at those who most need it, and who are most reliant on their self-employment income.

The Government does acknowledge that it has not been possible to support everyone as they might want. Those ineligible for the SEISS Grant Extension may still be eligible for other elements of the support available. The Universal Credit standard allowance has been temporarily increased for 2020-21 and the Minimum Income Floor relaxed for the duration of the crisis, so that where self-employed claimants' earnings have fallen significantly, their Universal Credit award will have increased to reflect their lower earnings. In addition to this, they may also have access to other elements of the package, including Bounce Back loans, tax deferrals, rental support, mortgage holidays, self-isolation support payments and other business support grants.

Claire Hanna:

[115841]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the eligibility criteria for the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme prior to the application process opening for the third grant to allow people represented by #ExcludedUK to access that scheme.

Jesse Norman:

The practical issues that prevented the Government from being able to include company owner-managers in the original Self-Employment Income Support Scheme, namely the inability of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to verify the source of their dividend income without introducing unacceptable levels of fraud risk, still remain. Similarly, the practical issues that prevented the Government from being able to include the newly self-employed in 2019-20 in the original SEISS, namely that HMRC will not have access to their self-assessment returns in order to verify their eligibility, still remain.

The Government has tried to target the SEISS at those who most need it through a maximum £50,000 threshold for average trading profits, and the requirement to earn 50 per cent or more of income from self-employment.

As previously announced, new eligibility criteria have been introduced for the third SEISS grant in order to ensure that it will only be available to self-employed traders who are facing reduced demand or those who are temporarily unable to trade due to COVID-19.

The Government has acknowledged that it has not been possible to support everyone as they might want. Those ineligible for the SEISS may still be eligible for other elements of the package of financial support available, including tax deferrals, rental support, self-isolation support payments and other business support grants.

■ Shipping: Tax Allowances**Grahame Morris:**[\[115605\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the potential effect of the covid-19 pandemic on income tax reliefs granted under the Seafarers Earnings Deduction in tax year 2020-21.

Grahame Morris:[\[115606\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will bring forward measures in the Comprehensive Spending Review to ensure that merchant seafarers who no longer meet the qualifying criteria for the Seafarers Earnings Deduction as a result of the effect of the covid-19 pandemic on the shipping industry are compensated for losses in annual income; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

The Seafarers Earnings Deduction (SED) entitles seafarers to a 100% deduction from income tax for their foreign earnings in certain circumstances. The deduction is available for an eligible period of at least 365 days provided that a minimum of half of the period is spent outside the UK, and that no more than 183 consecutive days are spent in the UK during that period.

Eligible periods for SED are not bound to the tax year, and seafarers are able to add periods of work abroad to previous, or future, eligible periods. Seafarers that claim

SED each year are likely to be able to add work done before COVID-19 restrictions to their previous eligible period, and so are unlikely to lose their SED entitlement.

The Government has made support available for seafarers through many other measures. It has ensured that people who need it have received help with their utility bills, had access to mortgage and consumer credit holidays and could benefit from temporary welfare measures, including an increase to the Universal Credit standard allowance and Working Tax Credit basic element.

The Government has taken recent steps to ensure that seafarers receive pay protection through the National Minimum Wage, ensuring that more than 10,000 seafarers across the UK will no longer be undercut. This builds on the Government's work to help British maritime workers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government keeps all taxes under review as part of its annual Budget process.

Grahame Morris: [\[115607\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the annual total of the Seafarers Earnings Deduction was in each year from 2006-07 to 2019-20.

Grahame Morris: [\[115608\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many qualifying claimants there were for seafarers earnings deduction in each year between 2006-07 and 2019-20.

Jesse Norman:

The estimated number of qualifying claimants and cost to the Exchequer of Seafarers Earnings Deduction (SED) from 2008-09 to 2019-20 is presented in the table below.

YEAR	ESTIMATED COST TO THE EXCHEQUER OF SEAFARERS EARNINGS DEDUCTION (£M)	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF QUALIFYING CLAIMANTS FOR SEAFARERS EARNINGS DEDUCTION
2008-09	160	17,000
2009-10	170	17,000
2010-11	180	17,000
2011-12	195	19,000
2012-13	250	20,000
2013-14	280	21,000
2014-15	280	23,000
2015-16	250	22,000
2016-17	240	21,000

YEAR	ESTIMATED COST TO THE EXCHEQUER OF SEAFARERS EARNINGS DEDUCTION (£M)	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF QUALIFYING CLAIMANTS FOR SEAFARERS EARNINGS DEDUCTION
2017-18	240	22,000
2018-19	260	22,000
2019-20	280	22,000

Comparable figures prior to 2008-09 are not held.

The estimated cost to the Exchequer of SED from 2012-13 to 2019-20 and the estimated number of qualifying claimants for SED from 2017-18 to 2018-19 was published in HMRC's non-structural tax relief statistics, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/main-tax-expenditures-and-structural-reliefs>.

■ Social Services: Coronavirus

Dr Philippa Whitford:

[115696]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the adequacy of financial support for people working in social care during the covid-19 outbreak.

Steve Barclay:

The Chancellor and the Health Secretary have discussed a wide range of health-related issues during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In September, we announced the extension of the Infection Control Fund until March 2021, bringing the total funding for infection control measures in social care to over £1.1 billion. This funding can be used to financially support staff in line with the grant conditions. This includes paying staff who are isolating, in line with government guidance, their normal wages while doing so.

■ Special Educational Needs: Finance

Stephen McPartland:

[115631]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans in the forthcoming spending review to announce Additional High Needs funding to March 2024, with that funding allocated to councils based on an assessment of local need rather than historical spend.

Steve Barclay:

The upcoming Spending Review is a one-year exercise that will set departmental resource and capital budgets for 2021-22.

My RHF the Chancellor will set out the government's spending plans that will focus on tackling Covid-19.

The government is committed to the multi-year resource settlement for schools that was announced at Spending Round 2019. This has provided for a £780 million boost to high needs funding this year, and an additional £730 million next year, which will bring the total high needs budget to over £8 billion in 2021-22.

■ Transfer Pricing

Dan Carden:

[\[115792\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what penalties apply to multinational companies that fail to submit required transfer pricing information within the deadline set by HMRC.

Jesse Norman:

The filing of transfer pricing documentation alongside the tax return is not currently compulsory in the UK.

Taxpayers should prepare and retain such transfer pricing documentation as is reasonable given the nature, size and complexity of their business or of the relevant transaction but which adequately demonstrates that their transfer pricing meets the arm's length standard. HMRC's aim is to address this issue effectively while ensuring that businesses do not suffer disproportionate compliance costs.

In the event of a compliance check by HMRC, if the business has not provided all the documents and information requested, HMRC have the power to issue a notice to the business requiring it to provide information and documents that HMRC reasonably require for the purpose of checking its tax position.

If the business does not provide the information or produce the documents requested, HMRC may charge a penalty unless there is a reasonable excuse for the failure.

If the failure continues, HMRC may charge daily penalties. If HMRC consider that the maximum daily penalties that can be assessed are insufficient for the particular case or the that records have been destroyed, a tax-related penalty may be appropriate.

■ TUI UK: Coronavirus

Jamie Stone:

[\[115770\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with TUI on that company's position on furlough for its permanent part year employees.

Kemi Badenoch:

Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery.

Ministers and officials from the Department for Transport and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy are in regular contact with airlines, airports

and unions, and similarly the Department for Digital, Media, Sport and Culture are working with employers, delivery partners and industry groups to understand the impact that Covid-19 is having on sectors like tourism and its workers.

Details of ministerial and permanent secretary meetings with external organisations on departmental business are published on a quarterly basis and are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>

As we look forward, we welcome views from representatives and the Treasury will continue to monitor the impact of government support with regard to public services, businesses, individuals, and sectors, and to consider how best to support the economic recovery.

■ UK Relations with EU

Angus Brendan MacNeil:

[115537]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what contingency plans he has with respect to the UK's future relationship with the EU in the event of manufacturers encountering difficulties with importing components after the transition period.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has provided extensive guidance to traders to support them in their preparations for the end of the transition period, including publishing the detailed Border Operating Model to help traders take the necessary steps.

Recognising the impact of coronavirus on businesses' ability to prepare, the UK Government has taken the decision to introduce the new border controls in three stages up until 1 July 2021. From 1 January to 30 June, traders when importing non-controlled EU goods to GB will have the option to make a declaration in their own records at the time of import followed by a supplementary declaration up to 175 days later, which provides traders and intermediaries with more time to prepare.

HMRC continue to work closely with industry to ensure they are engaging with the new requirements and can take the necessary steps to prepare, including through the latest public information campaign, cross-Government industry steering groups, webinars and events.

HMRC will continue to engage with industry beyond the end of the transition period to understand any concerns and identify any further support that HMRC can provide.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Attendance Allowance

Daisy Cooper:

[116662]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of extending eligibility for the attendance allowance to people in care homes who self-fund.

Guy Opperman:

No such assessment is necessary

Attendance Allowance may already be payable in such circumstances where the conditions of entitlement are satisfied.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Staff**Drew Hendry:**[\[115725\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on her Department's staffing levels.

Guy Opperman:

The Department is continually assessing the services being offered to customers and we continue to keep staff numbers under review as part of our response to the impact of COVID-19 on the labour market. We have recruited and continue to recruit significant numbers of new staff to meet the demand required.

■ Employment: Pregnancy**Owen Thompson:**[\[115732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she has taken to (a) ensure that employers undertake covid-19 risk assessments for pregnant employees and (b) act in accordance with the result of those assessments.

Mims Davies:

(a) Employers are required to carry out risk assessments for all pregnant workers and protect them from harm. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website has guidance on managing the risks of COVID-19 and specific information on protecting vulnerable workers, which includes the health and safety responsibilities for pregnant workers.

(b) Employers have a legal duty to act in accordance with the results of their risk assessment for pregnant workers. Where employers are not doing so, workers can contact the HSE to raise their concerns which will be followed up.

■ Industrial Health and Safety: Sharing Economy**Kirsten Oswald:**[\[115707\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions she has had with Health and Safety Executive on responding to the finding by the High Court that the Government has not provided health and safety protections to gig economy and other precarious workers as required by EU health and safety directives; and if she will make a statement.

Mims Davies:

The Government is considering the judgment and will respond according to the timetable set down by the High Court.

■ Jobcentres: Termination of Employment**Seema Malhotra:**[\[115681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many full-time equivalent work coaches stopped working for her Department in each of the last 12 months.

Mims Davies:

The number of full-time equivalent Work Coaches to have left the department in each of the last 12 months is below: -

Nov-19	12.86
Dec-19	62.22
Jan-20	47.36
Feb-20	51.30
Mar-20	62.44
Apr-20	49.68
May-20	45.63
Jun-20	45.85
Jul-20	50.18
Aug-20	74.70
Sep-20	79.26
Oct-20	54.49

Total 635.96**■ Kickstart Scheme: Sole Traders****Sir Mike Penning:**[\[115531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether sole traders are eligible to apply for Kickstart funding via a Kickstart gateway.

Mims Davies:

Sole traders can apply to the scheme through a Kickstart Gateway. Although if they are not registered with Companies House and/or do not have the systems to pay participants through PAYE, they will need to work with a Gateway which is able to put the participant on the Gateway's PAYE system.

■ Pension Credit

Dr Lisa Cameron: [\[114229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 28 September 2020 to Question 93723 on Pension Credit, what the comparative rate of successful applications was (a) during the course of the Pension Credit awareness raising campaign and (b) in 2019.

Guy Opperman:

The information requested could only be provided at disproportionate cost to the department.

Dr Lisa Cameron: [\[114230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 28 September 2020 to Question 93723, what comparative assessment she has made of the rate of successful applications for pension credit made through the (a) new online application service and (b) telephone service.

Guy Opperman:

The information requested could only be provided at disproportionate cost to the department.

■ State Retirement Pensions: Females

Afzal Khan: [\[114312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support the Government is providing to women born in the 1950s not yet in receipt of (a) state pension or (b) pension credit to mitigate the financial effect of the covid-19 outbreak.

Guy Opperman:

We have never spent more as a country on welfare support than we do now.

The Government has strengthened the safety net to provide financial support during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is committed to providing financial support for people at every stage of their life, including when they near or reach retirement.

The welfare system will continue to provide support to those who are unable to work or who are on a low income but who are not eligible to pensioner benefits because of their age.

We have invested in a significant new programme, the Plan for Jobs, to help people of all ages who may be made redundant find work and acquire the skills they need to return to work.

Afzal Khan: [\[114313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of providing women born in the 1950s early access to (a) state pensions and (b) pension credit in order to mitigate the financial effects of the covid-19 outbreak.

Guy Opperman:

No assessment has been made.

■ **Statutory Sick Pay: Coronavirus**

Stephen Farry:

[92025]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of increasing the level of Statutory Sick Pay for people who have (a) tested positive for covid-19 and (b) been notified to self-isolate via the Track and Trace App.

Justin Tomlinson:

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) provides a minimum level of income for employees when they are sick or incapable of work. SSP is payable from the first day of absence from work, rather than the fourth, where an individual is unable to work due to COVID19. It is paid by employers at £95.85 per week for up to 28 weeks in any one period of entitlement. Some employers may also decide to pay more, and for longer, through Occupational Sick Pay.

SSP is just one part of our welfare safety net and our wider government offer to support people in times of need, and we have taken steps to strengthen that safety net. Where an individual's income is reduced while off work sick and they require further financial support, for example where they are not eligible for SSP, they may be able to claim Universal Credit and new style Employment and Support Allowance, depending on their personal circumstances. The Government introduced a package of temporary welfare measures worth around £9.3 billion this year to help with the financial consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. This included the £20 weekly increase to the Universal Credit Standard Allowance rates as a temporary measure for the 20/21 tax year. We are continuing to work with the Treasury on the best ways to support those receiving benefits.

To help support people in Northern Ireland during the COVID-19 pandemic the Department for Communities has put in place additional support. Financial support may be available for short-term living expenses for those who have a positive Covid-19 diagnosis or are in self-isolation. A non-repayable Discretionary Support Self Isolation Grant may be available for those who are on a low income and are experiencing financial difficulties as a result of being told to self-isolate.

Background

To help support people during the COVID-19 pandemic the Department for Communities has put in place additional support. This includes:

- a non-repayable Discretionary Support self-isolation grant payment to assist with short term living expenses where a person, or any member of their immediate family, is diagnosed with COVID-19 or is advised to self-isolate in accordance with guidance published by the Regional Agency for Public Health and Social Well-being and

- extending Discretionary Support to full-time students suffering financial hardship as a direct result of COVID-19

■ **Support for Mortgage Interest: Coronavirus**

Claire Hanna:

[\[115842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make it her Department's policy to reverse the changes made to Support for Mortgage Interest due to the covid-19 outbreak.

Guy Opperman:

The Department has no plans to change the Support for Mortgage Interest scheme from a loan.

The support provided is at the same rate as when SMI was paid as a benefit and therefore the scheme offers the same level of protection against repossession.

Reversing the changes would not provide any additional assistance to home owners during the current pandemic.

■ **Universal Credit: Complaints**

Drew Hendry:

[\[115726\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of trends in the time taken to process a universal credit complaint.

Guy Opperman:

Complaints received about the Universal Credit are handled in line with the overall Departmental complaints process published on Gov.uk. We aim to contact customers within 15 working days to clear the complaint or agree how to investigate it if it will take longer.

As part of our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to make changes to our complaints model to allow staff to be deployed to support processing claims and payments. From 9 July 2020, DWP now triage complaints giving priority to vulnerable customers who may be at risk, and those with benefit payment issues.

We continue to look into all complaints as quickly as we can and, as part of the triage process used to determine lower priority, we write to those customers explaining there may be a delay in answering their complaint.

We plan to review the effectiveness of the approach we have taken throughout the pandemic as part of an ongoing review into complaints handling.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

HOME OFFICE

■ Youth Services

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[111599]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to increase youth intervention services in (a) Slough and (b) England.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 18 November 2020. The correct answer should have been:

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 £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 have awarded Thames Valley PCC, which includes Slough, £2.32m to develop its multi-agency Violence Reduction Unit. We have also invested £3.2m in Thames Valley to ‘surge’ the operational police response to serious violent crimes, which is supporting vital work to identify and disrupt exploitative county lines operations.

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 129 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.

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 aim to 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.

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We have awarded Thames Valley PCC, which includes Slough, £2.32m to develop its multi-agency Violence Reduction Unit. We have also invested £3.2m in Thames Valley to 'surge' the operational police response to serious violent crimes, which is supporting vital work to identify and disrupt exploitative county lines operations.

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 129 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.

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.

TRANSPORT

■ Transport for Greater Manchester and Transport for London: Finance

Andrew Gwynne:

[114087]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding (a) Transport for London and (b) Transport for Greater Manchester has received from the Government for (i) capital projects and (ii) general operations in each of the last 10 years.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 16 November 2020. The correct answer should have been:

Rachel Maclean:

The Department for Transport (DfT) has paid £883,925,106 (£884M) directly to Transport for London over the last 10 years. We have not made any direct payments to Transport for Greater Manchester. DfT makes payments to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority who then pay Transport for Greater Manchester for their required transport needs.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has paid £883,925,106 (£884M) directly to Transport for London over the last 10 years. DfT has made payments directly to Transport for Greater Manchester totalling £347.6m in the last 10 years. DfT also makes payments to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority who then pay Transport for Greater Manchester for their required transport needs.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ Gibraltar Covid Response

Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Dominic Raab): [\[HCWS588\]](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on all of the Overseas Territories, including Gibraltar, where it has impacted on around 60% of its economy. The Government of Gibraltar also instituted a lockdown and financial support package broadly similar to that in the UK. The cost of maintaining this support and related measures, combined with the loss of revenue from its key sectors, has put a significant strain on the Government of Gibraltar's finances. Consequently, the Chief Minister of Gibraltar sought financial support from the UK Government (HMG), as the sovereign power.

The UK Government was clear at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic that it was looking to Overseas Territories to make full use of their financial resources in order to address the needs of their people: we also indicated that we would consider requests for further support on a case-by-case basis, to complement comprehensive local responses. Following discussions with the Chief Minister, it was agreed that HMG would provide a Loan Guarantee for a lending facility of up to £500m. This will provide resilience to the Government of Gibraltar's finances by enabling it to borrow at more favourable rates, by leveraging HMG's high sovereign credit rating as the guarantor, confirming the Government of Gibraltar's capacity to repay the principal loan, providing HMG with the reassurance regarding its liability under the guarantee.

A Contingent Liability Checklist has been approved by HMT and FCDO ministers. The Government of Gibraltar has identified a bank prepared to open the requested drawdown facility, under acceptable terms, and contracts are being prepared for signature. The Government of Gibraltar has made commitments on transparency and information sharing and has ensured compliance with all relevant international standards in this respect.

The serious impact of Covid-19 on Gibraltar's economy means that it is important that these contracts are signed at the earliest opportunity. I have written to the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Public Accounts Committee explaining that it has not been possible to consult Parliament in advance on this occasion.

A departmental Minute has been laid in the House of Commons providing further detail on this contingent liability. I will keep the House informed of further significant developments in the case.

HOME OFFICE**■ Applications for British Citizenship – War Crimes Screening**

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Future Borders and Immigration (Kevin Foster): [\[HCWS589\]](#)

I have made the Equality (War Crimes etc.) Arrangements 2020 and the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) (War Crimes etc.) Arrangements 2020 to enable a Home Office Minister to subject applications from certain nationalities for British citizenship to more rigorous scrutiny than others for the purposes of determining whether the applicant has committed, been complicit in the commission of, or otherwise been associated with, the commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide.

The Equality (War Crimes etc.) Arrangements 2020 are made under paragraph (1)(1)(d) of Schedule 23 to the Equality Act 2010, and replace The Equality (War Crimes etc.) Arrangements 2013. The corresponding Race Relations (Northern Ireland) (War Crimes etc.) Arrangements 2020 are made under Article 40 paragraph 2(c) Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 and replace the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) (War Crimes etc.) Arrangements 2013.

The condition for subjecting these applications to more rigorous scrutiny is the applicant is a national of a State specified on a list approved personally by a Home Office Minister for the purpose of the arrangements.

I have reviewed and approved this list and I am satisfied the conditions set out in the arrangements are met in respect of the countries on the list.

The arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis and will remain in force until revoked. I will update Parliament when new arrangements are made.

Copies of the arrangements will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

PRIME MINISTER**■ Cabinet Committees**

Prime Minister (Boris Johnson): [\[HCWS590\]](#)

Today I am publishing an updated Cabinet Committee list. I have placed a copy of the new list in the Libraries of both Houses.

■ Publication of the Intelligence and Security Committee's Reports on GCHQ Accommodation Procurement: A Case Study

Prime Minister (Boris Johnson): [\[HCWS587\]](#)

The Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament (ISC) has today laid before Parliament a report of the former Committee on GCHQ accommodation procurement: a case study, examining the procurement process for the National Cyber Security Centre's (NCSC) London headquarters and the decision of the (then) Government in 2016 to approve Nova South as the location.

We welcome the scrutiny that the Committee and the National Audit Office provide in order to ensure that the taxpayer receives the best value for money from investments made by the Security and Intelligence Agencies. The procurement of Nova South as the headquarters of the NCSC was a unique challenge, undertaken within a demanding timeframe and as a result, the Government acknowledges there are lessons that can be learned from the procurement process. We have noted the Committee's recommendations and will respond to them in full in due course.

The UK has never been better defended from cyber threats than it is today. The NCSC offers unprecedented analysis, response and reduction techniques to the growing cyber threat.

The Government accepts that this report does not scrutinise the overall success of NCSC. However, as the public-facing part of GCHQ and the UK's lead technical authority on cyber security, the NCSC required a workspace which balanced the need for accessibility and operational capability to defend the UK against cyber threats effectively.

Nova South met all the key criteria required by Government, including proximity to Whitehall and other stakeholders within the Government Secure Zone. A further contributing factor to its selection was its availability which allowed the NCSC to be established at pace, within a year, providing a centre at time when there was an urgent need for the Government to increase its defensive cyber capabilities and respond to global cyber incidents like Wannacry.

Nova South has provided a much-needed central focus for UK cyber security since its procurement, hosting a wide range of Government and industry partners as well as contributing to our global commitment to cyber security and the UK's ranking as number one by the Global Cybersecurity Index.