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**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

#### ■ Domestic Abuse and Gender Based Violence

**Feryal Clark:**

[\[6505\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what meetings (a) he and (b) the Solicitor General have had with women's groups to discuss measures to prevent (a) gender-based violence and (b) domestic violence since February 2020.

**Michael Ellis:**

Ministers engage regularly with stakeholders from across the justice sector and value the importance of listening to and the opportunity to understand their views in relation to relevant issues. Meetings with external organisations, including women's groups, are published as part of the quarterly Ministerial transparency returns.

The following table includes a list of meetings the Law Officers have had with stakeholders and women's groups since February 2020:

MINISTER	DATE	NAME OF ORGANISATION OR ROLE	PURPOSE OF MEETING
Geoffrey Cox	2020-02-11	Victims' Commissioner, for London, End Violence Against Women and Girls	Meeting to discuss cross-government work on rape.
Michael Ellis	2020-01-23	The Lighthouse	Visit to discuss their work supporting victims of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
Michael Ellis	2020-01-23	Victim Support	Visit to discuss their work supporting victims of crime
Suella Braverman	2020-04-22	Victims' Commissioner	Introductory meeting to discuss work on Rape And Serious Sexual Offending, the Cross-Government End-to-End Rape Review and Domestic Abuse

<b>MINISTER</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION OR ROLE</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF MEETING</b>
Suella Braverman	2020-09-09	Victims' Commissioner	To discuss criminal justice issues of interest to the Victims' Commissioner.
Suella Braverman	2020-11-04	Victims' Commissioner	Routine meeting to discuss issues of relevance to the Victims' Commissioner (including rape and domestic prosecutions, the approach to disclosure, and wider victims' work).
Lucy Frazer	2021-04-20	Domestic Abuse Commissioner	Introductory meeting to discuss issues in relation to Domestic Abuse, including the prosecution of DA cases during the pandemic.
Lucy Frazer	2021-04-26	Rape Crisis	Meeting to discuss work to improve the criminal justice response to rape and serious sexual offences ('RASSO').
Lucy Frazer & Michael Ellis	2021-05-10	Victims' Commissioner	Routine meeting to discuss progress towards publication of the cross-government rape review, and the impact of the pandemic on victims.



**BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY****■ Carbon Capture and Storage and Hydrogen: Scotland****Richard Thomson:****[6496]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that industry in Scotland has access to (a) carbon capture and storage and (b) hydrogen production infrastructure required to meet Scottish and UK decarbonisation targets by 2045 and 2050.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

Last month, Government accepted the Committee on Climate Change's Carbon Budget 6 recommendation; this is a significant step in the UK's global climate leadership and CCUS and hydrogen will be critical to meeting these important commitments.

In May this year, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy set out the details of the Carbon Capture, Usage and Storage (CCUS) Cluster Sequencing Process. Through this process, government will look to identify at least two CCUS clusters whose readiness suggests they are most naturally suited to deployment in the mid-2020s, as part of our efforts to identify and support a logical sequence of deployment for CCUS projects in the UK. Projects within the clusters will have the first opportunity to be considered to receive any necessary support under the government's CCUS Programme including access to the £1bn CCS Infrastructure Fund, business models for Transport & Storage, power, industrial carbon capture and low carbon hydrogen. Further details on the revenue mechanisms to bring through private sector investment via these business models will be set out later this year.

We will continue to engage with each of the devolved administrations to develop our approach the delivery of CCUS across the UK. In order to facilitate this work, we continue to be open to any CCUS projects across the UK identifying themselves to us.

The UK has expertise and assets to support both electrolytic (green) and Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) enabled (blue) hydrogen production. Our twin track approach will drive cost effective supply volumes in the 2020s in line with our 2030 ambition, whilst scaling up green hydrogen. This ambition will be supported by a range of measures, including a UK wide £240 million Net Zero Hydrogen Fund, and our hydrogen business model. We will be consulting shortly on these measures, alongside the publication of the Hydrogen Strategy. We are working closely with the Devolved Administrations, including the Scottish Government, to help realise the economic and decarbonisation benefits that a UK hydrogen economy will bring.

We have also supported the development and deployment of projects within Scotland's industrial cluster that will deliver low carbon technologies and enabling infrastructure. Through the Industrial Decarbonisation Challenge, Scotland's Net Zero Infrastructure Programme (SNZI) received £31.3m in March this year from the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

## ■ Carbon Capture and Storage: Finance

**Alan Brown:**

[6354]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the (a) terms of reference, (b) qualifying criteria and (c) submission deadlines will be provided for the £20 million allocation to support the development of the next generation carbon capture, usage and storage technologies.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

On 24<sup>th</sup> May the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy published an Expression of Interest (EOI) for the CCUS 2.0 Innovation programme that will be providing up to £20 million to support the development of next generation carbon capture, usage and storage technologies. The EOI confirmed that BEIS will be looking to publish the competition guidance documents and application form by 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021, with a deadline for applications by 8<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

The competition guidance document will provide the scope of the competition and the assessment criteria. Applicants will have up to 8 weeks to complete an application for grant-funding, with the online application form due to go live on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

## ■ Closed Businesses Lockdown Payment: West Yorkshire

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

[7306]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many businesses applied for the Closed Business Lockdown Payment in (a) Wakefield and (b) West Yorkshire.

**Paul Scully:**

The Closed Business Lockdown Payment was a one-off payment for businesses that were required to close from 5 January 2021 due to the introduction of national restrictions.

We are not able to share a breakdown of the number of businesses that have applied for funding at this stage. We will publish data on Closed Business Lockdown Payments in due course.

All data on Government allocations and Local Authority payments of grant schemes is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-grant-funding-local-authority-payments-to-small-and-medium-businesses>.

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

[7307]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the average payment made to businesses under the Closed Business Lockdown Payment scheme was in (a) Wakefield and (b) West Yorkshire.

**Paul Scully:**

The Closed Business Lockdown Payment was a one-off payment for businesses that were required to close from 5 January 2021 due to the introduction of national restrictions.

We are not able to share a breakdown of the funding distributed by Local Authorities at this stage. We will publish data on Closed Business Lockdown Payments in due course.

All data on Government allocations and Local Authority payments of grant schemes is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-grant-funding-local-authority-payments-to-small-and-medium-businesses>.

## ■ Companies: Ownership

**Liam Byrne:**

**[7105]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the proportion of all registered companies in the UK which have not listed an ultimate beneficial owner; and if he will make a statement.

**Paul Scully:**

As of 1 April 2021, the proportion of all registered companies in the UK, having not listed an ultimate beneficial owner (Person of Significant Control) are 0.25% of the effective company register.

## ■ Conditions of Employment

**Martyn Day:**

**[6369]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that (a) agency workers and (b) other workers are treated fairly, respectfully and that their rights are protected.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government is committed to protecting and enhancing workers' rights, including for agency workers. In the past year the Government has taken a variety of actions to support workers. These include increasing the National Living Wage for around 2 million workers, extending eligibility for the minimum wage to thousands of seafarers, enabling workers to carry over more annual leave due to the Covid-19 pandemic, ensured that those made redundant after a period of furlough do not lose out on redundancy pay, increasing the reference period employers use to calculate holiday pay to improve seasonal workers' wages, and ensuring that prospective parents who are furloughed do not lose out on maternity pay entitlements and other forms of parental pay.

The Government has also introduced additional protections for agency workers. From 6 April 2020 the Government banned the use of 'Swedish Derogation' contracts, ensuring agency workers cannot opt out of their right to equal pay with permanent counterparts after the twelve-week qualifying period in the same role with the same hirer. We have also introduced the requirement for employment businesses to give new agency workers a Key Information Document to improve transparency around pay. The Government has also committed to extend the remit of the Employment Agency Standards (EAS) Inspectorate, which enforces agency workers' rights, so

that they can investigate relevant complaints involving umbrella companies and seek compliance from them. EAS has also doubled the number of frontline inspector roles.

### ■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

**Navendu Mishra:** **[6500]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many people volunteered to participate in Novavax trials.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

Since the end of September 2020, Novavax recruited more than 15,000 participants aged 18 to 84 years old for the UK COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial via the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) volunteer registry.

### ■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Correspondence**

**Afzal Khan:** **[6452]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what proportion of correspondence sent by hon. Members to his Department received a substantive response within the service standard in each month of (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Amanda Solloway:**

BEIS has a 15 working day target to provide a substantive response to hon. Members. The Cabinet Office will soon formally publish the correspondence performance data of Departments for the years: 2018, 2019 and 2020. In line with this publication, the Department has achieved the following annual results: 2018: 57% answered within 15 working days, 2019: 86% and 2020: 67%.

### ■ **District Heating: Prices**

**Apsana Begum:** **[6493]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of customers of heat networks that pay for heat at more than double the price of fuel if using a gas boiler at prices governed by the cap on standard variable tariffs.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

It is challenging to directly compare gas and heat network bills. This is because heat network bills tend to include additional system costs such as system maintenance, whereas these additional costs are typically paid by gas consumers through other means.

Whilst there is currently no requirement for heat networks owners or operators to formally report details on their pricing practices, studies have been carried out which provide useful insight into heat network pricing from a sample of the market, namely the [2017 Heat Networks Consumer Survey](#) (HNCS) and the [2018 CMA heat networks market study](#) (CMA).

Government is committed to implementing the Heat Networks Market Framework, which will introduce price transparency requirements on heat network operators. The future heat networks regulator will also have powers to protect consumers from disproportionately high pricing and monopoly power.

**Apsana Begum:**

**[6494]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many and what proportion of tenants on heat networks experience (a) per kWh tariffs and (b) standing charges for heat that are more than 1.5 times the capped price for gas.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

It is challenging to directly compare gas and heat network bills. This is because heat network bills tend to include additional system costs such as system maintenance, whereas these additional costs are typically paid by gas consumers through other means.

Whilst there is currently no requirement for heat networks owners or operators to formally report details on their pricing practices, studies have been carried out which provide useful insight into heat network pricing from a sample of the market, namely the [2017 Heat Networks Consumer Survey \(HNCS\)](#) and the [2018 CMA heat networks market study](#) (CMA).

Government is committed to implementing the Heat Networks Market Framework, which will introduce price transparency requirements on heat network operators. The future heat networks regulator will also have powers to protect consumers from disproportionately high pricing and monopoly power.

## ■ District Heating: Social Rented Housing

**Apsana Begum:**

**[6492]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of homes allocated to social housing under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that are on heat networks where the social landlord has no mechanism for control in relation to performance, reliability and pricing.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

We do not hold data on the exact number of social homes under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that are on a heat network. However, the results of the [2017 Heat Networks Consumer Survey \(HNCS\)](#) found that heat network consumers were more likely to be renting from a housing association or local authority (32% and 34%) compared with the wider population (8% and 9%).

The ability for landlords to have control over the performance, reliability and pricing of a heat network will in part depend on the network's delivery model. This is based on whether it is the leaseholder or the heat supplier who holds the right to use the network. The CMA heat networks study found that where the consumers have the right to use the network as part of their leaseholder or tenancy agreement, this provides them with more protection and control. In addition, leases can state that

supply of heating and hot water is the responsibility of the landlord, and the Landlord and Tenant Act places requirements on landlords to maintain a property and its associated assets, such as heating. The CMA report found that the types of business models found in the heat networks market vary significantly.

## ■ Electricity: Storage

**Graham Stringer:**

**[6195]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of the seasonal electricity storage capacity that will be required to deliver the net zero target.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

Longer duration storage, including seasonal electricity storage, can help manage variation in generation and demand over long periods of time by storing excess generation until times when generation sources are less available or demand is greater. Analysis<sup>[1]</sup> suggests that longer-duration storage could reduce system costs by replacing gas-fired generation and reducing the requirement for other low-carbon generation.

The analysis demonstrates that there are a number of scenarios for generation and storage that could deliver net zero. The electricity market should determine the best solutions for very low emissions and reliable supply of electricity, at a low cost to consumers.

[1] Modelling 2050: electricity system analysis,

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modelling-2050-electricity-system-analysis>

## ■ Employment: Coronavirus

**Andrea Jenkyns:**

**[6378]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to help prevent the long-term loss of labour-market participation among people under the age of 35 as covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government is committed to supporting everyone who has been affected by the unprecedented impact of COVID-19 on the economy and the labour market. From the outset of this pandemic, we have as a country put our arms around UK workers. The Government has acted decisively to provide an amazing package of support to protect people's jobs, businesses and livelihoods.

In order to help keep people employed and prevent the loss of labour-market participation during the pandemic we have put in place a huge package of support to businesses which has enabled them to continue operating. This includes business grants to support those required to close; the Bounce Back Loan Scheme which has seen 1.5 million loans approved worth over £46 billion; the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan scheme which has seen over 98,000 loans approved worth over

£23 billion and the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan scheme which has seen 716 loans approved worth £5.3 billion.

Additionally our new Recovery Loan Scheme opened for applications in April, and new Restart Grants (totalling around £3.4 billion) will support businesses in the non-essential retail, hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym businesses in England to enable them to reopen and creating jobs as restrictions are eased.

The Government is also supporting those who have become unemployed during the pandemic back into work. Through Plan for Jobs, the Government invested over £30bn in measures to create, support and protect jobs. This included over £3bn investment in the Kickstart programme and additional 13,500 Work Coaches in our Jobcentres, as well as other measures focussed on boosting work search, skills and apprenticeships.

At the Spending Review 2020, my Rt Hon friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed an additional £2.9bn funding for the Restart Scheme, to support people to find work quickly by providing intensive and tailored support to people in England and Wales who have been unemployed for over 12 months.

## ■ Fossil Fuels: Exploration

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[6251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies on (a) new exploration licenses for UK oil and gas (b) existing oil and gas reserves of the International Energy Agency (IEA)'s energy scenario aligned with the 1.5C goal of the Paris climate agreement published on 18 May 2021.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The International Energy Agency (IEA)'s recent report sets out a global pathway for achieving net zero. While the report acknowledges that continued investment in existing sources of oil and gas will be required to meet the world's energy demands, it also states that no new oil or gas fields are necessary.

The UK Continental Shelf is a mature oil and gas basin that is declining. We expect this rate of decline to be broadly in line with our domestic demand, and even with continued licensing for oil and gas in the UK, we expect the UK to remain a net importer of both oil and gas. This means that any reduction in the UK's own production would simply result in the UK importing more oil and gas from other countries.

In March, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy announced that a new climate compatibility checkpoint will be introduced into the oil and gas licensing regime. This checkpoint will help ensure that any future licenses are only awarded on the basis that they are aligned with the Government's broad climate change ambitions, including the UK's target of reaching net zero by 2050. This checkpoint will be designed by the end of 2021.

## ■ Fuel Poverty

**Dr Alan Whitehead:**

**[7074]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of fuel poor households living off the gas grid.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The most recent estimates for fuel poverty in England are for 2019. An estimated 542,000 fuel poor households in 2019 did not have a gas grid connection.

This figure can be found in Table 10 of the fuel poverty detailed tables statistics:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fuel-poverty-detailed-tables-2021>.

## ■ Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Finance

**Alan Brown:**

**[6352]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government has a shortlist or identified target projects for the allocation of the maximum £4.5 million allocation of project funding for investigating the viability of greenhouse gas removal methods; and if he will make a statement.

**Amanda Solloway:**

As part of the UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) Strategic Priorities Fund Greenhouse Gas Removal Demonstrators programme, research teams across the UK will investigate the viability of five innovative methods of large-scale greenhouse gas (GHG) removal from the atmosphere in demonstrator projects of up to £4.5 million. In conjunction with a Directorate Hub led by University of Oxford for the programme, these investments aim to help the UK reach its legislated net-zero climate target by 2050.

These five GHG removal (GGR) demonstrator projects will investigate:

- management of peatlands to maximise their GHG removal potential in farmland near Doncaster, and at upland sites in the South Pennines and in Pwllpeiran, west Wales
- enhanced rock weathering – crushing silicate rocks and spreading the particles at field trial sites on farmland in mid-Wales, Devon and Hertfordshire
- use of biochar, a charcoal-like substance, as a viable method of carbon sequestration. Testing will take place at arable and grassland sites in the Midlands and Wales, a sewage disposal site in Nottinghamshire, former mine sites and railway embankments
- large-scale tree planting, or afforestation, to assess the most effective species and locations for carbon sequestration at sites across the UK. It includes land owned by the Ministry of Defence, the National Trust and Network Rail
- rapid scale-up of perennial bioenergy crops such as grasses ( Miscanthus ) and short rotation coppice willow at locations in Lincolnshire and Lancashire.



The demonstrator projects have already been chosen and notified. Further details are available on the UKRI website ( <https://beta.ukri.org/news/uk-invests-over-30m-in-large-scale-greenhouse-gas-removal/> ).

The results will be used to shape longer-term government decision-making on the most effective technologies to help the UK tackle climate change and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

**Alan Brown:**

**[6353]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, in reference to his Department's announcement on green technology and UK jobs on 24 May 2021, for what reason projects based only in England and Wales have received up to £250,000 funding for projects that contain innovative designs that develop new ways of removing greenhouse gasses from the atmosphere and store them safely; and if he will make a statement.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Direct Air Capture (DAC) and Greenhouse Gas Removal (GGR) Innovation Programme allocated up to £250,000 to projects based in England and Scotland. United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI) is supporting projects up to £4.5million which are based across the UK. Therefore, the coverage of the combined programmes is across the UK.

## ■ Heating: Housing

**Dr Alan Whitehead:**

**[7075]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate his Department has made of the average cost of installing a heat pump to a typical rural off gas grid domestic property.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

Evidence from market research and industry engagement suggests that mass deployment of heat pumps in the UK could lead to a significant reduction in upfront costs for domestic-sized systems due to economies of scale and other efficiencies.

In order to ease consumer costs, the Government has been providing financial support through schemes such as the domestic Renewable Heat Incentive. In addition, from April 2022, the Clean Heat Grant will provide support to off gas grid households switching to low carbon heating, and the Home Upgrade Grant scheme will provide support to low income off grid households installing energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating.

The Government is developing options for how a long-term framework of policy approaches, including regulation, can combine to provide a clear direction-of-travel for industry and accelerate the uptake of low-carbon heat, including growing the heat pump market to 600,000 installations per year by 2028. Alongside the publication of the Heat and Building Strategy, we are planning to consult on new regulations to

phase out fossil fuel heating in homes, businesses, and public buildings off the gas grid.

**Dr Alan Whitehead:**

**[7076]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of rural domestic properties off the gas grid that are not suited to being heated by a heat pump.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The evidence received from stakeholders in response to our 2018 call for evidence highlighted that electrification of heat is the one pathway to net zero proven to work at scale in homes off the gas grid. This is reinforced by BEIS modelling which suggests around 80% of off gas grid homes currently have sufficient energy efficiency and internal electrical limits to accommodate a heat pump. Our analysis also shows that this figure potentially rises to around 90% with fabric upgrades including draught-proofing, cavity wall insulation, floor, and loft insulation, and / or more major upgrades such as external wall insulation. From 2022, the Clean Heat Grant will provide support to off grid households switching to low carbon heating, and the Home Upgrade Grant scheme will provide support to low income off grid households by installing energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating.

**Dr Alan Whitehead:**

**[7077]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support his Department provides to assist off gas grid households to purchase low carbon gas to heat their homes as an alternative to heating oil and where heat pumps are either unsuitable or cost prohibitive.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The Government recognises that biofuels such as bioLPG and bioliquid alternatives to heating oil may play a role in future off-gas-grid decarbonisation, particularly for those properties that are not suitable for a heat pump. The Department has recently published a Call for Evidence to inform the development of a Biomass Strategy. This strategy will review the amount of sustainable biomass available to the UK, including liquid biofuels, and how this could be best used across the economy to achieve our net zero target. It will also assess the UK's current biomass sustainability standards, which are some of the most stringent in the world, to see where and how we can improve them even further.

The Department also provides, and will continue to provide, support for households that are off the gas grid to switch to low carbon heating, including in homes where heat pumps are unsuitable. The Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (DRHI) is targeted at (though not limited to) homes that are off the gas grid, and supports biomass boilers and pellet stoves, and solar thermal (for hot water) systems as well as heat pumps. The DRHI is scheduled to close in 2022, but the successor scheme to the DRHI, the Clean Heat Grant scheme is scheduled to launch in 2022, and will provide upfront capital grants for the installation of low carbon heat systems in domestic and small non-domestic buildings. The scheme will support homes off the

gas grid to transition from high carbon fossil fuel heating sources such as oil to low carbon alternatives including biomass boilers where heat pumps are unsuitable.

## ■ Hydrogen: Finance

**Alan Brown:**

[\[6349\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, in reference to his Department's announcement on green technology and UK jobs on 24 May 2021, if he will list the (a) name and (b) locations of organisations that will receive funding as part of the £60 million funding announced for supporting the development of low carbon hydrogen in the UK; and whether such funding will be provided directly.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The up to £60m Low Carbon Hydrogen Supply 2 competition opened for expressions of interest on 24 May 2021. Competition winners including locations of projects will be announced in due course. Subject to successful completion of due diligence, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will contract directly with competition winners.

## ■ Hydrogen: Job Creation

**Alan Brown:**

[\[6350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Department's announcement on green technology and UK jobs on 24 May 2021, where the proposed 8000 new jobs in hydrogen will be located.

**Alan Brown:**

[\[6351\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Department's announcement on green technology and UK jobs on 24 May 2021, what his timescale is to deliver the 8000 new jobs in hydrogen.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan confirmed our ambition, working with industry, for 5GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030 for use across the economy. The plan stated that this could see the UK benefitting from around 8,000 jobs by 2030.

There is potential for hydrogen across the UK. Initially we expect many of these jobs will be linked to clusters in our industrial heartlands. This will support our ambitions on 'levelling up'.

The forthcoming Hydrogen Strategy will set out what is required to build a hydrogen economy fit for 2030, Carbon Budget 6 and beyond, whilst maximising economic benefits and supporting jobs and skills. We will work with the devolved administrations to deliver the strategy, while also noting their national plans and ambitions.

**■ Members: Correspondence**

**Alan Brown:** [\[6347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when the Energy Minister plans to respond to the letter to her from the hon. Member for Kilmarnock and Loudoun of 30 March 2021 on pumped storage hydro.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

A response was issued to the Honourable Member for Kilmarnock and Loudoun on 27 May 2021.

**Robert Largan:** [\[6519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to the letter of 17 December 2020 from the hon. Member for High Peak, reference RL16182.

**Amanda Solloway:**

I confirm that the Department received my hon Friend's correspondence on 17<sup>th</sup> December (reference RL16182). A response was issued on 7<sup>th</sup> January, signed by my noble Friend, Lord Callanan. A copy of the response has been reissued.

**Robert Largan:** [\[6520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak dated 12 January 2021, referenced RL16885.

**Amanda Solloway:**

My hon Friend the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets replied to my hon Friend on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021.

**Robert Largan:** [\[6521\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak dated 27 January 2021, referenced RL17479.

**Amanda Solloway:**

My Hon Friend the Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth replied to my hon Friend on 2 June 2021.

**■ Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry: Post Office**

**Gareth Thomas:** [\[6176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether people who held senior management posts at the Post Office from 2006 to date will be called to give evidence to the Post Office Horizon IT public inquiry; and if he will make a statement.

**Paul Scully:**

I announced to the House on 19 May that, with the agreement of the Prime Minister, I will put the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry on to a statutory footing on 1 June 2021. This change will give Sir Wyn Williams powers to compel organisations to provide documents and witnesses to give evidence, under oath if necessary to ensure the Inquiry can get to the bottom of what happened and get the postmasters the answers they are looking for.

The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry is independent of my Department and so my Department does not have information on who will be called to appear before it to give evidence at the Inquiry hearings. This is for Sir Wyn Williams to decide as Chair of the Inquiry.

**Research: Career Development****Dr Lisa Cameron:**[\[6327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has to support early career researchers in the R&D People Strategy.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The R&D People and Culture Strategy, due to be published in Summer 2021, will look to ensure the UK has the people we need at all levels, working in a culture that gets the best out of everyone and delivers the best outcomes for the country.

The Strategy will set out the actions that the R&D sector, including government, funders, employers and individuals will need to take to help achieve this ambition. It will also look to ensure we value all the roles that people play in our R&D system, ensuring capacity and capability across academia and industry.

**Research: Finance****Rachael Maskell:**[\[6365\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that investment in research is linked to economic growth.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The Government is investing £14.9 billion in research and development in 2021/22. This puts UK Government Research & Development (R&D) spending at its highest level in four decades. We are continuing to take forward commitments from last year's R&D Roadmap, which set out our vision to ensure the UK is the best place in the world for scientists, researchers and entrepreneurs to live and work, while helping to power the UK's economic and social recovery and level up the UK. The R&D Places Strategy, due to be published later this year, will ensure that R&D benefits the economy and society in nations, regions and local areas across the UK contributing to the Government's wider levelling-up ambitions.

As announced in the Plan for Growth at Budget 2021, we will also publish a new Innovation Strategy in the Summer. Building on the R&D Roadmap, the strategy will identify how we can enhance innovation even further working closely with business.

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[6366]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what tools his Department uses to calculate to effect of investment in research funding on economic growth in the UK.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The Department requires a business case be prepared for funding proposals to assess value for money and subsequently monitors and evaluates programmes to understand their impact including any impact on jobs and productivity where possible.

The Department also commissions studies to assess the impact of research funding. For example, macroeconomic modelling of the 2.4% target by Cambridge Econometrics for BEIS suggested that there would be increases in GDP, employment, and productivity from increased R&D. It is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-and-development-macroeconomic-modelling-of-24-target>

Other research conducted shows that public investment in R&D achieves high social rates of return, with £1 of public investment in R&D eventually leveraging around £2 of additional private sector investment.

Reports are available at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/science-and-innovation-rates-of-return-to-investment>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-and-development-relationship-between-public-and-private-funding>

## ■ Restart Grant Scheme: West Yorkshire

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

**[7308]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many businesses will be eligible for the Restart Grant in (a) Wakefield and (b) West Yorkshire.

**Paul Scully:**

The £5 billion Restart Grants scheme announced by my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer on 3 March 2021 are one-off grants to businesses in the non-essential retail, hospitality, leisure, personal care and accommodation sectors to support businesses to reopen as covid-19 restrictions are lifted in the coming months.

The Restart Grants allocations have been made on the basis of an estimate of the number of business hereditaments in the specified sectors covered by the grant scheme. This estimate has been informed by Valuation Office Agency data on business hereditaments in the local rating lists, but Local Authorities are the decision makers on whether specific businesses are eligible or not. The Government paid 90% of this estimated total to Local Authorities and are committed to provide further top ups if required to cover all businesses in scope.

Local Authorities in West Yorkshire have been allocated over £125 million through the Restart Grant scheme, over £17 million of which has been allocated to Wakefield Council.

All data on Government allocations and Local Authority payments of grant schemes is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-grant-funding-local-authority-payments-to-small-and-medium-businesses>.

## ■ Retail Trade: Measurement

**Philip Davies:** **[5169]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to allow packaged and loose goods to be displayed in imperial measurements only.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government recognises that some people have a preference to use imperial units in their day to day lives. At the same time, it recognises that many others are not familiar with imperial units and that the use of metric is a necessity for British businesses to compete in markets around the world. Therefore, the UK system allows for information to be provided in imperial units alongside metric.

While the majority of trade in the UK is conducted using metric units to ensure consistency in commerce and science, there are already some limited exemptions that allow for certain traditional imperial measures to be used, without metric alongside, for specific uses. Now we have left the EU we will consider whether further limited exemptions can be applied for other traditional uses.

## ■ Space Debris: Scandinavia

**John Healey:** **[6185]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions his Department has had with the Scandinavian governments on the potential for upper-stage rocket debris from UK launches to land on their sovereign territory.

**Amanda Solloway:**

There is no expectation that upper stage debris from any UK launch will affect the sovereign territory of any Scandinavian country.

The Government has held discussions with all countries to the north of the British Isles which may hold an interest in, or whose territory may be affected by, space launch activities undertaken from the UK.

Where there is a possibility of UK-based launch companies seeking to deposit launch vehicle debris (whether this is from the vehicle's upper stage or otherwise) in another state's territorial waters or Exclusive Economic Zone, the government intends to obtain consent from the affected countries.

**■ Technology: Environment Protection****Alan Brown:****[6348]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much of the £166 million funding for green technology is newly allocated money from HM Treasury; and how much of that funding was previously allocated.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

This week's £166 million cash injection for green technology sends a clear signal to industries across the British economy that we will invest in the UK's cleaner, greener future as we look to build back better.

£86.5 million of this funding was previously allocated from the Net Zero Innovation Portfolio to launch competitions which will support the development of low carbon hydrogen in the UK and the development of the next generation carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS) technologies. Furthermore, we announced winners from phase one of the largest government programme supporting greenhouse gas removal technology development. The Net Zero Innovation Portfolio is a £1 billion fund, announced in the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, and will be delivered from 2021-2025.

Additional funding was provided through UKRI's Strategic Priority Fund (SPF) and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Industrial Energy Transformation Fund (IETF). The £31.5 million UKRI Greenhouse Gas Removal Demonstrators (GGR-D) programme is part of the second wave of the government's SPF which invests in high quality multi and interdisciplinary research; announced in the 2019 £500m new investment in green technologies for a cleaner and healthier future. The two calls that have run to date as part of the GGR-D programme (for Demonstrator projects and Directorate Hub) also provided full details of the programme and funds associated with it.

This £16.5m IETF funding was part of its Phase 1 competition and is supporting businesses from a range of industrial sectors across England and Wales to improve their energy efficiency and industrial processes. This funding will help these organisations to significantly reduce both their carbon footprint and energy costs and is part of the £315 million funding announced in the 2018 Autumn Budget and is available over the period to 2024.

**CABINET OFFICE****■ Democratic Unionist Party****Jim Shannon:****[6290]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent discussions the Government has had with its EU counterparts on trading arrangements for Northern Ireland.



**Penny Mordaunt:**

Lord Frost met Vice President Šefčovič in Brussels on 15 April. He has been in regular contact with the Vice President since then and his team maintains engagement at all levels with the Commission through the Withdrawal Agreement structures.

**■ Cabinet: Ministry of Defence****Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[92\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government plans to allow the Veterans Minister to attend Cabinet.

**Michael Gove:**

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Secretary of State for Defence represent veterans in Cabinet, ensuring their interests are included in any relevant policy discussions. Attendance at Cabinet is the prerogative of the Prime Minister.

**■ Death****Rachael Maskell:**[\[6359\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many excess deaths there have been in each month since January 2018.

**Julia Lopez:**

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

**Attachments:**

1. UKSAs response to PQ6359 [UKSA's final response to PQ6359 (1).pdf]

**■ Electoral Register****Feryal Clark:**[\[6510\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what meetings he has had with representatives of (a) civil rights organisations, (b) Black, Asian and ethnic minority groups, (c) disability rights groups and (d) interest groups representing elderly people to discuss electoral participation, voter turnout and the proposals set out in the Electoral Integrity Bill since February 2020.

**Julia Lopez:**

The Cabinet Office has worked and continues to work closely with a wide range of charities and civil society organisations to make sure that the proposals in the Elections Bill are implemented in a way that is inclusive for all eligible voters.

**■ Electoral Register: Enfield North****Feryal Clark:**[\[6509\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many and what proportion of people in the Enfield North constituency are (a) currently

eligible to vote and (b) registered to vote in each of the last five years by local authority ward.

**Julia Lopez:**

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

**Attachments:**

1. UKSAs response to PQ6509 [UKSA's final response to PQ6509.pdf]

## DEFENCE

### ■ Animal Experiments: Porton Down

**Cat Smith:**

[\[6340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many experiments were conducted on animals by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory on behalf of his Department in (a) 2019 and (b) 2020.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Animal experiments are regulated by the UK Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA). Under ASPA, "animal experiments" are referred to as "scientific procedures". In accordance with ASPA, the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) makes an annual report of scientific procedures to the Home Office.

The numbers of scientific procedures using animals conducted at Dstl in 2019 was 1,500 and in 2020 the figure was 1,194.

Animal experiments at present remain a necessary part of Defence research and enable Dstl to develop protective measures for the UK and its Armed Forces that save lives. Examples of protective measures are vaccines and treatments that prevent or reduce the effects of exposure to chemical and biological agents and treatments for traumatic injuries. Dstl does not conduct animal experiments for the development or testing of offensive weapons and the Home Office does not grant licences for these purposes.

### ■ Disinformation and Hacking: Security

**Gareth Davies:**

[\[7322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to upgrade British cyber security capabilities in response to misinformation and wide-scale hacking by malign state sponsored entities.

**James Heapey:**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) takes cyber security and resilience very seriously and conducts a range of activities to ensure its systems are protected against attack from malign state and non-state actors. As a result of the Integrated Review settlement, the MOD is increasing its already substantial investment in defensive cyber capabilities. These are delivered through three dedicated programmes: Defensive

Cyber Operations, Cyber Resilience Programme and the Joint Crypt Key Programme. The MOD continues to work closely with industry and partners across Government, especially the National Cyber Security Centre. To guard against disinformation, Defence provides support to the cross-departmental Counter Disinformation Unit's campaigns. This work is led by the Cabinet Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

#### ■ **Military Aircraft: Procurement**

**John Healey:** [\[5153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to page 56 of the Government's Defence Command Paper, where the £2 billion allocated by his Department to the Future Combat Air System will be spent.

**John Healey:** [\[5154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, where the engine for Tempest will be built.

**John Healey:** [\[5155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, where the wing for Tempest will be built.

**John Healey:** [\[5156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, where the fuselage for Tempest will be built.

**John Healey:** [\[5157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the announcement of a £2 billion investment by his Department in the Future Combat Air System, how many jobs that investment will support over the next (a) five years and (b) decade.

**John Healey:** [\[5158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which components of Tempest will be built in (a) Sweden and (b) Italy.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The 3-year Concept & Assessment phase will commence in 2021 with a full business case commitment by 2028 that will include details of applicable production arrangements. The Concept & Assessment phase is vital to the FCAS Programme, as we conduct the work needed to narrow down options and provide supporting evidence. The Programme aims to deliver an Initial Operating Capability by the mid-2030s.

It is too early to say where work will be undertaken, but industrial partners estimate that over 1,800 new STEM jobs have been created in over 300 companies nationwide, sustaining and supporting a sector which employs tens of thousands of workers across the UK. Tempest will exploit our industrial base to create a next generation combat air enterprise. The early preparatory work of the FCAS Technology Initiative and Team Tempest had an aspiration to secure employment for 1,800 people directly supporting the programme. Based on information from our

industrial partners we believe that estimate has been exceeded, with over 2,000 people now engaged in Tempest enterprise activities alone.

In December 2020 the UK, Italy and Sweden signed the FCAS trilateral MOU. This enabling MOU signals the start of a long-term partnership that will allow us to begin the critical trilateral R&D work as part of the FCAS Concept and Assessment phase in 2021. It is too early to say where specific components of Tempest will be built.

#### ■ **Ministry of Defence: Correspondence**

**Afzal Khan:** [\[6460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what proportion of correspondence sent by hon. Members to his Department received a substantive response within the service standard in each month of (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Government recognises the great importance of the effective and timely handling of correspondence.

The Cabinet Office is currently compiling data on the timeliness of responses to Hon. and Rt Hon. Members from Government Departments and Agencies. This data will be released, and made available to Members, in due course.

#### ■ **Ministry of Defence: Sefton**

**Damien Moore:** [\[7275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many of his Department's jobs are located in (a) Sefton and (b) Southport.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Department provides no Ministry of Defence Civil Service jobs that are located in the towns of Sefton or Southport.

#### ■ **Ministry of Defence: Staff**

**Damien Moore:** [\[7274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to relocate civil servants in his Department from London to other parts of the UK.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Ministry of Defence is working with the cross-Government Places for Growth programme to determine relocation plans, and announcements will be made in due course.

#### ■ **Reserve Forces: Recruitment**

**Imran Ahmad Khan:** [\[7313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to encourage employers to advertise the benefits of joining the armed forces reserves to their staff.

**James Heappey:**

We work closely with employers to generate and maintain their support for the Reserve Forces. Employers can advertise the benefits of joining the Reserves to their employees if they wish, but we do not ask them to do so. Joining the Reserves cannot be a condition of employment, except where we have a contractual arrangement with a company to provide Sponsored Reserves to deliver a military capability.

Defence generates employer support for the Reserves through tailored engagement and clear communication of the benefits they can derive from being supportive. There is mutual benefit for employers and Defence when organisations are supportive of the employment of reservists. When Reservists are confident that their qualities are valued by employers, they are less likely to look for a new job with a more supportive employer.

**Spaceflight: Scotland****John Healey:**[\[5152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with counterparts in the Scottish Government on the military-commercial uses of future spaceports in Scotland.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Ministry of Defence works with the UK Space Agency (UKSA) to support the delivery of commercial UK launch. Defence Ministers have not had any contact with Scottish Government counterparts on this subject.

Any engagement on UK spaceports with the Scottish Government would currently be conducted through the UKSA-led programme.

**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT****Broadband: Investment****Justin Madders:**[\[3936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much has been invested in the delivery of super-fast broadband by constituency for each year since 2015.

**Matt Warman:**

DCMS does not hold information on spend on superfast broadband at constituency level. Spend within superfast broadband project areas in England is summarised in the below table:

DCMS Investment in the delivery of Superfast Broadband from financial year 2015/16

Financial year = April to March

Negative amounts represent unused funding returned to DCMS.

COUNTY	2015/16 £M	2016/17 £M	2017/18 £M	2018/19 £M	2019/20 £M	2020/21 £M
South Yorkshire	0.85	2.37	1.21	3.21	1.98	-
Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes	0.70	0.08	2.38	1.31	1.13	0.62
Cheshire	1.35	2.29	0.08	-	-	-
Cornwall	-	2.29	0.84	1.40	1.43	-
Cumbria	8.06	4.21	1.60	-	-	-
Derbyshire	6.47	1.58	0.61	-	-	-
Dorset	5.66	-	1.30	0.16	1.84	-
Durham	4.38	1.40	1.28	-	0.33	-
East Riding of Yorkshire	2.17	1.92	2.39	1.60	-	-
East Sussex	5.18	2.00	1.00	-	-	-
Essex	3.01	2.67	2.43	1.20	0.96	0.54
Hampshire	2.22	2.64	4.51	2.05	-	-
Herefordshire & Gloucestershire	9.72	0.06	1.50	0.65	0.73	4.05
Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire	0.22	2.03	2.81	0.30	-	-
Isle of Wight	1.34	(0.93)	(0.01)	-	-	-
Kent	0.62	3.38	1.68	-	-	-
Lancashire	2.10	0.47	2.44	0.93	-	-
West Yorkshire	0.35	1.04	-	-	-	-
Leicestershire	0.42	0.94	3.61	-	-	-
Lincolnshire	5.94	0.68	-	-	-	-
Merseyside	2.70	-	-	-	-	-
Norfolk	2.70	-	3.41	4.40	-	-
North Lincolnshire	0.39	1.10	-	0.40	-	-

COUNTY	2015/16 £M	2016/17 £M	2017/18 £M	2018/19 £M	2019/20 £M	2020/21 £M
Northamptonshire	0.49	3.18	0.13	0.85	0.85	-
Northumberland	4.24	1.58	1.42	-	-	-
Nottinghamshire	3.49	2.63	-	-	0.55	0.17
North Yorkshire	-	-	-	1.14	6.18	-
Oxfordshire	4.12	-	-	-	-	-
Rutland	-	0.18	-	-	-	-
Black Country	2.19	0.71	0.09	-	-	(0.08)
Shropshire	3.01	0.10	2.89	2.03	4.25	0.73
Devon & Somerset	17.97	1.01	-	1.36	1.09	0.42
South Gloucestershire	0.05	0.46	-	0.11	1.58	0.46
Staffordshire	1.43	1.85	0.33	-	-	-
Greater Manchester	0.85	-	-	-	-	-
Suffolk	1.41	-	-	13.85	-	-
Swindon	0.19	0.54	-	0.20	-	-
Telford & Wrekin	0.13	0.28	1.75	-	-	(0.05)
Warwickshire	0.99	2.83	1.12	0.67	1.62	2.27
Berkshire	1.35	0.72	0.57	0.10	0.94	-
West Sussex	2.04	0.92	0.33	-	-	-
West Oxfordshire	-	-	-	-	1.60	-
West Yorkshire	-	1.44	2.08	2.71	0.06	-
Wiltshire	0.05	2.22	0.33	0.07	0.53	0.58
Worcestershire	1.39	2.39	-	0.02	0.87	0.61

Funding for delivery in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland was provided through funding transfers to the devolved administration governments. The devolved administrations in turn manage deployment and funding delivery in each of the

nations. In the period 2015/16 to 2020/21 the relevant funding transfers were: Scotland £50.99m; Wales £12.11m; Northern Ireland £11.45m.

The total DCMS investment in the Superfast Broadband Programme to date across the UK as whole is £737m from the start of the programme in 2011.

## ■ Choirs: Coronavirus

**Julian Sturdy:** [\[7167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, on what date the Government decided not to include indoor amateur choir practice for more than six persons in the Step 3 easing of covid-19 restrictions that came into effect on 17 May 2021.

**Julian Sturdy:** [\[7168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, for what reason there was a 24 to 36 hours delay from (a) the Step 3 easing of covid-19 restrictions coming into effect to (b) the covid-19 guidance for indoor amateur choirs being updated; and whether Ministers received any new covid-19 guidance or data within that time period.

**Julian Sturdy:** [\[7169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what evidence, research or data the Government has assessed on the effectiveness of (a) limiting numbers based on the venue size, (b) maintaining social distancing and (c) other covid-19 safety measures on helping to limit transmission of the covid-19 virus within an amateur choir setting.

**Caroline Dinenge:**

Decisions on Step 3 were taken collectively across Government before 17th May. The updated Performing Arts guidance sets out how venues and organisers should operate in Step 3.

I know that the restrictions on singing are frustrating to large numbers of amateur choirs and performance groups across the country and that many people have made sacrifices in order to drive down infections and protect the NHS over the last year. I want to assure you that everyone across the government wants to ease these restrictions as soon as possible.

However, it is important that we take a cautious approach in easing restrictions. We have followed the views of public health experts on singing. We are aware, through the [NERVTAG](#) and [PERFORM studies](#) that singing can increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission through the spread of aerosol droplets. This was backed up by a [consensus statement from SAGE](#), resulting in the [suggested principles of safer singing](#) being published.

We will continue to keep guidance and restrictions under review, in line with the changing situation. Further detail on step 4 will be set out as soon as possible.



**Damien Moore:**

[\[7271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to enable non-professional singing choirs to resume rehearsals and performances indoors.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

I know that the restrictions on singing are frustrating to large numbers of amateur choirs and performance groups across the country and that many people have made sacrifices in order to drive down infections and protect the NHS over the last year. I want to assure you that everyone across the government wants to ease these restrictions as soon as possible.

However, it is important that we take a cautious approach in easing restrictions.

We will continue to keep guidance and restrictions under review, in line with the changing situation. Further detail on step 4 will be set out as soon as possible.

**Dean Russell:**

[\[7297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, for what reason the covid-19 guidance for amateur choirs issued by his Department was revised on 18 May 2021.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The Performing Arts guidance was updated on 18 May to reflect the arrangements for Step 3 of the roadmap.

Non-professional groups of up to six people can now sing indoors, in line with the rule of 6 applying to many other indoor activities and gatherings, and can perform or rehearse in groups of up to 30 outdoors. In addition, multiple groups of 30 can now sing outdoors, provided the groups are kept separate throughout the activity, in line with other large events that follow the organised events guidance for local authorities.

This is an important step forward in the return of non-professional performing arts activity from Step 2. We will continue to keep guidance and restrictions under review, in line with the changing situation. Further detail on step 4 will be set out as soon as possible.

## ■ Culture Recovery Fund: Cathedrals

**Alexander Stafford:**

[\[7325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much funding has been made available to cathedrals through the Culture Recovery Fund.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The Culture Recovery Fund is being delivered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council England and Historic England. Funding to cathedrals by these bodies through the Culture Recovery Fund is as follows (figures have been provided by the awarding bodies):

Heritage Stimulus Fund (data supplied by Historic England)

Cathedrals: £3,425,882

Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage (data supplied by National Lottery Heritage Fund)

Cathedrals: £17,074,600

Culture Recovery Fund (data supplied by Arts Council England)

Cathedrals (arts activities): £641,151

Grand Total: £21,141,633

**Alexander Stafford:**

**[7327]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will publish a list of the funding made available to cathedrals in each of the county council and metropolitan areas in England through the Culture Recovery Fund.

**Caroline Dinenge:**

Lists of recipients of Rounds One and Two of the Culture Recovery Fund including cathedrals are already published by the relevant awarding bodies, including details of the amounts given and the region. The lists can be found on their websites here:

Historic England:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/coronavirus/culturerecoveryfund/map/recipients-list/>

Arts Council England:

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/culture-recovery-fund-data>

National Lottery Heritage Fund:

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/about/decisions/culture-recovery-fund-heritage-decisions-up-to-1m-october-2020>

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/about/decisions/culture-recovery-fund-heritage-second-round-decisions>

## ■ Culture Recovery Fund: Churches

**Alexander Stafford:**

**[7324]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much funding has been made available to church buildings, excluding cathedrals, through the Culture Recovery Fund.

**Caroline Dinenge:**

The Culture Recovery Fund is being delivered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council England and Historic England. Funding to churches by these bodies through the Culture Recovery Fund is as follows (figures have been provided by the awarding bodies):

Heritage Stimulus Fund (data supplied by Historic England)

Churches (all denominations) £18,359,911.28

Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage (data supplied by National Lottery Heritage Fund)

Places of Worship (the majority of these relate to sites of active worship, mainly churches of all denominations): £11,600,100

Grand Total: £29,960,011.28

**Alexander Stafford:**

**[7326]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will publish a list of the funding made available to church buildings, excluding cathedrals, in each of the county council and metropolitan areas in England through the Culture Recovery Fund.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

Lists of recipients of Rounds One and Two of the Culture Recovery Fund including churches are already published by the relevant awarding bodies, including details of the amounts given and the region. The lists can be found on their websites here:

Historic England:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/coronavirus/culturerecoveryfund/map/recipients-list/>

Arts Council England:

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/culture-recovery-fund-data>

National Lottery Heritage Fund:

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/about/decisions/culture-recovery-fund-heritage-decisions-up-to-1m-october-2020>

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/about/decisions/culture-recovery-fund-heritage-second-round-decisions>

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

**Afzal Khan:**

**[6453]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what proportion of correspondence sent by hon. Members to his Department received a substantive response within the service standard in each month of (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

The Government recognises the great importance of the effective and timely handling of correspondence.

The Cabinet Office is currently compiling data on the timeliness of responses to Hon. and Rt Hon. members from Government Departments and Agencies. This data will be released, and made available to Members, in due course.

## ■ Football

**Carla Lockhart:**

**[4744]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he has had discussions with representatives of any of the English football clubs who signed up to the

European Super League since the announcement of the formation of that league on 19 April 2021.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

Neither DCMS Ministers nor officials have had discussions with representatives of Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester City or Manchester United football clubs since the European Super League (ESL) announcement.

After the announcement, I spoke briefly with a representative of Tottenham Hotspur and discussed the possibility of a meeting with the 6 clubs to allow them to express their position on the ESL. That meeting did not take place though and I have had no further contact with the clubs on this matter.

The full list of Ministerial meetings can be found on gov.uk.

■ **Gambling**

**Mark Pritchard:** [\[6240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to work with the gambling and gaming sector on extending self-exclusion provisions for problem gamblers as part of the gambling review.

**Mark Pritchard:** [\[6241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate he has made of the number of people employed in high street betting shops in Shropshire; and what assessment he plans to make of that level of employment for the gambling review.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

The government launched its Review of the Gambling Act 2005 on 8 December with the publication of a Call for Evidence. The Review's objectives include examining whether changes are needed to the system of gambling regulation to reflect changes to the gambling landscape, to make sure customers are suitably protected wherever they are gambling, and to ensure that there is an equitable approach to the regulation of the online and the land based industries.

The Gambling Commission requires gambling operators to have effective procedures in place for customers who choose to self-exclude. More information is available at: <https://gamblingcommission.gov.uk/PDF/LCCP/Licence-conditions-and-codes-of-practice.pdf> (Section 3.5). In March 2020, the Commission made it mandatory for online operators to participate in GAMSTOP, the national online self-exclusion scheme, which allows customers to self-exclude from all licensed online gambling at once.

The government recognises the value of a responsible industry which protects players, provides employment and pays taxes. It does not hold information on the number of people employed in high street betting shops in Shropshire.

**Jason McCartney:**

[\[6256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Gambling Commission in reducing gambling-related harms.

**Jason McCartney:**

[\[6257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of adequacy of online gambling protections provided by gambling companies for (a) known frequent gamblers and (b) other online users.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

Keeping gambling fair and open and free from crime, and protecting children and vulnerable people from being harmed or exploited are priorities for the government and key licensing objectives for the Gambling Commission. The Commission requires all operators to monitor gambling activity and to intervene where a customer may be at risk of harm. It has consulted on tightening its rules on customer interaction for online operators and will publish a response and next steps in the summer.

The government launched its Review of the Gambling Act 2005 on 8 December with the publication of a Call for Evidence. As part of the broad scope of the Review, we called for evidence on the effectiveness of our regulatory system, including protections for online gamblers and the Gambling Commission's powers and resources. We aim to publish a white paper by the end of the year.

## ■ **Gambling: Advertising**

**Paul Blomfield:**

[\[5190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with broadcasters on suspending betting adverts during the European Championships to protect people at risk of gambling-related harm.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

Broadcasters have discretion over how advertising breaks are set and what adverts are broadcast, in line with Ofcom and ASA standards. However, the Gambling Industry Code for Socially Responsible Advertising prohibits most gambling adverts from being shown before 9pm, including a whistle-to-whistle ban for live sporting events.

All gambling adverts, wherever they appear, are subject to strict controls on content and placement, and gambling adverts must never be targeted at children or vulnerable people. The Advertising Standards Authority independently administers these standards through the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) which covers online and non-broadcast spaces and the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP) for TV.

## ■ Internet: Safety

**Liz Twist:** [\[3994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether safety duties relating to content that is harmful to adults announced as part of the Online Safety Bill in the Queen's Speech 2021 will include content on and related to (a) suicide and (b) self-harm.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

Under the new legal duty of care, in-scope companies will need to remove and limit the spread of illegal content and activity online. This includes illegal content which encourages or incites suicide online, with all companies expected to take swift and effective action against such content.

In addition, companies whose services have high-risk functionalities and which have the largest audiences will also be required to take action on content which is legal but which may cause harm to adults such as material which relates to self-harm or suicide. These companies will need to set out in clear terms and conditions what is acceptable on their services, and enforce those terms and conditions consistently and transparently.

We are also ensuring that criminal law is fit for purpose to account for harmful and dangerous communications online. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has sponsored a Law Commission review of harmful online communications. As part of this review, the Government has also asked the Law Commission to examine how the criminal law will address the encouragement or assistance of self harm. We know there is a strong case for making this sort of appalling content illegal. The Law Commission have consulted on their proposed reforms and will produce final recommendations by summer 2021.

## ■ Internet: Sales

**John Nicolson:** [\[6336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to place additional obligations on online marketplaces as part of the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill to prevent dangerous and insecure products being sold on those platforms.

**Matt Warman:**

All connected consumer products sold in the UK will have to comply with the cyber security requirements set out in the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill. Where a product is sold on a third party online marketplace, the seller will be responsible for ensuring that the product is compliant. On the wider issue of product safety, the Office for Product Safety and Standards is currently conducting a review of the product safety framework to ensure it is simple, flexible and fit for the future, delivering safety for consumers and supporting businesses to innovate and grow. The Review will consider the impact on product safety of non-traditional business models, including third-party sales conducted online.

**John Nicolson:**[\[6337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans his Department has to ensure that consumers that own products which fail the basic requirements set out in the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill will be entitled to effective redress.

**Matt Warman:**

The government has a strong history of protecting consumer rights. The UK has an existing framework of laws, such as the Consumer Rights Act 2015 which requires goods and services to be of satisfactory, as described and fit for a particular purpose if that purpose was made known to the trader by the consumer. Failure to meet these requirements means a consumer has a right to reject the goods and ask for a refund, repair or replacement. The Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill will fit within this legal framework and builds on the existing governance model for consumer protection by following this model for product security.

**Mobile Phones: Fraud****Holly Mumby-Croft:**[\[6534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with the Home Secretary on developing a strategy to tackle phone call and text message financial scams.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

Officials in our departments have been working closely to explore a range of different measures aimed at tackling the criminal abuse of mobile telecommunications across the different crime types, including fraud.

The Government takes fraud very seriously and will continue to work closely with telecommunications providers, regulators, law enforcement agencies and consumer groups to protect the public from these crimes. This includes developing a voluntary charter of actions that the telecoms companies will implement to prevent fraud.

Later this year, the Government will take further action through a Fraud Action Plan, an approach grounded in prevention, education, effective enforcement and regulatory reforms.

**Sports: Coronavirus****Munira Wilson:**[\[6536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the evidential basis was used by his Department when determining the timing for when spectators will be permitted to watch grassroots sports under Step 3 of the Government's roadmap for the easing of covid-19 restrictions.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

Sports and physical activity are crucial for our mental and physical health. That's why we made sure that people could exercise throughout the national restrictions and why

we ensured that grassroots and children's sport was at the front of the queue when easing those restrictions.

On Monday 22 February, the Prime Minister announced a roadmap out of the current lockdown in England. The government has introduced a step approach to the return of outdoor and indoor sport areas across England. Each full step of the roadmap is informed by the latest available science and data and has been five weeks apart in order to provide time to assess the data and provide one week's notice to businesses and individuals.

Spectators must adhere to legal gathering limits at Step 3. Outdoors, spectators can gather in groups of up to 30. Indoors, unless an exemption applies, spectators may only gather in groups of up to 6 people, or as a group of two households. A group made up of 2 households can include more than 6 people, but only where all members of the group are from the same 2 households (and each household can include an existing support bubble, if eligible).

#### ■ **Sports: Schools**

**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[7129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when he plans to announce School Games Organiser funding from October 2021.

**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[7130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of making an announcement on School Games Organiser funding with a short period remaining before the previous funding round will end on (a) the efficacy of programmes for pupil health and wellbeing, (b) additional costs for participant schools and (c) staff job security.

**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[7131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he plans to provide additional funding through the School Games Organiser scheme for additional work with schools in 2021-22 to improve levels of pupil physical activity following the covid-19 outbreak.

**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[7152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when the extension of School Games Organiser contracts is planned to be announced.

**Caroline Nokes:** [\[7160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, by what date he plans decisions about the extension of School Games Organiser contracts to be announced.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

Physical education (PE) and school sport plays an important role in supporting children and young people to be physically active, particularly during the current COVID-19 restrictions. The Department is working with the Department for Education



and the Department of Health and Social Care on how to support better PE, sport and physical activity provision for all children and young people. This is part of our continuing work to deliver our joint school sport and activity action plan, published in 2019.

I can confirm that the School Games Organisers are now fully funded for the 2021/22 financial year. Funding beyond that point will be subject to future Government Spending Review decisions.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Adoption Support Fund

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[6368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that the caps on the Adoption Support Fund does not limit the therapeutic support available to children and young people.

**Vicky Ford:**

Since its launch in 2015, the Adoption Support Fund has given out over £200 million to provide therapeutic support to 36,000 children and young people. The average cost of applications funded is significantly below the fair access limit of £5,000 per child per year that have been set for the provision of therapies. The fair access limit enables a consistent and fair offer to be provided and maximises the number of children and young people that can be supported by the fund.

For the small number of children who require funding above the fair access limit, the fund will provide additional funding for some of these children, but only where a local authority or regional adoption agency agrees to provide 50% match funding towards any costs above the limit. 126 local authorities and regional adoption agencies have contributed £2.9 million towards the cost of support for children and young people whose needs exceed the limits and where there is a risk of an adoption breakdown.

### ■ Children's Centres and Family Hubs

**Ms Karen Buck:**

[\[6182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children aged five and under accessed programmes through children's centres and family hubs in each English local authority area in the last 12 months.

**Vicky Ford:**

The department does not routinely collect data on the number of children who are accessing programmes through children's centres or family hubs. This data is held at a local level.

Local authorities have statutory duties under Part 1 of the Childcare Act 2006 to facilitate access to early childhood services and encourage parents to take

advantage of them. The act, and the duties, are available to view here:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/part/1>.

Local authorities should be reviewing data on service use and outcomes to ensure that they are meeting these duties and that their commissioning decisions are informed by evidence of the impact of their local services.

## ■ Free School Meals: West Yorkshire

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

**[7311]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children in West Yorkshire were eligible for the free school meals voucher scheme during its operation.

**Vicky Ford:**

According to the census data for 2020: in West Yorkshire there were 76,940 (19.9%) pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals in the spring of 2020 and 85,738 (22.4%) pupils eligible in the autumn of 2020. This year's spring census is due to be published in June 2021.

During the periods of school opening restrictions, we continued to provide extra funding to support schools to provide food parcels or vouchers to pupils who were eligible for benefits-related free school meals and who were required to stay at home during term time.

Guidance was in place allowing schools to decide the best approach for their pupils. School leaders know their communities best and were given flexibility to select the most appropriate support for their pupils. This could have been through lunch parcels, locally arranged vouchers or through the national voucher scheme.

Now schools are fully open, all children should be able to access a nutritious meal at school, free to those that are eligible for free school meals. Where pupils eligible for benefits related free school meals are required to stay at home, schools should work with their school catering team or food provider to offer good quality lunch parcels. This is the same arrangement that was in place throughout the autumn term.

## ■ Overseas Students: Coronavirus

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[6363]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of allowing international students to quarantine at their university on arrival in the UK.

**Michelle Donelan:**

International students are a vital and valued part of our higher education sector. I speak regularly with my counterparts across government about how various COVID-19 policies may affect students with a view to minimising burdens for students while maintaining public health, and I have remained in close contact with ministers at the Department of Health and Social Care who are responsible for the Managed Quarantine Service.

Hotel quarantine is in place for all travellers that have travelled from or through a red-list country to prevent the spread of potentially harmful COVID-19 variants in the UK, and there is a need to have strict rules in place to prevent the vaccine effort from being undermined.

We have worked closely with the sector and colleagues across the government to ensure that UK residents (including international students due to their visa status), that are facing significant financial hardship will have the opportunity to apply for a deferred repayment plan when booking their managed quarantine hotel room. Travellers who access hardship will be referred to a Government debt collection agency ("Qualco"), who will perform an independent financial assessment and determine an appropriate payment plan.

Any student who is experiencing financial hardship can speak with their provider about support. We have made an additional £85 million of student hardship funding available to higher education providers in the 2020/21 academic year. This is in addition to the £256 million of government funded student premium funding already available to higher education providers to draw on for this academic year, 2020/21, and this support can include help for students, including international students and postgraduates. International students can be confident in expressing these concerns to their provider without any impact on their immigration status.

## ■ Respite Care

**Alexander Stafford:**

[\[7328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of funding additional respite care for the families of disabled children to alleviate exhaustion and social isolation.

**Vicky Ford:**

We believe it is right for local authorities, who know their areas' needs best, to determine what services are required locally. Respite care services for disabled children are provided on the basis of an individual assessment of each child and family's needs, and it is right that this individual focus continues. Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, we have ensured that respite care services for disabled children and their families have been allowed to continue to operate. This applies to services which care for children in and away from home. Where parents have a disabled child under the age of 5, they can also establish a support bubble with another household to provide respite care.

To support local areas, the government has given over £6 billion in un-ringfenced funding directly to councils to support them with the immediate and longer-term impacts of COVID-19 spending pressures, including children's services.

In addition to statutory services, we are providing £27.3 million to the Family Fund in financial year 2021-22 to support over 60,000 families on low incomes raising children and young people with disabilities or serious illnesses. Grants can be used for a range of purposes, including family breaks.

We are also providing £200 million for all secondary schools, including specialist settings, to deliver face-to-face summer schools. Schools will be able to target provision based on pupils' needs but the government is suggesting they may want to initially target incoming year 7 pupils, as well as pupils who may benefit from increased support, which includes disabled children and those with special educational needs. This is alongside wider support funded through our Holiday Activities and Food Programme across the country.

## ■ Secondary Education: Religion

**Luke Pollard:**

**[6464]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the most recently published School Workforce Census, how many schools with an outstanding Ofsted rating reported zero hours of religious education teaching in year 11; and if he will make a statement.

**Nick Gibb:**

In November 2019, 2,958 state funded secondary schools returned full curriculum information to the Department via the School Workforce Census. This represents 86% of all state funded secondary schools in England.

Of these 2,958 schools, 984 reported no teaching of religious education (RE) or philosophy teaching to Year 11 pupils during the week of the workforce census. One school reported teaching RE or philosophy in mixed year groups, which may include Year 11 pupils.

Of the 984 schools, 144 were judged outstanding in their last Ofsted full inspection. The last full inspection may have been several years prior to 2019. It is therefore not possible to draw any meaningful correlation between information about teaching time on these subjects during the census week and a school's Ofsted rating.

The information above is based on the number of hours of dedicated RE or philosophy teaching recorded by each school for Year 11 pupils. It is possible that other general teaching within the school may include elements of RE, ethics, or philosophy.

State funded schools in England have a duty to teach RE to all pupils aged 5 to 18 years. While academies, free schools and most maintained schools designated as having a religious character may design and follow their own curriculum, all other maintained schools must follow their area's locally agreed syllabus for RE.

Any concerns that a school may not be complying with the requirement to teach RE should, in the first instance, be raised via the school's complaints procedure. If the complaint is not resolved, then the issue can be escalated to the Department's School Complaints Unit.

## ■ Teachers: Training

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[6367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he plans to take to ensure that teacher training focuses on (a) trauma and attachment challenges and (b) support for children in the care system and those children who are adopted.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Government has provided £8 million for a Wellbeing for Education Return training programme, which has been used by more than 90% of councils since its launch last summer, to provide free expert training, support and resources for young people, staff or parents dealing with additional pressures from the last year – including trauma, anxiety, or grief.

Teaching quality is the most important in-school factor in improving outcomes for children and young people. Reforms to teacher training and early career support are a critical part of the Department's plans to improve school standards for all.

From September 2021, all new teachers will benefit from at least 3 years of evidence-based training, professional development and support. This starts with initial teacher training (ITT), based on the new ITT Core Content Framework, and is followed by a new two-year entitlement to high quality professional development and support underpinned by the Early Career Framework.

The ITT Core Content Framework sets out a mandatory minimum entitlement, describing the fundamental knowledge and skills that all new entrants to the profession need to effectively teach all children. It is not intended to be a curriculum and it remains for individual providers to design a coherent and well sequenced curriculum appropriate for the subject, phase, age range and needs of the children that trainees will be teaching. Courses must be designed so that trainees can demonstrate that they meet all the Teachers' Standards at the appropriate level.

From September 2021, the Government is funding an entitlement for all early career teachers in England to access high quality professional development and support at the start of their career.

New teachers will now receive development support and training over two years instead of one. The support for early career teachers includes:

- o 5% off timetable in the second year of induction for all early career teachers to undertake induction activities including training and mentoring.
- o Freely available high quality development materials based on the Early Career Framework.
- o A dedicated mentor and support for these mentors.
- o Funding for mentors to spend time with early career teachers in the second year of induction. This is based on 20 hours of mentoring across the academic year.

## ■ Universities: Social Distancing

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[6364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether directors of public health will be able to determine whether staggering the start of the term is required based on the covid-19 social distancing measures put in place by universities for September 2021.

**Michelle Donelan:**

Universities have worked extremely hard to ensure their facilities are COVID-secure and are as safe as possible for students to return to campus. As autonomous institutions it is for universities to determine their own provision, including arrangements for the start of term, taking account of any government guidance.

We expect universities to work closely with local Directors of Public Health, particularly on their plans for managing outbreaks, to keep students and staff as safe as possible.

The government will announce further easing of restrictions at Step 4 of the roadmap, including the outcome of the review of social distancing measures, which will be no earlier than 21 June 2021. In light of these developments, we will continue to work with the sector via the mission groups and the Higher Education Taskforce on plans for the autumn, taking account of the latest public health advice. We will update the higher education guidance in due course to support the return of students for the new academic year.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Agriculture and Food

**Neil Parish:**

[\[5191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that (a) Government buying standards for food are in line with the UK's targets for net zero emissions and (b) top-quality British farmers and producers can benefit from public sector contracts.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government will always champion greater consumption of our excellent British food and drink, including from British farmers and local producers. The Government Buying Standards for Food (GBSF) encourages the procurement of UK seasonal and locally produced food.

Defra is launching a public consultation this summer to review the GBSF. We want to enhance the GBSF in line with recent Government policy initiatives around promoting local produce, social value and environment and resource management.

The consultation will seek views as to how public sector food procurement can assist the Government in achieving net zero carbon emissions. This will include proposals for procuring from more sustainable farming systems, as well as ensuring caterers

use energy efficient equipment and move away from food waste management to waste reduction.

We will also be seeking views on how the standards could be used to promote even greater uptake of locally produced food by public procurers and their suppliers.

In addition, Defra is working closely with the Crown Commercial Service to develop the Future Food Framework in the South West region. The trial will create significant new opportunities for our farmers and local producers to supply regional public sector bodies.

## ■ Agriculture: Greenhouse Gas Emissions

**Carla Lockhart:**

[\[6527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to support research on methods to mitigate or reduce emissions in farming.

**Victoria Prentis:**

While emissions in farming is a broad topic, the question is assumed to concern greenhouse gas emissions only, and I am responding accordingly.

The Prime Minister has been clear that tackling climate change is a priority for this Government. Since 1990 emissions from agriculture have reduced by 13%.

The Government is investing to unlock innovation and translate our world leading research into practical farmer-led solutions that improve the productivity, sustainability and resilience of agriculture. This includes reducing emissions from farming.

Our £90 million investment in the 'Transforming Food Production' (TFP) challenge, launched in 2018, is supporting ground breaking research and development so farmers will be able to harness the latest technology to produce high quality food, increase their productivity and move towards net zero emission farming systems by 2040. This will put the UK at the forefront of advanced sustainable agriculture and food production while reducing emissions, pollution, waste and soil erosion.

This initiative is enhanced by a recently launched Defra-funded collaborative agricultural Research and Development competition 'Farming Innovation Pathways' with an additional £12 million of funding targeting existing and new farm focused innovation, which will also be delivered through the TFP initiative.

From 2022 a new Research and Development funding programme for England will build on the success of TFP as part of the proposed measures to stimulate innovation and boost productive, sustainable, low emissions agriculture as we move away from the CAP system of farming subsidy payments.

**■ Agriculture: Methane****Paul Maynard:****[7138]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to reduce methane emissions from agriculture.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Agriculture accounts for around 10% of the UK's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Emissions from methane (54%) and nitrous oxide (32%) make up the bulk of agriculture's GHG emissions. The most significant sources of emissions are due to enteric fermentation from livestock and from the use of fertilisers on agricultural soils.

Achieving our net zero target is a priority for the Government, and we are developing a range of measures to address it through the Agriculture Act, our future farming policy, the 25 Year Environment Plan, and our response to Henry Dimbleby's Independent Review of the food system and national food strategy review. All of these are aimed at enabling farmers to optimise sustainable food production, reduce emissions from agriculture and allow consumer choices to drive those changes.

We are also introducing three schemes that reward environmental benefits: The Sustainable Farming Incentive, Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery. Together, these schemes are intended to provide a powerful vehicle for achieving the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan and our commitment to Net Zero emissions by 2050, while supporting our rural economy. Through these schemes, farmers and other land managers may enter into agreements to be paid for delivering public goods, including adaptation to and mitigation of climate change.

We recognise the contribution to GHG emissions made by the livestock and dairy sectors. Defra has worked with industry to reduce emissions through improved productivity and has already made progress in this space. Defra works with the NFU, CLA and other industry partners to support the industry led Greenhouse Gas Action Plan. We also continue to work in partnership with industry partners including AHDB on breeding strategies to reduce emissions from ruminant livestock, mainly through improved feed efficiency. Defra is exploring the potential for feed additives such as seaweed or methane inhibitors to reduce the environmental impacts of farming.

**■ Animal and Plant Health Agency: Finance****Gareth Thomas:****[7082]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the (a) the income, (b) expenditure and (c) grant income was for the Animal and Plant Health Agency in each of the last five financial years; and if he will make a statement.



**Victoria Prentis:**

The income, expenditure and grant income for APHA is as follows:

ACTUALS (£M)	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
a) Operating Income	64	72	72	74	62
b) Operating Expenditure	263	248	245	227	217
c) Grant Income	0	0	0	0	0

**Gareth Thomas:**[\[7083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the (a) income, (b) expenditure and (c) grant income of the Animal and Plant Health Agency for the 2021-22 financial year; and if he will make a statement.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The budgeted income, expenditure and grant income for APHA is as follows:

ESTIMATE (£M)	2021/22
a) Operating Income	76
b) Operating Expenditure	289
c) Grant Income	0

■ **Animal Welfare: Charities**

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**[\[6331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will publish details of the Government's targeted investment for animal welfare charities.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government shares the public's high regard and appreciation for the important work that our animal welfare charities undertake. This extends to the valuable work of their many supporters and volunteers. We remain committed to deliver our Action Plan for Animal Welfare. The Government has made a range of support measures available to businesses and charities across the UK since the emergence of COVID-19, including those charities protecting animal welfare. This includes comprehensive guidance issued by the Charity Commission on running a charity during COVID-19.

Meanwhile it has been encouraging to see the sector working collaboratively and successfully to support itself, establishing various emergency grants schemes for numerous smaller organisations. While organisations have seen a drop in income during the pandemic, the financial sustainability of the sector appears to be improving. We will continue to engage closely with the sector and keep the situation under review.

## ■ **Animal Welfare: Fines**

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[5265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, further to plans announced in the Action Plan for Animal Welfare, what animal cruelty offences could be penalised with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

**Victoria Prentis:**

This is a devolved matter and the information provided therefore relates to England only.

As set out in the Action Plan for Animal Welfare and as part of an effort to promote high welfare standards, we want to ensure that proportional, targeted, transparent and consistent penalties are available to complement other existing sanctions; such as warnings, improvement notices and prosecution already established by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and other animal welfare related legislation.

Penalty Notices (PNs) would cover a wide range of offences included in the Animal Health Act, Animal Welfare Act and the parts of the European Communities Act covered by the Withdrawal Act. For the worst cases of harm and suffering experienced by animals – criminal prosecutions would still be the correct course of action. In other cases, PNs would be the proportionate response.

An example of where Penalty Notices (PNs) could be used is in the case of overstocking in laying hens, which impacts the welfare of hens. Criminal prosecution is often disproportionate, so beyond an improvement notice - this offence is often unchallenged. In such an example, PNs could be used as an effective deterrent.

## ■ **Animals (Recognition of Sentience) Bill**

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[5261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the Animal Sentience Committee announced in the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill will be independent of Government.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill creates an expert committee, the Animal Sentience Committee. The Animal Sentience Committee will have the power to scrutinise individual Ministerial policy formulation and implementation decisions. The Committee will set its own priorities and be supported by a secretariat. The Committee can publish reports on how Ministers have paid 'all due regard' to the welfare needs of animals as sentient beings, alongside other considerations.

Ministers will need to respond to these reports within three months by means of a written statement to Parliament.

## ■ Catering: Regulation

**Martyn Day:**

**[6370]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 20 April 2021 to Question 179265 on Catering: Regulation, whether his Department plans to bring forward legislative proposals on allergen labelling in restaurant menus, similar to regulations on pre-packaged food under Natasha's law.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019 No 1218 (known as 'Natasha's Law') comes into force on 1 October this year.

These Regulations were consulted on widely and a range of options considered. The option that was decided upon provides a higher level of protection for people living with food hypersensitivity. The amendment Regulations mean that food known as 'prepacked for direct sale' food must be labelled with the name of the food and a full ingredients list, with allergens emphasised, from 1 October 2021.

The Government has no plans at present to extend these regulations to cover mandatory ingredient labelling on restaurant menus. The Food Standards Agency, which leads on policy on food safety including food allergies, is open to understanding what is possible and practical in this area although any proposed changes will need to be evidence driven.

All businesses supplying food, whether prepacked, prepacked for direct sale or sold loose, must be able to provide accurate information on allergens to customers.

The Government has committed to review food labelling. This will include careful consideration of how food labelling might contribute to the outcomes of the National Food Strategy, which is looking in detail at creating a better food system.

## ■ Cats: Tagging

**Luke Pollard:**

**[5263]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he will publish the findings of the consultation on the compulsory microchipping of cats.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Consultation on Cat and Dog Microchipping and Scanning in England received over 33,000 responses. We are currently analysing these and will publish our findings later this year alongside our proposed actions.

## ■ Dogs: Smuggling

**Luke Pollard:**

**[5264]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of increasing the post-rabies vaccination wait time

from the three to 12 weeks before which a puppy can enter the UK, to further reduce puppy smuggling.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government takes the issue of puppy smuggling and other illegal importations of pets very seriously. It is an abhorrent trade which causes suffering to animals and puts the health of pets and people in the United Kingdom at risk.

On 12 May 2021 the Government published its Action Plan for Animal Welfare (APAW). This is a wide-reaching and ambitious plan to set out our current and future work on animal welfare and conservation.

The Government has a manifesto commitment to crack down on puppy smuggling and one of our key reforms in the plan is to end the abhorrent, cruel practice of puppy smuggling and low-welfare pet imports.

We are planning to bring in powers which enable us to that will allow us to prohibit the importation and non-commercial movement of dogs into Great Britain that have been subject to low welfare practices. This could include increasing the minimum age that dogs can be non-commercially moved or commercially imported into Great Britain.

■ **Environmental Stewardship Scheme**

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[\[7201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans his Department has to support Higher Level Stewardship agreement holders transition to new environmental land management schemes.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Where appropriate we are extending those Higher Level Stewardship agreements into 2022, and we are looking at how best to extend these further over the agricultural transition period. Agreement holders who are not offered an extension are encouraged to apply to Countryside Stewardship. When the new environmental land management schemes are fully rolled out, we will make sure there is a smooth transition for those in existing agri-environment schemes or involved in our pilots.

■ **Export Health Certificates**

**Gareth Thomas:**

[\[7081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of Export Health Certificates to be used in total for 2021; and if he will make a statement.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Estimates of the total number of Export Health Certificates (EHC) required following the end of the Transition Period, indicated that up to 300k additional EHCs would be needed for GB-EU trade, and up to 480k per annum when GB-NI and GB-Rest of World Trade were included.

From 01 Jan 2021 to 25 May, the Animal and Plant Health Agency has issued in the region of 71k EHCs for GB-EU trade and in the region of 88k in total. For the same period there were c.11k certificates issued for GB-NI.

## ■ Farmers: Finance

**Peter Dowd:** **[5200]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of farmer who will be eligible for the proposed lump sum exit scheme and delinked payments.

**Victoria Prentis:**

We are consulting on our proposed lump sum exit scheme, including the eligibility criteria that will apply. The consultation runs until 11 August 2021. We think our proposed scheme will provide a helpful option for some farmers who wish to exit the industry. We are seeking views on likely uptake via our consultation.

We intend to replace the Basic Payment Scheme with delinked payments in 2024. When payments are delinked, recipients won't have to farm the land to receive the payments until they have been phased out by the end of 2027. Eligibility for delinked payments will be based on a reference period. Our consultation seeks views on what this reference period should be.

Our consultation can be found here: <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/agricultural-policy/lump-sum-and-delinked-payments-england/>.

**Peter Dowd:** **[5201]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the cost of the proposed lump sum exit scheme and delinked payments for farmers.

**Victoria Prentis:**

We know that some farmers who wish to retire or leave the industry can find it difficult to do so and lack of finance can be one of the barriers to exit. We think that a lump sum exit scheme could help such farmers leave the industry in a planned way. By freeing up land, the scheme will also open up opportunities for new entrants and expanding farmers.

We believe that the proposed lump sum exit scheme will offer good value for the taxpayer. The lump sum will be in place of the Direct Payments farmers could otherwise have received between 2022 to 2027, as we transition to our new farming system outside the Common Agricultural Policy.

This means that the scheme will not increase overall spending on farming. It will not affect the money available for other schemes.

To ensure value for money for the taxpayer, we have proposed a payment cap that will make sure farmers do not receive a lump sum which is higher in value than the amount they could have otherwise received in Direct Payments for 2022 to 2027.

**■ Floods: West Yorkshire****Imran Ahmad Khan:**[\[7317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of properties in West Yorkshire that are at risk of flooding.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Environment Agency estimates there are 45,453 properties at risk of flooding across West Yorkshire.

**■ Food: Waste Disposal****Andrew Bridgen:**[\[6297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support local authorities undertaking food waste collections.

**Rebecca Pow:**

We want to make recycling easier and ensure that there is a comprehensive, consistent service across England. This will help to reduce confusion with recycling, ensure that there is more recycled material in the products we buy and that the UK recycling industry grows. It would also constitute a significant step towards meeting our 25 Year Environment Plan commitment to eliminate avoidable waste by 2050 and contribute towards meeting recycling targets, including our commitment of 65% of municipal (household-like) waste to be recycled by 2035.

Following support at public consultation, the Environment Bill stipulates that all local authorities in England must make arrangements for a core set of materials to be collected for recycling from households. This includes a weekly separate food waste collection. On 7 May we published a second consultation seeking further views on recycling consistency, including setting out implementation timelines for food waste collection and asking questions on the provision of caddy liners to householders. Local authorities will be able to decide the end destination for food waste and garden waste, provided that the material is recycled or composted. One option is anaerobic digestion which presents the best environmental outcome for the treatment of unavoidable food waste, due to the generation of biofuel and digestate.

Any new financial burdens introduced through new statutory duties on local authorities will be assessed and the net additional cost covered by the Government. We are working to assess net additional costs to local authorities and will continue to engage with local authorities on the cost estimates that we have provided in the impact assessment accompanying the second consultation on recycling consistency, as well as the appropriate timing for funding to be provided to local authorities, ahead of introduction of recycling consistency reforms.

## ■ Horticulture and Tree Planting

**Stuart Anderson:**

[\[7277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to encourage communities to engage in (a) tree planting and (b) community garden initiatives.

**Rebecca Pow:**

We are committed to increasing tree planting across the UK to 30,000 hectares per year by the end of this parliament. We will take steps to improve public access to trees and woodlands in a responsible way, encourage community-led tree planting and invest in partnerships with communities and local government.

This includes steps to empower local authorities to support communities in tree planting. Local tree and woodland strategies offer an opportunity for local communities to decide where new trees will be planted and how existing trees will be protected.

We are opening the Local Authorities Treescape Fund, to work in partnership with Nongovernmental Organisations, local landowners, and community groups to deliver strategic planting and natural regeneration of trees outside of woodlands for the benefit of local communities and nature.

We are also supporting a number of initiatives to inspire communities to engage with tree planting and community gardens:

- The Queen's Green Canopy Project will see communities, charities, schools, and local councils planting trees across the UK in celebration of the Queens Platinum Jubilee.
- The 'Plant for our Planet' initiative has also been introduced to encourage individuals, communities, and businesses to help protect the natural world, either by starting a new activity or by joining an existing project.

The National Planning Policy Framework already makes clear that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified health and wellbeing needs, for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure. The Government also recently sought views on the draft National Model Design Code, and supporting Guidance Notes, which sets out how local design codes may specify levels of green infrastructure provision, including allotments, community gardens and street trees, as a critical component of well-designed places that provide multiple benefits for biodiversity, nature, recreation, climate change resilience and health and wellbeing.

**■ Members: Correspondence**

**Afzal Khan:** [\[6455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of correspondence sent by hon. Members to his Department received a substantive response within the service standard in each month of (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government recognises the great importance of the effective and timely handling of correspondence. We are working to make things better.

The Cabinet Office is currently compiling data on the timeliness of responses to Hon. and Rt Hon. members from Government Departments and Agencies. This data will be released, and made available to Members, in due course.

**Robert Langan:** [\[6525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak dated 26 March 2021, referenced RL20503.

**Rebecca Pow:**

A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 28 May 2021.

**■ Pet Theft Task Force**

**Luke Pollard:** [\[5262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he expects the Pet Theft Task Force to report their findings.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government launched the Pet Theft Taskforce on 8 May 2021 and the taskforce expects to report its findings this summer. The taskforce's terms of reference were published when it was launched and are available here:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/pet-theft-taskforce-terms-of-reference](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pet-theft-taskforce-terms-of-reference). The terms of reference detail the background to the taskforce's establishment as well as information on its objectives.

**■ Pets: Animal Welfare**

**Dr Lisa Cameron:** [\[6332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to help ensure that the welfare of exotic animals being held in private residences is being protected.

**Victoria Prentis:**

This is a devolved matter and the information provided therefore relates to England only.



The Government takes the issue of animal welfare very seriously. Our manifesto and the recent Action Plan for Animal Welfare published on 12 May were clear about the importance of high standards of animal welfare. We have a long tradition of protecting animals and that will continue.

As with all kept animals, the welfare of exotic animals held in private residences is protected by the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Under this legislation it is an offence to cause suffering to a kept animal or to fail to provide for their needs. The Government's recent Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Act 2021 realises the Government's manifesto commitment to increase the sentences available to our courts for the most serious cases of animal cruelty. From 29 June 2021, anyone who is cruel to an animal faces a prison sentence for up to five years, an unlimited fine, or both.

The private keeping of specific exotic animals deemed to be dangerous in the UK is also regulated by the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976. This legislation requires those keeping particular species to obtain a licence from their Local Authority. Whilst this legislation is primarily concerned with public safety, licence holders are required to provide suitable accommodation, food, drink and bedding for any animals held under licence and are subject to regular inspections by a veterinary practitioner.

In the 2019 manifesto, the Government committed to ban the keeping of primates as pets. Primates are highly intelligent wild animals with complicated welfare needs and as such are unsuitable to be kept as pets. In a Call for Evidence on the welfare of primates kept as pets which closed in January 2020, Defra received evidence of the harm that can be done to primates kept in domestic settings, both physical and psychological.

Defra sought public input on proposals to tackle the issue of primates kept as pets in a consultation launched at the end of 2020. As outlined in the Government's Action Plan for Animal Welfare we will legislate to prohibit primates as pets. Keepers that are able to provide welfare standards akin to those of licensed zoos will be able to keep their primates under a new licensing regime, subject to conditions and inspections. Ownership of these exotic animals with complex needs will be phased out for keepers unable to meet these standards.

The Government is considering which other wild animals these restrictions could apply to and steps to ensure this is possible will form part of the upcoming Kept Animals Bill.

## ■ **Plants: Biodiversity**

**Andrew Bridgen:**

**[6296]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the importance of (a) the Alcea collection and (b) other national plant collections to preserving the biodiversity of plants in the UK.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Defra values these national collections and the role they play in conservation. The Charity 'Plant Heritage' oversees the National Plant Collections and has a particular focus on rare cultivars, promoting the UK's horticultural heritage and engaging the public. The UK's first *A/cea* (Hollyhock) National Plant Collection in Lincolnshire is one of around 650 collections nationally. The Royal Botanic Gardens (RBG) Kew, which is a Defra arm's length body, is also a holder of some of these national collections. RBG Kew's Wakehurst National Collections like *Nothofagus* (southern beech) and *Betula* (birch) come from a range of global locations and may offer valuable indications of which species could be fit and functional in the long-term, in the face of biotic and abiotic threats. For instance, incorporation of the southern beech into our tree planting programmes could help to ensure functional future woodlands.

**Plastics: Waste**

**Gareth Thomas:** [\[6171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of plastic packaging used in the UK has been recycled in the UK in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:** [\[6172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of plastic packaging used in the UK has been exported in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:** [\[6173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that rubbish exported from the UK to be recycled is not dumped in unregulated and illegal sites; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:** [\[6174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to reduce the amount of UK plastic waste that is exported for disposal; and if he will make a statement.

**Gareth Thomas:** [\[6175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to disincentivise the production, sale and use of single-use plastics; and if he will make a statement.

**Rebecca Pow:**

It is illegal under retained EU law to export UK waste for disposal to countries outside the European Union and the European Free Trade Area. Individuals and businesses found to be exporting waste in contravention of the requirements of the UK legislation can face a two-year jail term and an unlimited fine. In addition, the export of UK waste for disposal to EU/ EFTA countries is generally prohibited, save for the strictly limited

exceptions which are laid out in the [UK Plan for Shipments of Waste](#). Proposed updates to the Plan were consulted upon earlier this year and the revised UK Plan will be published next month. The UK Government is committed to banning the export of plastic waste for recycling to countries that are not members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Government will consult on this measure and work is underway to make this happen.

The UK environmental regulators take a pro-active, intelligence led approach to checking compliance with the legislation on waste shipments, targeting exports which pose a high risk and intervening to stop illegal exports taking place. In 2019-20 the Environment Agency (EA) stopped 1,889 containers at ports and intervened at waste loading sites, preventing the illegal export of 463 containers comprising 22,688 tonnes of waste.

In addition, the regulators undertake rigorous checks to ensure businesses accredited as exporters of packaging waste under the Packaging Waste Regulations comply with their conditions of accreditation, this includes verifying evidence that exported waste is recycled. Conditions of accreditation have been tightened to require an exporter to provide the EA with full details of the final overseas reprocessing sites receiving packaging waste it exports and to provide access to export documentation to prove that the material reached or was accepted by these overseas reprocessing sites. In 2020 the EA cancelled the accreditation of 4 exporters and suspended 7 accreditations Government is consulting currently on reforms to the packaging producer responsibility system which includes proposals for new requirements on those exporting packaging waste for recycling.

We are also taking action to reduce the volume of waste generated in the first place. The Resources and Waste Strategy (RWS) for England, published in December 2018, sets out the Government's plans to reduce, reuse, and recycle more plastic than we do now. Our target is to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste throughout the life of the 25 Year Environment Plan, but for the most problematic plastics we are going faster - which is why we have committed to work towards all plastic packaging placed on the market being recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025. We also committed to introducing electronic waste tracking to help us understand where waste is within the system. That will help to tackle illegal movements and misdescription of waste.

We have made significant progress, by introducing one of the world's toughest bans on microbeads in rinse-off personal care products and have significantly reduced the use of single-use carrier bags by the main supermarket retailers by 95% with our 5p charge. The charge increased to 10p and was extended to all businesses on 21 May 2021. In October 2020, we introduced measures to restrict the supply of plastic straws, plastic drink stirrers, and plastic-stemmed cotton buds. We will continue to review the latest evidence on problematic products and/ or materials to take a systematic approach to reducing the use of unnecessary single-use plastic products, including problematic packaging materials. Furthermore, from April 2022, plastic packaging that does not contain at least 30% recycled content will be subject to a tax

of £200/tonne. Further details on the development of this tax can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-plastic-packaging-tax/plastic-packaging-tax#detailed-proposal>.

Our Environment Bill will enable us to significantly change the way that we manage our waste and implement proposals from the Resources and Waste Strategy. The Bill includes powers to create extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes; introduce deposit return schemes (DRS); establish greater consistency in the recycling system; better control the export of plastic waste; and to set new charges for other single-use plastic items. Our approach is focused on encouraging greater uptake of reusable alternatives and increasing supply and demand for secondary materials to be recycled in the UK. We have set new targets for plastic packaging to be recycled (to 2023) and we are currently consulting on a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers, an Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme for packaging, and our proposals for greater consistency in household and business recycling.

Statistics on Plastic Packaging Data (tonnes)

	TOTAL PLACED ON THE MARKET TOTAL (POM)	RECYCLING	UK RECYCLING	EXPORT	% EXPORTED
2019	2,472,317	1,141,316	447,078	690,631	61%
2018	2,361,000	1,034,410	384,848	649,562	63%
2017	2,260,000	1,044,363	358,467	685,896	66%
2016	2,260,000	1,015,226	330,731	684,495	67%
2015	2,260,000	891,141	327,591	563,550	63%

## ■ Poultry: Animal Welfare

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

**[6330]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of the French and German Governments' decision to end the killing of day-old male chicks in the egg production sector; whether the Government plans to bring forward similar legislative proposals; and if he will make a statement.

**Victoria Prentis:**

We have some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world and we continue to explore ways to enhance our position as a global leader.

The killing of day-old male chicks from the egg production sector is used to provide a valuable food source for reptiles and raptors. We are aware that alternatives to culling male laying hen chicks are currently being investigated by a number of research

establishments around the world. A few systems are being used in commercial hatcheries in some EU countries, including France and Germany, but are not yet scaled up enough to meet the demands of the entire industry. We will be assessing the success of these systems.

## ■ Recycling

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

**[7253]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he plans to take to increase domestic recycling capacity.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The 2018 Resources and Waste Strategy sets out the Government's ambitions for increased resource efficiency and a more circular economy in England. These ambitions require changes in how we produce and consume products and materials, as well as how we treat and dispose of them at end-of-life.

In the Resources and Waste Strategy, we have committed to taking actions which will help to stimulate private investment in reprocessing and recycling infrastructure. The Collection and Packaging Reforms (Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (EPR), consistency and a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)) are expected to increase and incentivise appetite for commercial infrastructure investment, giving investors greater confidence in the growing UK reprocessing market. Our ambition to recycle 65% of municipal waste and reduce waste to landfill to no more than 10% will help to drive investment. Also, the HMT plastic packaging tax is expected to increase demand for secondary material plastic and increasing reprocessing infrastructure will help meet this demand.

Further capacity is likely to be required if the UK was to reprocess domestically the increased levels of packaging material expected to be captured for recycling as a result of the reforms.

We are already seeing a response from the sector to increase reprocessing capacity. Defra is also working with other departments (e.g. BEIS and DIT) and the waste sector to highlight the investment opportunities that result from the reforms.

## ■ Rural Areas: Crime

**Mark Pritchard:**

**[6238]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with West Mercia Police and Crime and Commissioner on steps to reduce (a) vehicle theft, (b) livestock theft and (c) other rural crime.

**Rebecca Pow:**

My Rt Hon. Friend the Environment Secretary has not recently met the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner.

We recognise that there can be particular challenges in responding to rural crime. In particular, we are aware that dog attacks on livestock are a serious and growing

concern to rural communities, police forces and farmers. To address this, we recently set out in “Our Action Plan for Animal Welfare”, published on 12 May, that we will legislate to ensure that new powers are available to the police so they can respond to the most serious incidents of livestock worrying.

**Mark Pritchard:**

[6239]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what new funding is available to farmers in England to help them to introduce crime prevention measures to help reduce rural crime.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Defra’s new Farming Investment Fund is intended to help farmers improve their business performance rather than support crime prevention measures. The Farming Equipment and Technology Fund will provide smaller grants to allow farmers to buy items from a set list of equipment and technology. The Farming Transformation Fund will support larger or more complicated investments. Defra will publish full eligibility guidance in the coming months.

#### ■ **Seasonal Workers: Pilot Schemes**

**Damian Hinds:**

[6259]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Answer of 7 October 2020 to Question 96849, on Seasonal Workers: Pilot Schemes, when he plans to (a) conclude and (b) publish the findings of the evaluation of the Seasonal Workers Pilot.

**Victoria Prentis:**

We intend to publish the findings from the first year of the Seasonal Workers Pilot scheme in the coming months.

#### ■ **Waste: Recycling**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[7252]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much recyclable waste (a) in tonnes and (b) as a proportion of total recyclable waste has been sent overseas in each of the last five years.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Data on exports of waste materials is collated and published by HMRC and is available at the following link <https://www.uktradeinfo.com/trade-data/ots-custom-table/>

Defra does not hold data on the amount of waste suitable for recycling generated in the UK.

YEAR	WASTE EXPORTED FOR RECYCLING (TONNES)
2020	12,879,137
2019	11,373,916
2018	15,843,470
2017	16,431,888
2016	16,265,212

## FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

### ■ Afghanistan: Coronavirus

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[5185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what practical assistance his Department is providing to the Government of Afghanistan in tackling the covid-19 pandemic.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK is firmly committed to Afghanistan and we are supporting efforts to combat the pandemic in Afghanistan through our contributions to COVAX, the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and through our humanitarian assistance. As one of the largest contributors to COVAX, UK support has helped to secure 468,000 initial doses of SII-AstraZeneca (COVISHIELD) vaccine. Through the ARTF the UK has also provided over £65 million to support the government's COVID-19 plan. In the year 2020-21, the UK allocated over £55 million to meet urgent humanitarian needs including those arising from COVID-19.

### ■ Bangladesh: Rohingya

**Sir Mike Penning:**

[\[3816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether UK official development assistance has been allocated to supporting the provision of health care to the Rohingya community that has been relocated to the silt island Bhasan Char; and if he will make a statement.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK Government is not funding operations on Bhasan Char.

We remain clear that the refugees need to relocate voluntarily, be safe on Bhasan Char, and have access to education and healthcare, including Covid-19 vaccinations as these become available. We welcome the UN's first appraisal visit to evaluate the safety and sustainability of life on Bhasan Char but recognise that further

conversations are needed between the Government of Bangladesh and the UN to discuss protection and technical issues in detail.

### ■ **China: Religious Freedom**

**David Linden:** [\[7258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Chinese Government on the state of the human right to freedom of religion or belief in China.

**Nigel Adams:**

We are deeply concerned about restrictions on freedom of religion or belief in China, including the persecution of Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, and Falun Gong practitioners. The Foreign Secretary has personally raised our serious concerns with his Chinese counterpart, State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, on a number of occasions, most recently on 27 May. The Foreign Secretary also expressed the UK's deep concern at the treatment of Uyghur Muslims and other religious and ethnic minorities at the UN Human Rights Council on 22 February.

### ■ **Colombia: Police Brutality**

**Feryal Clark:** [\[6511\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has made to his Colombian counterpart in respect of human rights abuses reported to have been committed by Colombian police during protests in April and May 2021.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK Government remains concerned about reports of human rights violations in Colombia, and we have raised our concerns with the relevant state actors in Colombia since the recent protests began. We are clear that we support the right of all Colombians to protest peacefully, and that the right to peaceful assembly and association must be guaranteed.

Most recently, I spoke with then acting Foreign Minister Adriana Mejía on 14 May to express my concerns, and welcome Colombia's commitment to transparent investigations into allegations of excessive use of force. Security services must be held accountable for their actions, with all complaints being thoroughly investigated.

### ■ **Developing Countries: Education**

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[6408\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the impact of the reduction in Official Development Assistance spending on education on the Prime Minister's ability to use the G7 to support global education.



**Wendy Morton:**

2021 is a year of UK leadership on the world stage, including on girls' education. Meeting under the UK Presidency, G7 Foreign and Development Ministers endorsed two new, global, SDG 4 milestone targets on girls' education on 5 May - 40 million more girls in school by 2025 in low and lower-middle income countries; and 20 million more girls reading by age 10, or the end of primary school in low and lower- middle-income countries by 2025. We are calling on the world to help deliver these objectives, working in partnership with developing country partners, multilateral institutions, civil society, girl-led groups, and youth leaders. The Prime Minister is calling on G7 Leaders to re-endorse our two targets in the Leaders' Communique, and to make ambitious financial pledges to the Global Partnership for Education.

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) will spend a total of £400 million on girls' education in this financial year. This very substantial sustained investment of UK ODA is only one of our tools in achieving our ambitions.

**■ Ethiopia: White Phosphorus****Sarah Champion:**[\[7190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has been able to verify reports of the use of white phosphorus attacks on civilians in Ethiopia; and what plans he has to respond to those reported attacks in the event that those reports are verified.

**James Duddridge:**

We are aware of reports alleging that civilians in Tigray have suffered burns that may be consistent with the weaponised use of white phosphorus. The Government of Ethiopia has strongly refuted allegations that such weapons are being used against civilians. The UK strongly condemns direct or indiscriminate attacks against civilians no matter what weapon is used.

The UK Government is working to establish the facts. Access to the affected areas, and to verified information, remains difficult. We have called for communications to be restored and for unfettered humanitarian access. We have also consistently called for access for independent human rights investigators. We will continue to do so and support the efforts of the joint investigation between the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission.

**■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Correspondence****Afzal Khan:**[\[6459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what proportion of correspondence sent by hon. Members to his Department received a substantive response with the service standard in each month of (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Nigel Adams:**

The Government recognises the great importance of effective and timely handling of Ministerial correspondence.

The Cabinet Office is currently compiling data on the timeliness of responses to Parliamentarians from Government Departments and Agencies. This data will be released, and made available to Members, in due course.

**■ Global Fund to End Modern Slavery****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[7111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will publish any (a) risk assessments and (b) consultation with (i) the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery (GFEMS), (ii) organisations receiving Government funding from the GFEMS and (iii) the beneficiaries of projects funded through the GFEMS including survivors of slavery and other State agencies conducted (A) before and (B) after his Department's decision to reduce the budget allocated to the GFEMS.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK remains committed to the eradication of all forms of modern slavery, human trafficking, forced and child labour, in this country and internationally. We are committed to playing our part to deliver UN Sustainable Development Goal target 8.7 which focuses on eradicating modern slavery. We continue to value our partnership with the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery (GFEMS) and their work to combat modern slavery.

The impact of the global pandemic has forced the Government to take the tough, but necessary, decision to reduce UK Official Development Assistance (ODA). The FCDO's aid budget, including the portion invested in GFEMS, has been allocated in accordance with the UK's strategic priorities as set out in the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy and the Foreign Secretary's priorities for ODA. The government assessed the impact on women and girls, the most marginalised and vulnerable, people with disabilities and people from other protected groups when deciding how best to allocate the UK's ODA budget. We have been working closely with GFEMS to agree how to maximise the impact of available resources to improve the lives of victims and those at risk of modern slavery.

**■ Global Partnership for Education: Finance****Dr Lisa Cameron:**[\[6329\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to use the Global Partnership for Education replenishment fund to help ensure that there is equitable education financing for the most marginalised children, including children with disabilities.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK has made strong commitments on inclusive education for children with disabilities, and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is an important vehicle

for improving mainstream education systems to be inclusive of all learners. The Prime Minister and President Kenyatta of Kenya will co-host the Global Education Summit: Financing the Global Partnership for Education in London this July. A well-funded GPE will be central to delivering the two global objectives endorsed by G7 Foreign and Development Ministers - to get 40 million more girls in school, and 20 million more girls reading by age 10 in the next 5 years.

As one of the biggest donors to GPE, the UK has been instrumental in ensuring equity and gender is hardwired throughout GPE's new strategy for 2025. During the pandemic, GPE funding has targeted the most marginalised children, with 54 countries including interventions for children with disabilities and special needs in their Emergency Response Plans. For example, in Nepal, fast-tracked GPE funding guaranteed accessible remote learning content with captioning, interpretation, and inclusive examples that do not stigmatize.

#### ■ **Haiti: Coronavirus**

**Fabian Hamilton:**

[\[7103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assistance the Government is providing to the Haitian Government in securing supplies of a covid-19 vaccine.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK has been at the forefront of the international response to COVID-19. We have committed up to £1.3 billion of aid spending to counter the impact of the pandemic. The UK Government is one of the leading donors to COVAX, committing £548 million to the scheme, which will contribute to the supply of at least 1.8 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines in 2021 for up to 92 developing countries. The UK is pleased that the Government of Haiti has recently announced that the AstraZeneca/Oxford COVID-19 vaccine is now authorised for use. GAVI has since confirmed the availability of an initial 130,000 doses which should be delivered before the end of July.

#### ■ **Honduras: Coronavirus and Hurricanes and Tornadoes**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[7110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with its counterpart in Honduras on supporting that country to recover from the effects of (a) the covid-19 pandemic and (b) recent hurricanes.

**Wendy Morton:**

On 17 May, the Minister of State for the Pacific and Environment, the Rt Hon Lord Zac Goldsmith, met with Honduran Secretary of State, Carlos Madero. They discussed Honduras' reconstruction plan, environmental issues, and vaccines. The UK provided immediate humanitarian support to Honduras in response to the devastation caused by storms Eta and Iota, which struck Central America in

November 2020. The UK also contributed £1m to the International Red Cross for their post-hurricane relief efforts, and an additional £224k worth of relief items were delivered by the Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessel Argus. Honduras has so far received 200,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine through the COVAX mechanism. The UK is fully committed to COVAX as the best way to ensure global equitable access for priority vulnerable populations, and that is why we have donated more than £548 million to the process. The British Embassy in Guatemala City (non-Resident for Honduras) has regularly engaged with the Honduran government and the private sector about the impact of the pandemic, and storms Eta and Iota, including facilitating donations from GSK (1,000 inhalator chambers, and 1,844 boxes of Panadol) to the Honduran Government, and supporting communication between AstraZeneca and the Honduran Minister of Health.

### ■ **India: Amphotericin B**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[6427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether India has requested supplies of amphotericin B from the UK.

**Nigel Adams:**

The Government of India requested supplies of amphotericin B on 19 May. The UK Government does not hold stockpiles of amphotericin B, therefore cannot directly assist. In line with the extensive scientific and medical collaboration already underway, on 25 May India's Chief Scientist held a virtual meeting with Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Whitty and Chief Scientific Adviser Sir Patrick Vallance. In this meeting, they discussed research insights as well as identifying and mitigating risks in relation to black fungus.

As the Prime Minister has said, we stand side by side with India as a friend and partner in the fight against COVID-19, and send our solidarity and condolences to the Indian people at this difficult time. The UK has worked closely with the Indian Government to put together a package focusing on India's most urgent needs, including oxygen concentrators, ventilators, and oxygen generating units. The latest shipment was delivered on 9 May, which brought the total package of equipment to 495 oxygen concentrators, 1,200 ventilators and three oxygen generating units.

### ■ **Mali: Sexual Offences**

**Gareth Davies:**

[\[7321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure British troops deployed on the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali tackle conflict-related sexual violence against women.

**Nigel Adams:**

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Ministry of Defence work together to ensure that British troops deployed to the UN's peacekeeping operation in Mali, MINUSMA, receive comprehensive pre-deployment training,

including on human rights, preventing sexual exploitation and abuse and Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV). The UK's long range reconnaissance task group in Mali is a high capability commitment intended to enable MINUSMA to conduct more effective intelligence-led operations across the full range of its mandated tasks, including protection of civilians and prevention of CRSV. UK troops themselves have visited a large number of Malian communities, including some which have not previously interacted with peacekeepers, to deter criminal activity and violence against civilians, to provide a UN presence and to understand local population's concerns.

The UK Government has a strong commitment to ensuring UN peacekeeping is equipped to tackle CRSV. Across all missions, including MINUSMA, and as a member of the UN Security Council, we support specific protection and assistance for women affected by armed conflict, and advocate for civilian and uniformed gender advisers to enable missions to address the needs of victims and survivors of CRSV.

#### ■ **Members: Correspondence**

**Rosie Cooper:** [\[5165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when he plans to respond to the letter from the Hon. Member for West Lancashire of 17 March 2021 on foreign aid in India, reference ZA55927. .

**Nigel Adams:**

A response to this letter is currently being expedited and will be sent out shortly.

**Robert Largan:** [\[6526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak dated 18 March 2021, referenced RL20521.

**Nigel Adams:**

A response to this letter was sent on 25 May 2021.

#### ■ **Nepal: Christianity**

**Ms Marie Rimmer:** [\[7204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the extent of persecution of Christians in Nepal.

**Ms Marie Rimmer:** [\[7205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to support freedom of religion or belief in Nepal.

**Nigel Adams:**

Nepal is a secular country, and the right to freedom of religion or belief is enshrined in Nepal's constitution. Although people may legally convert to a different religion, the

constitution prohibits proselytisation, as well as religious behaviour that disturbs public order or is deemed contrary to public health, decency and morality. The British Embassy engages with members of faith and belief groups, civil society and other embassies to monitor trends.

## ■ Nepal: Coronavirus

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[5184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what practical assistance his Department is providing to the Government of Nepal in tackling the covid-19 pandemic.

**Nigel Adams:**

On Friday 28 May, a plane carrying the UK's donation of 260 ventilators and 2,000 visors arrived in Nepal, in response to an urgent request for medical supplies from the Government of Nepal. Moreover, since the beginning of the pandemic, British Embassy Kathmandu has helped Nepal respond to COVID-19 by reprioritising over £40 million of its aid budget. This support has included the construction of an oxygen plant in a Kathmandu hospital; technical advice to local government on managing the impact of COVID-19; water, sanitation and hygiene facilities to support around 300,000 people; safe spaces for women in isolation centres; cash and voucher assistance for the most vulnerable; and nutrition support for pregnant and lactating women. The UK is also a leading donor to COVAX, having committed £548 million to the scheme. COVAX has allocated 2,000,000 vaccine doses to Nepal, of which 348,000 have already been delivered. We are working closely with international partners to support the people of Nepal at this difficult time.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[6409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what requests he has received from the Government of Nepal for oxygen-related equipment and medical supplies in respect of the covid-19 outbreak in that country.

**Nigel Adams:**

On 28 May, the FCDO sent 260 ventilators and 2000 visors (worth £550,000) in response to a request for medical supplies from the Government of Nepal. Moreover, since the beginning of the pandemic, the British Embassy in Kathmandu has helped Nepal respond to COVID-19 by reprioritising over £40 million of its aid budget. This support has included the construction of an oxygen plant in a Kathmandu hospital; technical advice to local government on managing the impact of COVID-19; water, sanitation and hygiene facilities to support around 300,000 people; safe spaces for women in isolation centres; cash and voucher assistance for the most vulnerable; and nutrition support for pregnant and lactating women. On 19 May, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Minister of State for South Asia and the Commonwealth, discussed with Foreign Minister Gyawali how the UK could continue to support Nepal's fight against the second wave of COVID-19. The UK is also a leading donor

to COVAX, having committed £548m to the scheme. COVAX has allocated 2,000,000 vaccine doses to Nepal, of which 348,000 have already been delivered.

## ■ Overseas Aid

**Sarah Champion:** [\[6304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to his Written Statement of 21 April 2021 on FCDO update, whether reductions to Official Development Assistance will effect UK Aid Match grants.

**Nigel Adams:**

I am pleased to have been able to protect the UK Aid Match programme, including all active and provisional grants. However, in response to the seismic impact of COVID-19 on the UK economy we have deferred start dates of the provisional grants under round 4 to 1 April 2022. The latest round 5 of UK Aid Match is progressing as planned with the expectation that successful projects would start after 1 April 2023.

## ■ Pakistan: Religious Freedom

**Alex Sobel:** [\[7266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Pakistani counterpart on (a) the alleged abductions of children such as Maira Shahbaz and Farah Shaheen, (b) forced marriage and (c) forced conversion to Islam in that country.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK Government strongly condemns the forced marriage and forced conversion of women and girls in Pakistan.

We regularly raise our concerns on these issues with the Government of Pakistan. Most recently, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon raised our human rights concerns, including Freedom of Religion or Belief, with Pakistan's Special Representative for Religious Harmony, Tahir Ashrafi, on 23 March 2021. Lord Ahmad also raised these concerns with Pakistan's Minister for Human Rights, Dr Shireen Mazari, on 20 February 2021. Pakistan remains a FCDO Human Rights Priority Country.

## ■ Russia: Pipelines

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[7113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made on the potential effect on Ukraine of the US lifting sanctions on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK remains concerned about the impact Nord Stream 2 will have on European energy security and particularly on the interests of Ukraine. Our focus continues to be supporting resilient European energy markets, including measures that diversify

energy supply. The UK offers a full range of military, security, economic, political and governance support to Ukraine.

#### ■ **Russia: Ukraine**

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[7180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Ukraine on the increasing presence of Russian military forces at the Ukrainian border.

**Wendy Morton:**

There has been regular Ministerial and senior official level engagement with the Government of Ukraine and with our allies and partners on this issue. The Foreign Secretary and the Defence Secretary spoke to their Ukrainian counterparts on 2 April. The Prime Minister had discussions with President Zelenskyy of Ukraine on 5 April. Ukraine was also discussed at the 4-5 May G7 Foreign Ministers meeting. Most recently, I spoke to Deputy Foreign Minister Dzhaparova on 27 May regarding this and other issues. In all of these engagements, Ministers have made clear our deep concern over Russia's destabilising behaviour, including the build-up of military forces, and reiterated the UK's strong support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

We note Russian Defence Minister Shoigu's announcement on 22 April that Russian troops would return to their bases. We continue to monitor the situation and are working with international partners to continue to de-escalate and reassure all sides.

#### ■ **Spain: Undocumented Migrants**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[7114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussion his Department has had with its counterpart in Spain on illegal crossings of its border at Ceuta.

**Wendy Morton:**

FCDO officials discuss a range of issues with the Spanish authorities, including on migration, on a regular basis. We continue to monitor developments around the recent influx of illegal migrants to the Spanish enclave of Ceuta in North Africa.

#### ■ **Sri Lanka: Coronavirus**

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[5187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what practical assistance his Department is providing to the Government of Sri Lanka in tackling the covid-19 pandemic.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK Government is concerned about the rising number of COVID-19 infections in Sri Lanka, and is in regular contact with the Government of Sri Lanka and the World



Health Organisation's (WHO) representatives in Sri Lanka. The UK does not have a bilateral aid programme in Sri Lanka but through our support to the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other international bodies, UK aid is supporting Sri Lanka in tackling COVID-19. In addition to our average annual contribution of £120 million to assist the WHO, including in its role to provide technical guidance and operational support in maintaining essential health services, we recently announced a further £340 million (2020-24) in new core contributions. This is a significant uplift in support towards its vital work on public health. On global access to vaccines, the UK has already committed £548 million to the COVAX Advanced Market Commitment that specifically supports vaccines access for at least 500 million people in up to 92 low and middle income countries in 2021, including Sri Lanka, with our overall support to COVAX reaching over 120 countries and economies

Finally, to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable and conflict affected communities, we have adapted our Conflict, Security and Stability Fund work in Sri Lanka for 2020/2021, including ongoing work to respond to rising sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), and tackling disinformation that targets minorities.

## ■ **Sudan: Violence**

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

[\[7301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Sudanese counterpart on recent reports of violence in the Red Sea state.

**James Duddridge:**

The UK is deeply concerned by reports of intercommunal violence in the Red Sea state between the Beni Amer and Nuba. It is an important reminder of the challenges Sudan faces as it transitions to democracy and seeks to end decades of conflict. Following the removal of President Bashir in 2019 the UK is supporting Sudan through this transition process, including efforts to deliver much needed economic stability and aid to those most in need.

We welcome the efforts made by the Sudanese Government to ensure that Sudan is an inclusive peaceful country, embracing the diversity of its people, and urge the Government to: deliver their commitment to assume full responsibility for the Protection of Civilians; implement swiftly their National Plan for Civilian Protection; and implement the Juba Peace Agreement, particularly provisions relating to security arrangements.

## ■ **Taiwan: Coronavirus**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[7112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent conversations he has had with his counterpart from Taiwan on the cause of a recent increase in cases of covid-19 in that country.

**Nigel Adams:**

Taiwan has had one of the lowest incidences of Covid-19 in the world since the outbreak of the pandemic. We are now engaging with the relevant authorities locally through the British Office in Taipei as it faces its first significant occurrence of community transmission of the virus. We will continue to work with all of our international partners to deliver a strong global response.

**■ Western Sahara: Politics and Government****Kim Johnson:****[7300]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 19 May 2021 to Question 517 on Western Sahara: Politics and Government, what recent assessment he has made of the potential (a) risks and (b) merits of the UN's designation of the status of Western Sahara as a Non-Self-Governing Territory; and whether he has plans to review the UK's position that the status of Western Sahara is undetermined.

**James Cleverly:**

As the Foreign Secretary stated on 11 December 2020, [and as referenced in previous answers] the UK's position remains unchanged.

We note the UN's position on the status of Western Sahara, which is set out on its website: <https://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en/nsgt/western-sahara>

**■ Yang Hua****David Linden:****[7257]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the treatment of Pastor Yang Hua of Living Stone Church by Chinese authorities.

**Nigel Adams:**

We are concerned by reports that Pastor Yang Hua of Living Stone Church was recently attacked by Chinese officials. We remain deeply concerned about the persecution of Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Falun Gong practitioners and others on the grounds of their religion or belief in China. The freedom to practise, change or share ones faith or belief without discrimination or violent opposition is a human right that all people should enjoy. We believe that societies which aim to guarantee freedom of religion or belief are more stable, prosperous and more resilient against violent extremism. We will continue to raise our concerns around freedom of religion or belief with the Chinese authorities.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]****Ben Everitt:****[527]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that the 2009 NICE guidelines on rehabilitation after critical illness become standard practice in NHS Trusts.

**Jo Churchill:**

Health and care commissioners are expected to take the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's (NICE) guidelines fully into account. These guidelines provide recommendations on best practice in terms of both the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of interventions and services.

NHS England's Adult Critical Care Service specification states that providers must comply with the 2009 NICE clinical guideline on rehabilitation after critical illness. The specification is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Adult-Critical-Care-Service-Specification-FINAL.pdf>

**Jim Shannon:****[6293]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the Office for Health Promotion on obesity services; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Office for Health Promotion will bring together expert advice, analysis and evidence with policy development and implementation to ensure that decision-making and delivery are better informed, more effective and joined-up, for obesity and for other health promotion priorities.

**Jim Shannon:****[6294]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions his Department has had with stakeholders on the transition of responsibilities for obesity policy from Public Health England to the National Institute for Health Promotion; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Department has had discussions with a wide range of stakeholders on our overall public health reform programme. In addition, we have established a Population Health Stakeholder Advisory Group to consider how to strengthen both local and national functions that support improved health and wellbeing outcomes. Further information on this Group is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/population-health-improvement-stakeholder-advisory-group>

On 29 March, the Department published 'Transforming the public health system: reforming the public health system for the challenges of our times' inviting views on supporting effective implementation of our reform programme. The responses are currently being analysed.

#### ■ Ambulance Services

**Alex Sobel:** [\[7267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of including the ambulance service as an emergency service rather than an essential service.

**Edward Argar:**

No such assessment has been made. The ambulance service is an emergency service. National Health Service ambulance trusts are category one responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

#### ■ Animal Experiments

**Cat Smith:** [\[6339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Commissioner for Patient Safety will make an assessment of the impact on patients of the reliance on data from animal tests in the early stages of developing new medicines and the difficulty in accurately translating those test results to people.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

Once appointed, it will be for the Patient Safety Commissioner to determine what they review within their remit of medicines and medical devices.

#### ■ Cancer: Children and Young People

**Carla Lockhart:** [\[5276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment his Department has made of the prevalence of cancer diagnosis among children and young people.

**Jo Churchill:**

In 2018, the most recent data available, there were 25,312 children and young people living with a cancer diagnosis in England. This data is available by cancer type, sex and other demographic factors and is available at the following link:

<https://www.cancerdata.nhs.uk/prevalence>

#### ■ Cancer: Waiting Lists

**Chris Green:** [\[6320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how the NHS plans to tackle (a) the current backlog in cancer diagnosis and (b) ensure that any additional referrals for diagnosis are not delayed.

**Jo Churchill:**

The National Health Service priorities and operational planning guidance 2021/22 sets out how the NHS aims to tackle the backlog in cancer treatment which includes:

- Increasing people with symptoms coming forward through cancer-specific messages as part of the 'Help Us Help You' campaign;
- Rapidly increasing diagnostic capacity, with immediate action plans to increase endoscopy and computed tomography capacity; and
- Focusing on reducing the number of patients waiting over 62-days on cancer pathways, rescheduling diagnostic procedures or treatment for those who have had their care delayed by the pandemic.

Local health systems, drawing on advice and analysis from their Cancer Alliance, will ensure that there is sufficient diagnostic and treatment capacity in place to meet cancer need to ensure that any additional referrals for diagnosis are not delayed.

**■ Care Homes: Dental Services****Rachael Maskell:****[7218]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure the provision of routine dental checks in all care homes; and at what interval those dental checks are planned to take place.

**Jo Churchill:**

Specialised dental services are in place to provide dental treatment in a number of settings including care homes, subject to the Standard Operating Procedures in place and Public Health England's (PHE) infection prevention and control guidance. The frequency of dental checks will be determined by dentists on an individual basis.

In addition, PHE published their oral health toolkit for adults in care homes to support care homes and commissioners to implement the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guidelines on oral health for adults in care homes. The toolkit will also help care homes to implement the oral health element of the Enhanced Health in Care Homes Framework, for the support from general practice, the care home clinical lead and multidisciplinary team. The toolkit is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-oral-health-in-care-homes-toolkit/oral-health-toolkit-for-adults-in-care-homes>

**■ Carers: Mental Health****Ed Davey:****[6177]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many carers accessed the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme in (a) 2018-19, (b) 2019-2020 and (c) 2020-21.

**Ed Davey:** [\[6178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the recovery rate was for carers accessing the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme in (a) 2018-19, (b) 2019-20 and (c) 2020-21.

**Ed Davey:** [\[6179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the treatment completion rate was for carers accessing the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme in (a) 2018-19, (b) 2019-20 and (c) 2020-21.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* The data is not held in the format requested. The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies data set does not record whether the person accessing therapies is a carer.

**Children: Coronavirus****Sarah Olney:** [\[6397\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant the Answer of 17 May 2021 to Question 822 on Children: Coronavirus, if his Department will make an assessment of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the development of children aged two years and under.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* Health visitors assess child development through universal health and wellbeing reviews, with a formal development assessment completed at the two to two and a half year review. Currently there are no plans for further assessments of child development.

**Continuing Care: Children and Young People****Siobhain McDonagh:** [\[6180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many children and young people had NHS continuing care packages in each NHS clinical commissioning group area in England in each year from 2015-16 to 2020-21 inclusive.

**Helen Whately:**

The data requested is not held centrally.

**Coronavirus: Contact Tracing****Caroline Lucas:** [\[6249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of B.1.617 covid-19 cases have had close contacts traced within 24 hours in (a) Brighton and Hove, (b) the South East region and (c) the UK.

**Jo Churchill:**

This data is not available in the format requested, as variant sequencing and identification is made after contact tracing is complete.

**■ Coronavirus: Death****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[7117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the recent spike in the B.1.617.2 covid-19 variant on the number of people dying from covid-19.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England (PHE) is monitoring the B.1.617.2 COVID-19 variant in England.

Of the 5,559 cases of B.1.617.2 recorded in England as of 25 May 2021, PHE recorded 12 deaths within 28 days of the specimen date. 2,854 cases had been recorded by PHE, up to 18 May 2021, with six deaths recorded within 28 days of specimen date.

The latest data on the SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern and variants under investigation in England is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/investigation-of-novel-sars-cov-2-variant-variant-of-concern-20201201>

**■ Coronavirus: Disease Control****Dr Kieran Mullan:**[\[6530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the role of genomic sequencing in tackling the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England (PHE) analyses COVID-19 genomic data together with epidemiological data to derive information on mutation, variants and transmission.

This analysis is fed into health protection activities such as local outbreak management, detection and characterisation of novel variants permitting more accurate predictions of the trajectory of the pandemic, output into policy including the border risk assessment and the roadmap tests and the vaccination programme. In addition, PHE's data and analysis contribute to international control activities.

**■ Coronavirus: Greater London****Gareth Thomas:**[\[7084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people in (a) Harrow, (b) Hillingdon and (c) Brent have tested positive for covid-19 since 25 April 2021; and how many of those people were identified as having the Indian variant of the virus.

**Jo Churchill:**

Data on the number of new variant cases by local authority area is not currently available.

**■ Coronavirus: Immunotherapy****Jess Phillips:**[\[7196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the extent of the UK's access to monoclonal antibody therapies as an alternative to covid-19 vaccines.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Therapeutics Taskforce continues to monitor a range of COVID-19 therapeutics, including monoclonal antibodies, aimed at different stages of the treatment pathway. There has been a collaboration with the Vaccines Taskforce to assess the potential of neutralising monoclonal antibodies to provide passive immunity as an alternative to COVID-19 vaccines. We continue to work closely with the cross-agency group RAPID C-19, to assess evidence from clinical trials and delivery to patients, following regulatory approval.

We are in contact with a number of manufacturers to ensure that United Kingdom patients have access to COVID-19 therapeutics as evidence continues to emerge.

**■ Coronavirus: Quarantine****Caroline Lucas:**[\[6250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the pilot projects aimed at supporting people to self-isolate in areas with higher covid-19 infection rates, what steps the pilots will take to identify people who do not come forward to take a test for covid-19 because they lack the financial means to self-isolate; if he will make it his policy to include further financial support for people to self isolate; how long the pilots will take to be evaluated; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

The pilots have been co-designed with the local authorities involved and will focus on interventions designed to address barriers to uptake of testing and adherence to self-isolation. These include improving accessibility to and effectiveness of the Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme, including raising the income threshold for eligibility, with the aim of giving people on low incomes confidence that they will receive financial support quickly if they test positive for COVID-19.

The pilots work will inform future policy through robust evidence on specific interventions. The pilot programme is designed to find innovative approaches to encourage uptake in testing, evaluate these approaches and share pilot results widely and quickly with local decision-makers. The length of evaluation will vary from pilot to pilot.



## ■ Coronavirus: Screening

**Sir Mike Penning:** [\[4558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that covid-19 tests are affordable to travellers returning from overseas.

**Sir Mike Penning:** [\[4559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help ensure that people are not overcharged for private covid-19 tests.

**Sir Mike Penning:** [\[4560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of utilising the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to ensure that companies are not overcharging for covid-19 tests.

**Jo Churchill:**

In the United Kingdom, all international arrivals travelling from outside the Common Travel Area are required to book a testing package before travelling to England to protect themselves and the public. Testing requirements and therefore the costs paid by international arrivals, are set according to the risk posed by travel from 'red', 'amber' and 'green' list countries.

Since requirements were introduced for international travel testing, the costs of travel testing have fallen significantly. The Government is committed to working with the travel industry and private testing providers to reduce the cost of travel testing whilst also ensuring travel is as safe as possible. NHS Test and Trace testing is priced at the mid-market level. GOV.UK shows a list of private providers to allow international arrivals to select providers based on cost, location and types of test on offer.

## ■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Emma Hardy:** [\[1372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of legal protection for patients who have suffered from complications after receiving a covid-19 vaccination.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

No specific assessment has been made.

Where individuals believe they have come to avoidable harm in relation to a vaccine, they could pursue a compensation claim against the producers of the vaccine.

While not constituting legal protection, the Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme (VDPS) was established in 1979, to help ease the burden on those individuals where, on very rare occasions, vaccination against certain diseases has caused severe disablement. COVID-19 was added to the scheme in 2020. The Scheme provides a one-off, tax-free, lump sum to those who are severely disabled as a result of a vaccination. The VDPS is not a compensation scheme and making a claim will not prevent someone from pursuing a compensation claim.

**Carol Monaghan:**

**[2341]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to assess the (a) availability and (b) dissemination of covid-19 vaccine information in (i) Tigrinya, (ii) Amharic, (iii) Blen, (iv) Kibajuni, (v) KiSwahili, (vi) Tigre, (vii) Oromo, (viii) Afar, (ix) Sidayama, (x) Wolayatta, (xi) Hausa, (xii) Chichewa, (xiii) Igbo, (xiv) Pashto and (xv) other languages spoken by asylum seeker and refugee communities.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

We are working closely with the National Health Service and Public Health England to provide advice and information at every possible opportunity to encourage people to come forward for vaccination when they are eligible, and support anyone who might have questions about the vaccination process, regardless of their immigration or residency status.

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government Community Champions scheme works with trusted local leaders to engage with their communities. The Government's vaccination programme includes the use of street ambassadors to provide advice and information to local communities. The teams include ambassadors who can speak KiSwahili, Oromo, Afar, Yoruba, Akan and Somali. The programme can access additional translation support if a local need is identified.

Anyone living in the United Kingdom, including refugees and asylum seekers, can receive the vaccine free of charge in line with the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) prioritisation groups. Because there is no charge for the vaccine for people living in the UK, no proof of residence or immigration status is needed. NHS Regional teams, working with various appropriate local systems will reach out to unregistered people to ensure they are offered the vaccine.

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

**[6162]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when recipients of the Janssen covid-19 vaccination will be able to see the record of their vaccination on the NHS app.

**Navendu Mishra:**

**[6504]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what proportion of people are not eligible for the proposed vaccination passports due to their participation in the Novavax trial.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* Those participating in United Kingdom vaccination trials can request a letter from the trial they are participating in to confirm their vaccination status, which will include vaccine type and dose information. The Government is exploring how vaccine information for those on clinical trials can be linked to the NHS App, as well as to a non-digital solution.

**Paul Girvan:** [\[6412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department plans to publish the Government's Vaccine Strategy.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The vaccine strategy is being refreshed to reflect new developments from the COVID-19 vaccine rollout and the extended National Health Service flu programme. The vaccine strategy will be published in due course.

**Munira Wilson:** [\[6480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what educational materials on the covid-19 vaccination are being communicated to people who are reluctant to receive a vaccine.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

Departmental and National Health Service (NHS) social media channels have published a series of videos with vaccine experts, general practitioners, and senior clinical advisors to answer questions frequently raised by people who are more reluctant to receive a vaccine. The NHS website has a dedicated COVID-19 vaccine page that is regularly updated with the latest advice. Public Health England has also created an online resource centre where other organisations, including local authorities, can access materials that they can use in their local communities.

**Jim Shannon:** [\[7178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of using community development centres to help promote and administer the covid19 vaccine in areas where the take-up of the vaccine is lower than average.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The delivery of the vaccination programme is designed to be convenient and flexible, including in areas where there are groups with lower uptake. There is already a wide offer of vaccination settings such as religious and community centres. Local and national public health agencies are consulted on how best to utilise this flexibility to maximise uptake in groups with low vaccine uptake.

**Jess Phillips:** [\[7194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps is he taking to measure the value of covid-19 vaccine boosters for (a) people with blood cancer and (b) other immunocompromised groups.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

To ensure ongoing protection for the United Kingdom population, particularly the most vulnerable, we are preparing for a potential booster vaccination programme. While we are planning for several potential scenarios, final decisions on the timing and scope of the booster programme will not be taken until later this year, in line with results from key clinical studies. This includes the OCTAVE study, which will examine

the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines in clinically at-risk groups, including patients with certain immunocompromised conditions such as blood cancer.

Any decision on a booster vaccination programme will be informed by independent advice from the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation.

**Jess Phillips:**

[\[7195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to provide funding for research into covid-19 vaccine efficacy among all types of blood cancer.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

As part of the COVID-19 Immunity National Core Study, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is providing initial funding of £1.8 million for 12 months towards the OCTAVE study, examining the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines in clinically at-risk groups and £3 million towards a new research call to support projects investigating COVID-19 vaccine responses and immune failure. UKRI is also supporting the COVID-19 Data and Connectivity National Core Studies Programme with an investment of up to £15.2 million, which will enable studies including the evaluation of vaccine uptake and efficacy across all populations, including people with blood cancer.

## ■ Dental Services

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[2903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that people eligible for NHS dental treatment are able to (a) register with and (b) access treatment at a local dental practice.

**Jo Churchill:**

Continuous registration with dental practices is no longer required for a patient to access NHS services. Patients are only registered with a dental practice during the course of their treatment. National Health Service dentists have been asked to maximise safe throughput to meet as many prioritised needs as possible, focussing first on urgent care and vulnerable groups followed by overdue appointments. In circumstances where patients are unable to access an urgent dental appointment directly through an NHS dental practice, they should contact NHS 111.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

[\[2927\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has for the future of the dental workforce.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

[\[2930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of dental workforce throughout the UK.

**Jo Churchill:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement are responsible for commissioning primary care dentistry to meet local need. While available data suggests that the number of

dentists providing NHS services in England is sufficient, the interim NHS People Plan commits to addressing geographic shortages.

We are working both on improving career pathways and the current dental contract. In the summer, Health Education England will publish the report of their 'Advancing Dental Care' programme which has explored opportunities for flexible dental training pathways and the Department will publish a report on the learning from dental contract reform programme.

The Department has asked NHS England and NHS Improvement to work with the British Dental Association to bring forward implementable proposals.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:** [\[2928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent progress has been made on increasing access to NHS dentistry.

**Jo Churchill:**

National Health Service dentists throughout the country have been asked to maximise safe throughput to meet as many prioritised needs as possible, focussing first on urgent care and vulnerable groups followed by overdue appointments. In addition, NHS England and NHS Improvement has provided a flexible commissioning toolkit to local commissioners to help focus the available capacity on those that need it most and to reduce oral health inequalities.

For the longer term, the Department has asked NHS England and NHS Improvement to work with the British Dental Association to build on the learning from the dental contract reform programme. Through this work, the Department is seeking to bring forward implementable proposals that address the key challenges facing the delivery of NHS dentistry and improve patient access.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:** [\[2929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many dental practices are registering new (a) adult and (b) child NHS patients.

**Jo Churchill:**

This data is unavailable. Continuous registration with dental practices is no longer required and patients are only registered with a dental practice during the course of their treatment.

In circumstances where patients are unable to access an urgent dental appointment directly through a National Health Service dental practice, they should contact NHS 111.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[7221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether there will be health area dental recovery plans under plans for dental services to move to integrated care systems.

**Jo Churchill:**

National Health Service dentistry is currently commissioned by NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) and regional NHSEI teams have a critical role in planning and delivering recovery of dental services. In the future, developing and delivering plans to meet the health needs of their area will be a key role for integrated commissioning boards, as part of their overall responsibility for population health.

**■ Dental Services: Contracts**

**Alex Norris:** [\[3125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS General Dental Services contract holders in England handed back their NHS contract in each of the last 6 months.

**Alex Norris:** [\[3126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS General Dental Services contract holders in England are currently working through their contractual notice period before ceasing to provide NHS services.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2021]:* The information requested is not held centrally.

**■ Dental Services: Migrant Workers**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[7219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many dentists who trained in other European countries have practised in England for each of the last five years.

**Jo Churchill:**

This data is not held in the format requested.

**■ Dental Services: Norfolk**

**Jerome Mayhew:** [\[6468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the availability of NHS dental provision in Norfolk.

**Jo Churchill:**

National Health Service dentists throughout the country have been asked to maximise safe throughput to meet as many prioritised needs as possible, focussing first on urgent care and care for vulnerable groups followed by overdue appointments. This has been underpinned by the requirement for dental providers to deliver 60% of normal activity volumes for the first six months of 2021/22 for full payment of the NHS contractual value.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with stakeholders to amend the Directory of Service to improve pathways for urgent patients to urgent dental centres and dental practices across the East of England. In addition, a web-based programme called 'Service Finder' has recently been launched which provides up-to-

date information about services that are available locally. A transformational dental strategy has also been developed in the East of England, to prioritise urgent care, prevention and inequalities. Plans to procure additional primary care dental services across Suffolk, Norfolk and Waveney are currently being reviewed.

#### ■ **Dental Services: Richmond upon Thames**

**Munira Wilson:**

**[4705]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve access to NHS dental care in Richmond-upon-Thames.

**Jo Churchill:**

National Health Service dentists throughout the country have been asked to maximise safe throughput to meet as many prioritised needs as possible, focussing first on urgent care and vulnerable groups followed by overdue appointments. This has been underpinned, taking into account current infection prevention and control guidelines, by the requirement for dental providers to deliver 60% of normal activity volumes for the first six months of 2021/22 for full payment of the NHS contractual value. In addition, NHS England and NHS Improvement have provided a flexible commissioning toolkit to local commissioners to help focus the available capacity on those that need it most and to reduce oral health inequalities.

In London, NHS England and NHS Improvement are currently working with North and South Thames Paediatric Networks and Paediatric Managed Clinical Networks to secure funding for a project to increase access for children requiring dental procedures under general anaesthetic.

#### ■ **Dental Services: Waiting Lists**

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[7215]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to publish his proposals for tackling the backlog in dental appointments.

**Jo Churchill:**

National Health Service dentists throughout the country have been asked to maximise safe throughput to meet as many prioritised needs as possible, focussing first on urgent care and vulnerable groups followed by overdue appointments. This has been underpinned, taking into account current infection prevention and control guidelines, by the requirement for dental providers to deliver 60% of normal activity volumes for the first six months of 2021/22 for full payment of their NHS contractual value. In addition, NHS England and NHS Improvement have provided a flexible commissioning toolkit to local commissioners to help focus the available capacity on those that need it most and to reduce oral health inequalities. We are continuing to work with NHS England and NHS Improvement to seek opportunities to improve throughput and support NHS dental recovery.

## ■ Dentistry

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[4629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of dental school training places there are in the UK.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 25 May 2021]:* In England the number of places is controlled through intake targets operated by the Office for Students with approximately 800 dental training places available each year. The latest available data shows the intake target was 809 training places in the 2019-20 academic year.

The provision of dentistry training places in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales is a matter for each devolved administration.

## ■ Department of Health and Social Care: Correspondence

**Afzal Khan:** [\[6458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of correspondence sent by hon. Members to his Department received a substantive response within the service standard in each month of (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Edward Argar:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* The Government recognises the great importance of the effective and timely handling of correspondence. The Cabinet Office is currently compiling data on the timeliness of responses to hon. Members from Government departments and agencies. This data will be released and made available to Members in due course.

## ■ DNACPR Decisions

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[6381\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 26 April 2021 to Question 185441 on the Ministerial Oversight Group for DNACPR: whether a date for the oversight group to convene has been set; and where the minutes and terms of reference of that group will be published.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The first meeting of the Ministerial Oversight Group is scheduled for 8 June 2021. Decisions on the publication of the terms of reference and minutes will be made at the first meeting of the Group.

## ■ Eating Disorders

**Tim Farron:** [\[5170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, which NHS trusts have been allocated transformation funding for the eating disorders pathway since 2019-20.



**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The information requested is held at local sustainability and transformation partnership (STP) or integrated care system (ICS) level.

In 2019/20 and 2020/21 transformation funding was made available to twelve 'early implementer' sites to test, evaluate and refine new models of integrated primary and community care for adults with severe mental health problems. Of these, eight sites focussed on transforming care for adults with eating disorders. The eight sites were Hertfordshire and West Essex STP; Cambridgeshire and Peterborough STP; Cheshire and Merseyside STP; South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw ICS; Herefordshire and Worcestershire STP; North East London STP; North West London STP; and Somerset STP.

**Tim Farron:****[5175]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to tackle the increase over the last 10 years in the number of people with eating disorders.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

In 2016, we set up the first waiting time standard for children and young people eating disorder services so that 95% of children with an eating disorder will receive treatment within one week for urgent cases and within four weeks for routine cases. Under the NHS Long Term Plan, extra funding is going into children and young people's community eating disorder services every year, with £53 million per year from 2021/22. This extra funding will enhance the development of more than 70 new or improved community eating disorder teams covering the whole of the country.

For adults, we will invest an extra £1 billion in community mental health care for adults with severe mental illness, such as eating disorders, by 2023/24. In addition, we announced that in 2021/22 the NHS will receive an additional £500 million, which will support people with a variety of mental health conditions, including eating disorders. Of this, £79 million will be used to significantly expand children's mental health services, including allowing 2,000 more children and young people to access eating disorder services and £58 million to bring forward the expansion of integrated primary and secondary care for adults with severe mental illness, including eating disorders.

NHS England has also announced additional early intervention services for young people aged 16 to 25 years old with eating disorders in 18 areas across the country, so young adults seeking support could be contacted within 48 hours and begin treatment within two weeks.

**■ Eating Disorders: Children and Young People****Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:****[7238]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the APPG on Eating Disorders report: Short-changed: Funding for children and young people's community eating disorder services in England in 2019-20, published in May 2021, what

steps his Department is taking to ensure that children and young people's community eating disorder services are adequately funded.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The funding and provision of health services, including mental health services, are the responsibility of local clinical commissioning groups which have the flexibility to allocate funding according to local need.

NHS England and NHS Improvement continue to work with mental health leads from local systems, Health Education England and other partners across the health system to support local services and help ensure the funding flows to frontline children and young people's community eating disorder services as outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan. NHS England and NHS Improvement review system plans against expected trajectories, seek assurance on any major divergences and establish recovery plans where needed.

We have also announced an extra £79 million in 2021/22 to significantly expand children's mental health services, including allowing 2,000 more children and young people to access eating disorder services.

■ **Eating Disorders: Health Services**

**Tim Farron:**

[\[5171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what additional funding has been provided for NHS eating disorders services to support schemes aimed to reduce increased inpatient admissions throughout the covid-19 outbreak.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

Since 2016, extra funding has been provided for children and young people's community eating disorder services, with £41 million in 2019/20 and £53 million in 2021/22. NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with partners across the health system to support local services and help ensure the funding flows to these services as outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan.

During COVID-19, NHS England and NHS Improvement advised all areas to continue prioritisation of service delivery and mitigate the potential impact of COVID-19 on this vulnerable group. We announced that in 2021/22 the National Health Service will receive an additional £500 million, which will support people with a variety of mental health conditions, including eating disorders. Of this extra funding £79 million will be used to significantly expand children's mental health services, including allowing 2,000 more children and young people to access eating disorder services and £58 million to bring forward the expansion of integrated primary and secondary care for adults with severe mental illness, including eating disorders. In addition, NHS England announced additional early intervention services for young people aged 16 to 25 years old with eating disorders in 18 areas across the country.

**Tim Farron:** [\[5172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure consistency in the quality and funding of eating disorders services in different areas of the country in the context of devolution to CCGs.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The funding and provision of health services, including eating disorder services, are the responsibility of local clinical commissioning groups and they have the flexibility to allocate funding according to local need. NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with partners across the health system to support local services and help ensure the funding flows to these services as outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan. NHS England and NHS Improvement will review system plans against expected trajectories, seek assurance on any major divergences and establish recovery plans where needed.

**Tim Farron:** [\[5173\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that funding allocated to CCGs for eating disorder services for children and young people are ringfenced.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

While funding provided for eating disorder services is not ringfenced, NHS England and NHS Improvement continue to work with mental health leads from local systems, Health Education England and other partners across the health system to support local services and help ensure the funding flows to these services as intended.

#### ■ **Education: Coronavirus**

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[7142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on collection and publication of complete weekly data on school and college outbreaks, including (a) how many students are affected and (b) which covid-19 variant is suspected; how schools that are at risk of outbreaks where cases are high in the community are being monitored; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on the response to the pandemic and local COVID-19 outbreaks, including through the weekly Local Action Committee Gold meetings.

#### ■ **Educational Institutions: Coronavirus**

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[7140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish, on a weekly basis, complete data of all outbreaks of covid-19 in educational settings including data from both (a) PHE reports and (b) the national school helpline that began operating on 17 September 2020.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England (PHE) publish acute respiratory infection incidents by different settings, including educational settings each week and is available at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports>

PHE also publish a breakdown of the number of cases of each variant in the United Kingdom twice a week. PHE is looking at ways to publish clusters and outbreaks by variant in different settings in a robust and clear way. This includes incidents escalated through the national school helpline. PHE will publish this data in due course.

**■ Fluoride: Drinking Water****Rachael Maskell:****[7222]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the planned timescale is for adding fluoride to all drinking water.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Government is planning to announce measures in the forthcoming Health and Care Bill to make it easier to introduce new fluoridation schemes. However, any plans for expansion would be subject to the passage of the Bill, funding being agreed and consultation.

**■ General Practitioners: Hearing Impaired****Paul Maynard:****[7137]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to standardise accessibility to GP services for deaf patients and ensure GP surgeries meet their responsibilities under the Accessible Information Standard.

**Jo Churchill:**

All National Health Service providers are required to comply with the public sector equality duty set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the Accessible Information Standard to ensure that deaf people who wish to communicate using British Sign Language (BSL) when accessing NHS services can do so.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have also commissioned a rapid review into access to BSL interpretation in NHS services which is nearing completion. The review will set out clear steps to support NHS providers to meet their responsibilities to deliver access to BSL interpretation. Under the General Medical Service and Personal Medical Service regulations, practices are required to ensure that their premises are suitable for the delivery of essential services and that these services are sufficient to meet the reasonable needs of their patients, including those with disabilities.

## ■ Health

**Daniel Zeichner:** [\[3010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effects on health of (a) precarious work and (b) the climate crisis.

**Jo Churchill:**

No such assessment has been made of the effects on health of precarious work.

The National Adaptation Programme has an objective for Public Health England to update the evidence base on the health impacts of climate change, considering a wide range of risks and opportunities of climate change impacts on health as identified by the second Climate Change Risk Assessment.

An update of estimates of direct and indirect climate-related health impacts using the UK Climate Projections' 18 projections will be included. Findings will be published in a comprehensive report 'Health Effects of Climate Change in the UK'.

## ■ Health Services

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[4631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to use learning from the delivery of the covid-19 vaccine to deliver primary care services.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 25 May 2021]:* The Department is committed to understanding and building on positive lessons learned from the COVID-19 vaccination programme and implementing these changes into other primary care services. As the vaccination programme is still underway, NHS England and NHS Improvement have not yet completed a review.

## ■ Health Services: Babies

**Sarah Olney:** [\[6396\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 17 May 2021 to question 824 on Babies: Coronavirus, if his Department will allocate further ring-fenced funding to local authorities to support them to meet local demand for increased services for babies.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* There are currently no plans to do so. Local authorities receive funding through the public health grant to commission services for babies. The public health grant to local authorities in England will increase from £3.279 billion in 2020/21 to £3.324 billion in 2021/22, an increase of 1% in cash terms.

## ■ Health Services: Domestic Abuse

**Andrea Jenkyns:**

[\[7225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will take steps to promote a whole-health approach in the provision of health services to domestic abuse victims as proposed by the SafeLives charity.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

Health professionals are trained to spot the signs of domestic abuse and those at risk, referring to further support and sharing information appropriately with colleagues and other organisations. All National Health Service staff undertake mandatory safeguarding training which includes focus on domestic abuse. The Department continues to work with partners to support integrated care systems in embedding violence prevention and reduction across local health, social care and public health systems. The Department has overseen a £2 million domestic abuse pathfinder project, producing a free online toolkit and supporting the development of a model health response to domestic abuse.

## ■ Health Services: Females

**Dr Kieran Mullan:**

[\[6529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve women's health outcomes.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The Government has announced the first women's health strategy for England to improve the health and wellbeing of women. To ensure the strategy reflects what women identify as priorities, the Government launched a call for evidence on 8 March until 13 June. The evidence gathered through the call for evidence will inform the priorities, content and actions for the strategy. We will respond to the call for evidence after the summer and we aim to publish the strategy later this year.

## ■ Health Visitors

**Ellie Reeves:**

[\[5245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the level of funding required to deliver the two additional health visiting checks recommended in the Healthy Child Programme commissioning guidance published by Public Health England on 17 March 2021.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England has made no estimate.

Commissioning guidance provides a framework for local authorities to use and adapt to meet local needs. Additional, non-mandated contacts are described at ages three months or six months old, based on evidence and are outlined for local consideration. Health visitors should also use their clinical judgement to determine use of targeted interventions or referral.

**Ellie Reeves:** **[5246]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of emerging Public Health England data indicating that the likelihood of babies receiving mandated health visiting checks varies based on ethnicity and level of deprivation.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England's experimental statistical release is intended to provide greater visibility and emerging evidence on children who received mandated health visiting reviews accounting for ethnicity, deprivation and other characteristics. This data is in addition to the routinely available health visitor metrics and outcomes. Local authorities and their health visiting providers can use this data to inform their commissioning strategies and needs assessments to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities faced by children of minority ethnic or deprived backgrounds.

**Ellie Reeves:** **[5247]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he has taken to improve accountability for delivering mandated health visiting checks in response to evidence from the Children's Commissioner's Best Beginnings in the Early Years report that indicated up to 65 per cent of children were not receiving the two and a half year old check in some local areas.

**Jo Churchill:**

Since publication of the Children's Commissioner's report 'Best beginnings in the Early Years', Public Health England (PHE) has published updated guidance for mandated health visits to support local decision-making on service commissioning and provision. The guidance is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthy-child-programme-0-to-19-health-visitor-and-school-nurse-commissioning>

To monitor implementation, PHE also continues to collect and publishes quarterly data on health visiting service metrics, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/health-visitor-service-delivery-metrics-2019-to-2020>

**Health Visitors: Coronavirus****Ellie Reeves:** **[5244]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of mandated health visiting checks missed since covid-19 lockdown began in March 2020; and what steps he is taking in response to those mandated health visiting checks being missed as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England has made no such estimate. Collection of quarterly and annual health visitor service delivery metrics covering has now restarted with the next publication of official statistics expected later in 2021.

Health visiting services have continued to deliver throughout the pandemic with virtual contact unless there has been a clinical or safeguarding need to ensure children remain safe and protected. The restoration framework for community health services for children and young people outlines a recommendation for services to move to restore health visiting services, following their prioritisation during the containment phase of the pandemic.

## ■ Health: Children

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[5242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the new Office for Health Promotion will take to (a) improve outcomes and (b) reduce inequalities in the mental and physical wellbeing of children aged under two.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Office for Health Promotion (OHP) will bring health improvement focused expert advice, analysis and evidence together with policy development and delivery from Public Health England and the Department. This will include children and young people's health. We will present more detail on our plans for the OHP in due course.

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[5243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of placing a statutory duty on Integrated Care Systems to deliver a strategy that improves outcomes and reduces inequalities in the mental and physical wellbeing of children aged under two.

**Edward Argar:**

The proposed legislation for integrated care systems (ICS) is designed to be flexible, allowing the system to continue to evolve and develop new and better ways of working, based on local needs and circumstances.

We expect ICS, in partnership with local agencies, to deliver targeted measures to support people at all stages of life, including measures to address health inequalities in the mental and physical wellbeing of children aged under two.

## ■ Heart Diseases: Older People

**Jim Shannon:** [\[7177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to make heart murmur tests available to people aged over 65 to ensure early detection and diagnosis.

**Jo Churchill:**

There are no age restrictions for National Health Service tests to detect and diagnose heart murmurs.



## ■ Hospitals: East Anglia

**James Wild:**

[\[6491\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of (a) James Paget and (b) West Suffolk hospitals were constructed using Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete.

**Edward Argar:**

NHS Digital's National Health Service estates return shows that the proportion of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete in James Paget Hospital is currently 96% and 58% at West Suffolk Hospital.

## ■ Integrated Care Systems

**Margaret Greenwood:**

[\[6322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 13 April 2020 to Question 175901, on Health Services and Social Services: Standards, whether private companies will be permitted to undertake roles on Integrated Care System NHS Boards.

**Edward Argar:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* The proposed legislation will set out minimum membership of the integrated care board (ICB) and will need to include representatives from National Health Service trusts, primary medical care and local authorities. Local areas can, by local agreement, go beyond the legislative minimum requirements in order to address their specific needs and detail further board members in their constitutions. Private providers of NHS services are not excluded from the ICB, but we expect this to be agreed in the constitution. This would be subject to local agreement and would need to be approved by NHS England. In every case, ICBs will be required to have clear and robust arrangements to declare and manage potential conflicts of interest.

## ■ Mechanical Thrombectomy

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[6362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to expand access to mechanical thrombectomy services for stroke patients.

**Jo Churchill:**

The expansion of thrombectomy services across England for those patients who have suffered a stroke is a multi-year programme within the NHS Long Term Plan. Thrombectomy is available in 22 centres in England, with another two non-neuroscience centres currently under development to provide access to thrombectomy.

There are additional plans to increase the number of operators able to perform thrombectomy. Due to training requirements this is currently restricted to Interventional Neuroradiologists in England. Over the past two years there has been

work undertaken with the General Medical Council to develop a credentialing programme which would enable acceleration of training to a wider cohort of medical professions such as radiologists, interventional cardiologists and neurosurgeons.

#### ■ **Medical Treatments: Innovation**

**Chris Green:** [\[6321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how the forthcoming NHS Bill will support patients' ability to receive the most effective therapeutic innovations as early as possible in their treatment.

**Edward Argar:**

The upcoming Health and Social Care Bill will build on the work of the National Health Service to support integration, joint working and the delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan.

It will put integrated care systems on a statutory footing focusing resources on effective treatments and innovations and working to streamline referral and patient pathways as far as possible. This will support the NHS to deliver the most effective therapeutic innovations as early as possible.

#### ■ **Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Independent Review**

**Cat Smith:** [\[3942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the terms of reference are of the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Review working group.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

There is a cross-system working group which meets to discuss the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review. There are no formal terms of reference as the working group is not a decision-making forum and is focused on monitoring progress towards delivering the Government's response to the recommendations in the Review.

#### ■ **Members: Correspondence**

**Rosie Cooper:** [\[5166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for West Lancashire of 31 March 2021 on face coverings, reference ZA56046.

**Edward Argar:**

We replied to the hon. Member on 28 May 2021.

**Robert Lorgan:** [\[6524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak dated 25 March 2021, referenced RL20466.

**Edward Argar:**

We replied to the hon. Member on 27 May 2021.

**Menopause****Robert Halfon:****[4580]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that women who are diagnosed with early menopause are (a) referred to specialists and (b) receiving regular checks.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines for menopause were updated in December 2019 and include criteria for the diagnosis, investigation and treatment of early menopause. NHS England and NHS Improvement expect all providers to give due regard to NICE's guidance.

After diagnosis has been confirmed in primary care, women with premature ovarian insufficiency (POI) or early menopause are generally referred to a specialist menopause clinic. The clinic will conduct further tests and, where appropriate, women will be offered treatment and fertility advice. After the initial consultations, women with POI should be reviewed after three months to assess the efficacy of their treatment. Further appointments should then be tailored to the needs of the individual.

**Mental Health****Marsha De Cordova:****[4694]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether a Mental Health Bill will be introduced in the 2021-22 parliamentary session.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The public consultation period on the Reforming the Mental Health Act white paper ended on 21 April 2021. We are now analysing the consultation responses and will respond with a formal report later this year. This will inform the development of our planned Mental Health Bill which will be brought forward when Parliamentary time allows.

**Mental Health Services****Rosie Cooper:****[4569]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what comparative assessment his Department has made of the potential effect on outcomes for patients of the delivery of remote mental health services (a) face-to-face, (b) by telephone and (c) by video call.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

No such comparative assessment has been made.

Data on access to mental health services on people with mental health conditions is collated in the Mental Health Services Dataset and the Improving access to Psychological Therapies dataset. While both these datasets are able to record the

consultation medium and show increased use of remote consultations for people in contact with services, it is too early to determine the overall effect of this change on service users and outcomes.

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

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

**[6334]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make a statement on the role that the new Office for Health Promotion will play in the provision of mental and emotional support services for children and young people within (a) school, (b) community and (c) clinical settings.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Office for Health Promotion (OHP) will bring health improvement focused expert advice, analysis and evidence together with policy development and delivery from across Public Health England and the Department, including a particular focus on improving the health of children. We will provide more detail on plans for the OHP in due course.

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

**[6335]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his Department's press release of 29 March 2021, how the Office for Health Promotion will work across government to promote the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Office for Health Promotion will work to promote and improve health, including a particular focus on improving the health of children across the Department, the health system, national and local government and wider partners to drive and support action on mental and physical wellbeing. We will present more detail on our plans for the Office for Health Promotion in due course.

**Damien Moore:**

**[7270]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve mental health support for children and young people in (a) Southport constituency and (b) England.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

In the West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) area, which includes Southport constituency, children and parents can now self-refer into local child and adolescent mental health services and these services cover 0 to 19 year olds. The CCG has developed the local Healthy Young Minds website and a 24 hours a day, seven days a week helpline to provide information on access, urgent help and links to self help and support for family members and carers. Kooth have been commissioned to provide online live digital support and access to materials to support a young person with their mental health. Children and young people's mental health services in the area will receive additional investment in 2021 and beyond to improve access

and crisis support. This includes the establishment of a school-based mental health support team from January 2022.

Nationally, the NHS Long Term Plan invests a further £2.3 billion a year into mental health services by 2023/24, which will see an additional 345,000 children and young people a year able to access support through National Health Service-funded services including school and college-based mental health support teams by 2023/24. We have also announced an additional £79 million in this financial year to significantly accelerate this planned expansion of children and young people's mental health services.

## ■ **Mental Health Services: Reform**

**Dr Kieran Mullan:**

**[6528]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reform mental health treatment.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

We are committed to our ambitions in the NHS Long Term Plan to expand and transform mental health services in England. We are investing an additional £2.3 billion a year in mental health services by 2023-24, so that two million more people will be able to access mental health support. We are introducing new models of care which will give 370,000 adults with serious mental illness greater choice and control over their care and treatment, supporting them to live well in their communities.

We have published the Mental Health Recovery Action Plan, with a one-off targeted investment of £500 million, part of which will be used to accelerate key commitments in the NHS Long Term Plan. The Government published its white paper on Reforming the Mental Health Act on 13 January, to give people greater control over their treatment and receive the dignity and respect they deserve. Legislation will be brought forward when Parliamentary time allows.

## ■ **Mental Illness**

**Theresa Villiers:**

**[6209]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure the NHS is able to diagnose mental health conditions at an early stage.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has issued the guideline 'Common mental health problems: identification and pathways to care' which is available at the following link:

[www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg123](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg123)

This guideline assists healthcare professionals make an assessment of a possible mental health condition. Where initial questions indicate a possible mental health disorder, but the practitioner is not competent to perform a mental health

assessment, the guideline provides for the patient to be referred to an appropriate healthcare professional.

The General Medical Council's 'Outcomes for Graduates' sets out what newly qualified doctors must know and be able to do. This includes a requirement to be able to explain, and illustrate by professional experience, the principles for the identification, safe management and referral of patients with mental health conditions.

We have also announced that in 2021/22 the National Health Service will receive an additional £500 million, of which £79 million will be used to significantly expand children's mental health services, including a faster increase in the number of mental health support teams in schools and colleges during this year. This will help support schools and health care professionals to respond to early signs of mental health conditions in children and young people.

**Theresa Villiers:**

**[6210]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the harm caused to people with mental health conditions when support is delayed until those people have severe problems.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* No such assessment has been made.

Under our mental health recovery action plan, the National Health Service will receive a further £500 million in this financial year to address waiting times for mental health services, to give more people the mental health support they need and to invest in the NHS workforce. This is in addition to the extra £2.3 billion invested in expanding and transforming mental health services in England by 2023/24.

## ■ **Mental Illness: Coronavirus**

**Colleen Fletcher:**

**[3005]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) financial and (b) other support his Department is providing to local authorities in (i) Coventry, (ii) the West Midlands and (iii) England to help people experiencing mental-ill health as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 24 May 2021]:* In 2021-22 the total public health grant to local authorities will be £3.324 billion, of which £22,571,371 has been allocated to Coventry City Council. The grant will be ring-fenced for use on public health functions, including public mental health. This may include mental health challenges arising directly or indirectly from COVID-19.

As part of the Mental Health Recovery Action Plan, £15 million will be invested in local authority areas in the most deprived parts of the country to help stimulate and boost prevention and early intervention services. Five eligible West Midlands local authorities were invited to submit expressions of interest by 28 May 2021. Proposals

will be reviewed by a national panel on 9 June 2021 with a view to confirming awards before the end of June 2021.

## ■ **Ministers: Correspondence**

**Justin Madders:** [\[5205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish the correspondence since March 2020 between the Minister for Patient Safety, Suicide Prevention and Mental Health and the (a) Ombudsman and (b) Chair of the Parliament and Health Service Ombudsman on the use of the severity of injustice scale.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

A search of the Department's correspondence database has shown there are two relevant letters, which are attached.

### **Attachments:**

1. 20210414 Rob Behrens to Minister Nadine Dorries [20210414 Rob Behrens to the Minister Nadine Dorries.pdf]
2. 20210426 MS(PSM) to Rob Behrens [260421 - MS(PSM) to Rob Behrens, PHSO.docx]

## ■ **Miscarriage**

**Peter Gibson:** [\[4036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of second trimester miscarriages on expectant parents who are unable to take statutory bereavement leave.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

We have made no such assessment.

We encourage employers to provide appropriate support to women who have suffered a miscarriage and respond sensitively to each individual's specific needs.

## ■ **NHS Trusts: Buildings**

**James Wild:** [\[6490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS Trusts have buildings which use Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC).

**Edward Argar:**

In January 2020 National Health Service trusts conducted extensive building survey works to identify the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in their fabric, using technology to record potential issues and visually identify and log potential risks.

This identified that there are 13 NHS trusts and a total of 32 buildings containing RAAC planks.

**■ NHS: Computer Software****Sir Desmond Swayne:**[\[6164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has plans to enable the NHS App to access information relating to patients' (a) physical and mental health, (b) families, (c) lifestyle and social circumstances, (d) ethnicity, (e) biometric details and (f) criminal convictions or alleged criminal behaviour.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* The NHS App does not capture or access any information which is not strictly necessary to deliver services to help people manage their health and access essential health services. The NHS App is independently tested against standards set by the National Cyber Security Centre, with extensive assurance work undertaken at each release to ensure it meets those standards.

The COVID-19 Status Certification programme initially issued a Privacy Notice copied from a template which included a standard list of data, many items of which are not collected. That Privacy Notice has since been updated to only include data fields which are collected. Fields such as those relating to 'criminal convictions or alleged criminal behaviour' are not relevant and have been deleted.

**■ Patients: Coronavirus****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[7116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people hospitalised by the B.1.617.2 variant of covid-19 to date.

**Jo Churchill:**

As of 25 May 2021, 5,559 cases of B.1.617.2 have been identified in England. Of these cases, 201 or 3.6% were recorded to have visited accident and emergency and 43 or less than 1% of those admissions resulted in overnight stays in hospital.

**■ Pharmacy: West Yorkshire****Imran Ahmad Khan:**[\[3202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many pharmacies are signed up to the Pharmacy Collect scheme in (a) Wakefield and (b) West Yorkshire.

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**[\[3203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of pharmacies which are signed up to the Pharmacy Collect scheme in (a) Wakefield and (b) West Yorkshire.

**Jo Churchill:**

As of 18 May 2021, 68 pharmacies have opted in to provide the service in Wakefield. We do not hold this data for West Yorkshire as a region. Nine in 10 pharmacies



across England are currently registered to offer lateral flow tests and there are no current plans to increase the numbers further across West Yorkshire.

### ■ **Pregnancy: Coronavirus**

**Catherine West:** [\[7236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that pregnant women are supported to access to the covid-19 vaccine.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

Pregnant women can use the National Booking Service to book their vaccination on the same basis as other eligible adults. The Booking Service has been updated to ensure that those who are pregnant are offered appointments only at vaccination centres offering the appropriate vaccine for their needs. Anyone who is pregnant and who has questions about vaccination can speak to their general practitioner or maternity service or speak to a healthcare professional at their vaccination appointment.

### ■ **Pregnancy: Mental Health Services**

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[5238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the average waiting time is for women experiencing mental ill health to be admitted to a community-based mother and baby unit (a) during or (b) in the year following their pregnancy.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The information requested is not held centrally as there is no defined access and waiting times standard for these services.

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:** [\[6395\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether all expectant mothers and birthing people can access NHS perinatal services in every region of England.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

Expectant mothers and birthing people are able to access physical and mental health care during the perinatal period in every region in England.

### ■ **Prostate Cancer: Screening**

**Alex Norris:** [\[4690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many rapid diagnostic pathways are in operation for prostate cancer in the NHS in England.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 25 May 2021]:* There are currently 11 urology or prostate rapid diagnostic centre pathways operational or in development, some of which cover multiple hospital sites.

## ■ Protective Clothing: Manufacturing Industries

**Justin Madders:**

**[301]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish a list of UK manufacturers from which personal protective equipment (PPE) has been sourced; and the postcodes where that PPE has been produced.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 17 May 2021]:* As of May 2021, DHSC has contracted with 31 UK based personal protective equipment (PPE) Manufacturers as part of our UK Make programme. The UK Make programme was stood up by the Department to ramp up domestic production in response to the pandemic.

All PPE providers who have been awarded a contract to supply goods and services to the Department are published on Contracts Finder on GOV.UK, including those with UK manufacturers of PPE.

The information requested is shown in the following table:

MANUFACTURER NAME	POSTCODE
I Love Cosmetics (Expac)	PR25 2DY
Potter & Moore	PE4 6ND
DTR MEDICAL LTD	SA6 8RF UK
DURAWELD LTD	YO11 3UP
KINGSBURY PRESS	DN11 0BF
L J A MIERS AND COMPANY LTD	PE19 1QS
NUMATIC INTERNATIONAL LTD	TA20 2GB
PHOTOCENTRIC LTD	PE1 5YW
RAMFOAM LIMITED	B69 2HF
STAEGER CLEAR PACKAGING LTD	CV6 4BL
THE ROYAL MINT LTD	CF72 8YT
Elite Plastics	HR2 6JR
Lincoln Polythene	LN5 8LG
PFF Packaging	NE37 3HR
Polystar Plastics	SO14 5BF
Siva Plastics (CWB's) CWOT0100	SO19 7GB

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MANUFACTURER NAME	POSTCODE
Burberry	WF10 1QX
McDonald & Taylor	WA1 4RX
Private White	M3 7LJ
Redwood	WN8 9PL
Survitec	CH41 1HQ
Alpha Solway (Globus)	DG12 5BL
Blue Tree Group	S63 5DR
Burberry	WF10 1QX
Don & Low	DD8 1FR
Dräger	NE24 4RG
Eumar Technology	HR1 3SE
Honeywell	ML1 5SB
Medicom	NN4 7EJ
Private White	M3 7LJ

## ■ Radiology

**Justin Madders:** [\[5206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the shortfalls in the clinical radiology workforce as identified in the Royal College of Radiologists' clinical radiology workforce census 2020.

**Jo Churchill:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement have not yet made a specific assessment of the 2020 survey.

**Justin Madders:** [\[5207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has plans to allocate additional funding to the clinical radiology workforce.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Health Education England (HEE) Cancer Workforce Plan commits to the expansion of capacity and skills across six professions by 2021, including clinical radiology. In 2021/22 HEE will continue implementation of this plan, including working with NHS England and NHS Improvement to increase the number clinical radiology

training posts by over 100. Allocation of funding for future years will be dependent on future Government Spending Reviews.

**Justin Madders:** [5208]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what comparative assessment he has made of the number of (a) clinical radiology trainees and (b) vacant clinical radiology consultant posts in hospitals.

**Helen Whately:**

We have made no such assessment.

#### ■ Self-harm: Children

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:** [6394]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many children were admitted to accident and emergency for self-harming in each year from 2015 to 2020.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The information is not collected in the format requested.

#### ■ Sudden Adult Death Syndrome

**Munira Wilson:** [6537]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to raise awareness of sudden adult death syndrome.

**Jo Churchill:**

There are no current plans to do so. However, NHS England and NHS Improvement are developing plans with the British Heart Foundation, St John Ambulance and GoodSAM, to raise awareness of first responder lead activities and to increase bystander cardiopulmonary resuscitation and defibrillation skills for those that have suffered cardiac arrest and help prevent Sudden Adult Syndrome.

#### ■ Travel: Coronavirus

**Navendu Mishra:** [4723]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether companies contracted to provide covid-19 tests to people returning to the UK have to adhere to a threshold of successful on time (a) deliveries and (b) results in order to keep their contracts with his Department.

**Jo Churchill:**

Private providers which are listed on GOV.UK have declared and evidenced compliance with the relevant minimum standards for testing services, including the relevant stage of the United Kingdom Accreditation Service accreditation if the provider is processing tests or taking swabs. The minimum standards are available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/testing-on-day-2-and-day-8-for-international-arrivals>

The Department is continuing to monitor each provider supplying testing for international arrivals, including assessment of their delivery, customer service and reporting services. We are also carefully monitoring issues raised by the public about private test providers, raising every complaint with providers. We are taking rapid action with companies where appropriate. Providers delivering inadequate services receive a five-day warning to demonstrate they have rectified their service and if they are unable to do so, they are removed from the GOV.UK list.

**Navendu Mishra:**

**[4724]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will introduce a cap on the amount private companies can charge people returning to the UK for covid-19 tests and results.

**Jo Churchill:**

We have no current plans to do so.

Since requirements were introduced for international travel testing, the costs of travel testing have fallen significantly. The Government is committed to working with the travel industry and private testing providers to reduce the cost whilst also ensuring travel is as safe as possible.

NHS Test and Trace tests are available at the market mid-point. A list of providers offering testing bundles for international arrivals is available at GOV.UK, allowing travellers to find tests at an appropriate price. We also offer deferred payment plans and hardship support for people who cannot afford to pay for the cost of managed quarantine and testing. In some circumstances this may be available to those who are not in receipt of income related benefits.

**Nickie Aiken:**

**[6470]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of providing (a) free or (b) low-cost NHS covid-19 tests to parents whose children live abroad, to allow such parents to visit their children under legally agreed custody agreements between the UK and other countries whilst incurring reduced costs for covid-19 testing.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* No assessment has been made.

Since requirements were introduced for international travel testing, the costs of travel testing have fallen significantly. The Government is committed to working with the travel industry and private testing providers to reduce the cost of travel testing whilst also ensuring travel is as safe as possible. NHS Test and Trace tests are priced at the mid-market level. We offer deferred payment plans and hardship support for people who cannot afford to pay for the cost of managed quarantine and testing. In some circumstances this may be available to those who are not in receipt of income related benefits.

**Munira Wilson:**[\[6481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans are in place to support mandatory covid-19 testing costs for people who must travel abroad.

**Jo Churchill:**

NHS Test and Trace tests can be purchased at the market mid-point to ensure that tests are available at an appropriate cost. We also offer deferred payment plans and support for people who cannot afford to pay for the cost of managed quarantine and testing. In some circumstances this may be available to those who are not in receipt of income related benefits.

**HOME OFFICE****■ Animal Experiments: Licensing****Cat Smith:**[\[6338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of sharing redacted versions of applications for licences to conduct scientific experiments on animals with organisations that could provide expert advice on alternative scientifically satisfactory methods that do not involve the use of animals.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The National Centre for the 3Rs (NC3Rs) is the UK's leading independent scientific based organisation dedicated to replacing, refining and reducing the use of animals in scientific research and testing.

The NC3Rs primarily exists to support the research community to use the latest science and technology to replace animal studies. This Government will continue to work with the NC3Rs on how best to utilise its expert advice on the delivery of the 3Rs as part of the regulatory process.

**■ Cars: Electronic Equipment****Hilary Benn:**[\[7100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of making it mandatory for all new cars sold to be fitted with an electronic tracking device.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Government is tackling vehicle crime as a priority. We continue to work closely with police and motor manufacturers through the National Vehicle Crime Working Group, established by the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for vehicle crime and overseen by the Government's Crime and Justice Taskforce. This includes consideration of how we can reduce the number of vehicles being stolen.

## ■ Counter-terrorism: Children

**Ms Diane Abbott:** [\[6169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many children under the age of 18 were referred to Prevent in each year between April 2015 and April 2020 by (a) gender, (b) ethnicity and (c) religion of the individual referred.

**Ms Diane Abbott:** [\[6170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, , how many children under the age of 18 were adopted as a Channel Case in each year between April 2015 and April by (a) gender, (b) ethnicity and (c) religion of the individual referred.

**Kevin Foster:**

Since 2012, 2,897 people have been adopted to Prevent's voluntary and confidential multi-agency Channel programme, which supports people who are vulnerable to exploitation from terrorist influences.

Below is data on the gender and age of those under the age of 18 who were referred to Prevent and adopted to Channel. Please note the '-' symbol has been used where the number of individuals in a category is less than 10.

### **GENDER OF THOSE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 REFERRED TO PREVENT, 2015/16 TO 2019/20**

Gender	Year				
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Male	2,799	2,367	3,116	2,495	2,532
Female	829	550	436	382	373
Other	-	-	-	-	10
Unknown	-	-	-	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,630</b>	<b>2,918</b>	<b>3,556</b>	<b>2,879</b>	<b>2,915</b>

### **GENDER OF THOSE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 ADOPTED AS A CHANNEL CASE, 2015/16 TO 2019/20**

Gender	Year				
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Male	191	176	200	282	320
Female	39	23	13	34	38
Other	0	0	0	0	-
Unknown	0	0	0	0	-

**GENDER OF THOSE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 ADOPTED AS A CHANNEL CASE, 2015/16 TO 2019/20**

<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>360</b>
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The Channel process is entirely voluntary and those under-18 must have the consent of their parent/guardian to be adopted as a Channel case.

Recording the ethnicity and religion of individuals who have been considered as a Channel case is not mandatory on the Home Office Case Management Information System. We therefore only hold partial data on the ethnicity or religion of Prevent referrals and Channel cases. This partial data cannot be released as it would create a misleading and inaccurate picture of the ethnic/religious make-up of Channel referrals aged under 18.

### ■ Crime Prevention

**Stuart Anderson:**

[\[5267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to improve community safety.

**Kit Malthouse:**

This Government is committed to cutting crime and delivering the safer streets that the public deserves.

The Government is also committed to recruiting 20,000 additional police officers by March 2023 and despite the challenges of COVID-19, as at 31 March 2021, 8,771 officers were recruited through the Uplift programme. Deployment of the new officers will be a matter for Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables but their presence should contribute to making streets safer.

The Safer Streets Fund was launched on 26 January 2020, providing £25 million in 2020/21 to support 52 areas across England and Wales persistently and disproportionately affected by neighbourhood and acquisitive crimes, like burglary, robbery and theft. The fund is being used by Police and Crime Commissioners to invest in well evidenced, physical crime prevention measures, such as improved street lighting and CCTV.

On 28 January 2021, we launched a second £20m round of the Safer Streets Fund, for 2021/22. This second round will give funding to Police and Crime Commissioners and Local Authorities to invest in crime prevention, both in commercial and residential areas.

We have also announced we are investing a further £25 million in the Safer Streets Fund for the 2021/22 financial year, building on the £45 million already committed between 2020 and 2022. This additional funding will look to deliver innovative and evidence-based crime prevention measures in public spaces, with a focus on ensuring women and girls feel safe in the public domain.



## ■ Crime: Costs

**Jim Shannon:**

[7179]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle the costs associated with levels of crime.

**Kit Malthouse:**

According to the most recently published estimates of the overall costs of crime, the total costs of crime in England and Wales in 2015/16, is estimated to be approximately £50 billion for crimes against individuals and £9 billion for crimes against businesses.

The full report can be accessed at [The economic and social costs of crime \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

This Government remains focused on reducing levels of crime, which is why we are recruiting an additional 20,000 police officers, investing £40 million in our work on county lines, £130.5 million on serious violence, and £70 million on neighbourhood crime. Specifically, these investments intend to target and bring to justice county lines gangs, fund enforcement activity in police force areas that see the highest levels of violent crime; as well as to improve public safety in communities who are disproportionately affected by acquisitive crime.

Through our targeted activity, we will continue to work with partners to make real progress in reducing levels of crime, and in turn the associated costs it brings.

## ■ Detainees: EU Nationals

**Alex Sobel:**

[7268]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU nationals have been detained by UK border force since the end of the transition period.

**Kevin Foster:**

EU Nationals who do not have status under the EUSS and are not eligible to apply for it, can enter the UK for up to six months as visitors, visa free. However, now freedom of movement has ended, those coming to work or study must prove they meet our entry requirements.

In addition to the immigration rules, any travel to the UK at this time must be in line with the Border Health Requirements relating to the global pandemic set by the UK Government and the three devolved administrations. We urge people to check these requirements carefully before travelling, as entry to the UK may also be denied by Border Force on the basis of failure to comply with these regulations.

Border Force treat all arrivals with respect and consider each passengers situation on an individual basis to check everyone entering the UK has the right to do so.

We have issued instructions to our officers to reinforce the principle; in all cases there exists a presumption in favour of bail.

The Home Office published data on how many people are detained or returned on gov.uk. the latest publication can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-december-2020/how-many-people-are-detained-or-returned](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-december-2020/how-many-people-are-detained-or-returned)

## ■ Domestic Abuse: Males

**Andrea Jenkyns:**

**[6374]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to encourage male victims of domestic abuse to seek support and report that abuse to the police.

**Victoria Atkins:**

This Government is committed to protecting and supporting all victims of domestic abuse, regardless of gender. That is why we recently passed the landmark Domestic Abuse Act, which includes a new definition of domestic abuse in recognition that around one third of domestic abuse victims are male. Additionally, the Statutory Guidance that will accompany the Act will address the impact on male victims and their unique needs and barriers to accessing support. We will be publishing this guidance for consultation shortly.

Since 2016/18 the Home Office has provided funding of over £160,000 per year to the Men's Advice Line run by Respect which supports and advises male victims of domestic abuse. Additional funding of £151,000 was provided to further bolster the helpline during the pandemic.

In March 2019 the Home Office published the Male Victims Position Statement which sets out 12 specific commitments to better enable male victims and survivors to come forward and receive necessary support, and to tackle offenders. A copy of the statement can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-unveils-commitments-to-tackle-abuse-against-men>

Specific advice has been published on gov.uk for domestic abuse victims during COVID-19 directing them to a range of specialist organisations, including those supporting male victims.

We launched the Ask for ANI Codeword Scheme in January, in which 5,000 pharmacies are now participating. This scheme has already helped victims flee abuse, including male victims.

## ■ Domestic Abuse: Rehabilitation

**Andrea Jenkyns:**

**[6376]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support perpetrator behaviour change programmes to support services to work together to tackle high-harm perpetrators of domestic violence.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Government is committed to ensuring that abusive behaviour is tackled directly with perpetrators of abuse and the root causes of domestic abuse are addressed.

This is why in the financial year 2020/21 we committed £10 million to tackle perpetrators of domestic abuse. From this we awarded over £7 million to Police and Crime Commissioners to support the introduction of innovative approaches to preventing domestic abuse, including the expansion of interventions such as the Drive Project that work with high harm perpetrators of domestic abuse.

For the year 2021/22 we have £25 million - more than doubling the funding for tackling domestic abuse perpetrators. Building on the success of last year's fund, I am pleased to confirm that on Friday 21st May we launched a new Perpetrator Programme Fund for Police and Crime Commissioners to bid into totalling £11.1m. The purpose of this fund is to support the introduction of more perpetrator programmes. The competition will be live for six weeks, closing on 2nd July.

With the remainder of the £25 million funding, we will be considering how we can best support the projects we funded in 20/21, as well as continuing to build up our evidence base by investing in research, technology and innovation to tackle perpetrators and keep victims safe.

**■ Drugs: Misuse****Kenny MacAskill:**[\[7944\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent representations her Department has received from the (a) Lord Advocate and (b) Crown Office in Scotland on drug consumption rooms.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Parliament received representations from the Lord Advocate on a range of drug policy issues, including drug consumption rooms, as part of the Scottish Affairs Select Committee's Inquiry into Problem Drug Use in Scotland in 2019. The Government published its response in 2020 and can be found here: [Problem drug use in Scotland: Government response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2019 - Scottish Affairs Committee - House of Commons \(parliament.uk\)](#). The Home Office has not received any direct representations from the Lord Advocate or the Crown Office on the issue of drug consumption rooms.

Tackling drug misuse is a priority for this government and it clear that action is needed across all four nations to reduce the harms caused. We are committed to working across the UK and have regular contact with the Scottish Government at ministerial and official level on this issue. While the legal framework on the misuse of drugs is reserved to the UK, the Scottish Government has its own approach to tackling drug and alcohol misuse in areas where responsibility is devolved, including healthcare, criminal justice, housing, and education.

## ■ Fraud: Telephones

**Holly Mumby-Croft:**

[6533]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of deterrents to prevent phone call and text message financial scams.

**Kevin Foster:**

Fraudulent calls and texts can be particularly stressful and damaging for the most vulnerable in society and can provide a gateway to scams, with opportunistic criminals targeting potential victims.

The Government is aware we must improve our response to fraud, and we have been working with partners from law enforcement, the public and private sectors to tackle this growing threat. In February, the Economic Crime Strategic Board agreed an ambitious framework for a fraud action plan which will now be developed and will commit key partners in the public sector and industry to do more to tackle fraud.

We have also been working with Ofcom to disrupt phonenumber enabled scams. Ofcom have adopted new rules relating to Call Line Identification (CLI), which means phone numbers used to perpetrate scams will be identified, filtered out and prevented from reaching the recipient. I would also highlight the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR) governs unsolicited live or automated direct marketing calls and imposes strict obligations on organisations which make direct marketing calls to individuals in the UK. The ICO has the powers to impose civil monetary penalties of up to £500,000 for serious contraventions of the PECR.

Lastly, to ensure we improve the effectiveness of our response to fraud, the Home Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) are in regular discussion with the telecommunication industry on ways to tackle fraud, including text messaging scams known as smishing. In 2019, the Government published a joint public-private Economic Crime Plan which commits us to work in partnership with the private sector to address the vulnerabilities which allows fraud to flourish and to share data and intelligence to better disrupt and prevent fraud. This can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/economic-crime-plan-2019-to-2022>.

## ■ Home Office: Correspondence

**Afzal Khan:**

[6447]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of correspondence sent by hon. Members to her Department received a substantive response within the service standard in each month of (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* The Government recognises the great importance of the effective and timely handling of correspondence.

The Cabinet Office is currently compiling data on the timeliness of responses to Hon. and Rt Hon. members from Government Departments and Agencies. This data will be released, and made available to Members, in due course.

## ■ Immigration: EU Nationals

**Caroline Nokes:** [\[7156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she has made of the number of British citizens who have been sent a letter telling them to register for EU settled status.

**Caroline Nokes:** [\[7157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which Government departments she has shared data with to identify people who may be eligible for the EU settled status scheme but who have not yet registered for that scheme.

**Caroline Nokes:** [\[7158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which databases held by the Department for Work and Pensions her Department has accessed in order to determine whether people may need to apply for EU settled status.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Government is using every possible channel to encourage everyone who may be eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) to apply.

The Home Office is currently working with HMRC and DWP to send letters to EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who receive benefits, but it appears are yet to apply to the EUSS.

The information shared with the Home Office by DWP was sourced from the DWP Data Analytics Data Warehouse (DADW) which holds data from Legacy systems, the Universal Credit (UC) database and the Migrants Workers Database (MWDB).

In trying to reach as many people as possible, there may be a small number of instances where these letters are sent to recipients who are naturalised as a British citizen. The letter may also be received by a small number of individuals who have already applied to the EUSS, for example because they applied after the initial exercise with DWP or HMRC was completed, but before the letter was sent out. The letter makes clear anyone who is a British citizen or already has EUSS status does not need to take any action.

As of 30 April 2021, 4.9m grants of EUSS status have been made. The Home Office urges anyone eligible for the EUSS to apply before the 30 June deadline to ensure their rights are protected following the end of the grace period.

## ■ Internet: Fraud

**Martyn Day:**

[5218]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to raise awareness of online scams.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Government recognises the serious risks presented by online scams and fraud and is working collaboratively with law enforcement and the private sector to reaffirm messages to the public setting out how they can protect themselves from fraud and stay safe online.

We know one of the best ways to deal with these scams is for the public to be well-informed on how to protect themselves. This is why we published guidance for the public to spot potential frauds and the steps they can take to avoid them. This advice can be accessed at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-fraud-and-cyber-crime](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-fraud-and-cyber-crime).

As well as this, Action Fraud, the national reporting service for all victims of fraud and cybercrime, also regularly provide fraud alerts via their website, which can help individuals raise their awareness of these sorts of scams, and advise on how to combat them:

[www.actionfraud.police.uk/news](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/news).

We continue to encourage anybody who suspects an email, text or other form of communication to be suspicious to report it to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk) or forward a text to 7726, free of charge.

## ■ NHS: Migrant Workers

**Brendan Clarke-Smith:**

[7279]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will extend the automatic 12-month visa extension to (a) ST3 GP trainees and (b) other international staff working in the NHS.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Government recognises the vital contribution overseas NHS, health and social care workers have and continue to make in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

The introduction of the Health and Care visa last August made it quicker and cheaper for regulated health and care professionals and their dependents to secure their visa. This includes ST3 (Speciality Trainee, 3<sup>rd</sup> year) GP trainees who are eligible under the standard occupation classification code for medical practitioners.

Since the start of the pandemic, the Government has extended the visas of over 10,000 key, frontline regulated health and care professionals, and their eligible family members. The visa extension scheme was recently extended in April to cover visas which expire between 1 April 2021 until 30 September 2021. The intention of the

scheme is to allow frontline medical professionals to focus on tackling the Covid-19 pandemic, rather than worrying about renewal applications.

#### ■ Overseas Visitors: India

**Munira Wilson:** [7285]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many travellers have entered the UK from India since 1 April 2021.

**Kevin Foster:**

Travel to the UK from India is currently subjective to extensive restrictions due to it being on the Red List, this includes a requirement to enter the Managed Quarantine Service on arrival in the UK.

The Home Office regularly publishes migration statistics including number of visitors to the UK on gov.uk. The latest publication covers up to March 2021 and can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021)

Statistics covering the period including April 2021 will be published as part of the next Quarterly Update.

#### ■ Royal Mail: Fraud

**Martyn Day:** [5216]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with representatives from Royal Mail on the Royal Mail delivery fee text message scam.

**Martyn Day:** [5217]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of the National Cyber Security Centre Suspicious Email Reporting Service in tackling online scams and frauds.

**Kevin Foster:**

Fraudsters are sophisticated and will exploit any vulnerabilities they can, especially as more of us find ourselves at home and online.

To protect the public, the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), the UK's national technical authority on cyber security, established the Suspicious Email Reporting Service. This service allows the public to report suspicious emails and potential phishing scams more effectively and easily to law enforcement. It has proved an instant success with the public, with over 5.8 million reports received and over 43,000 scams and 84,000 websites taken down since its inception in April 2020. To use the service, suspicious emails should be forwarded to: [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk).

As well as this, we continue to encourage the public to forward suspicious text messages to 7726 (which is free of charge) and anyone who has been targeted by a scam to report it. Action Fraud is the national reporting service for all victims of fraud and cybercrime and can be contacted by phone on 0300 123 2040 or through

their website: [http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report\\_fraud](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud). All of this information is being used by the City of London Police, the National Cyber Security Centre and the National Crime Agency alongside crime reports to identify, disrupt and stop fraudsters.

The Government is also aware of the ongoing scams relating to Royal Mail and the Post Office. We are working closely alongside the City of London Police (the national lead force for fraud) and wider law enforcement to track and mitigate the risk to the public. Royal Mail has issued guidance on how to spot fake emails and communications and what to do if you have received one. More information can be found on the Royal Mail's website: <https://www.royalmail.com/help/scam-examples>.

### ■ **Travel: Quarantine**

**Munira Wilson:** **[7287]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what checks are in place to ensure self-isolation at home is being carried out fully and correctly.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Self-isolation following a positive Covid test is one of the most important things we can do to help stop the spread of the virus and protect our friends and family, our community and the NHS. Following a report of non-compliance by a member of the public and if considered appropriate, the police are empowered to issue fixed penalty notices for failure to self-isolate.

Separate isolation requirements also apply to individuals returning to England from an amber-list country. Those self-isolating at home may receive daily phone calls from the Isolation Assurance and Compliance service (IAC), to ensure that they are complying with their duty to self-isolate.

Additionally, a service run by my department will through contractors carry out a number of in-person checks on amber-list arrivals to ensure compliance. The service has the capacity to deliver up to 10,000 checks a day.

If an individual is found to be non-compliant with their duty to self-isolate, then staff from the service may refer individuals to the case to the police who have the power to take law enforcement action and issue Fixed Penalty Notices.

### ■ **Undocumented Migrants: English Channel**

**Andrew Rosindell:** **[7108]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has made an estimate of the proportion of people illegally crossing the Channel in the last 12 months who were male.

**Andrew Rosindell:** **[7109]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information her Department holds on people who have crossed the Channel illegally in the last year, broken down by age.



**Chris Philp:**

As part of the processing of arriving migrants who have travelled by small boat, the Home Office collects personal data including age, sex and nationality. Information on numbers of arrivals in 2020 has previously been provided to the House via the Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee, and can be found at

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/5385/documents/54027/default/>.

**■ Visas: EEA Nationals****Bob Blackman:****[5183]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment the Government has made of the difference in fees in visa applications applying to some EEA and EU member state nationals; and what steps the Government is taking to improve equal treatment of all EEA/EU nationals under the current visa regime.

**Kevin Foster:**

The UK has long standing arrangements in its legislation for the nationals of countries which have ratified the 1961 Council of Europe's Social Charter (CESC) to qualify for a fee reduction for visa applications to come to work in the UK.

Nationals of the 26 countries which have signed and ratified the CESC are eligible for a reduction of £55 to their application fee if they are applying for a visa under a work route. Where the applicant is required to have a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) from their employer, the CoS can be issued free of charge.

Details of the routes which qualify for a reduced fee are published on at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fee-arrangements-for-cesc-nationals/fee-arrangements-for-cesc-nationals>.

The fee reduction of £55 only applies to the main applicant, it does not apply to dependants.

**■ Visas: India****Munira Wilson:****[7286]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many visas were granted to allow travellers to enter the UK from India since 1 April 2021, by type of visa.

**Kevin Foster:**

Travel to the UK from India is currently subjective to extensive restrictions due to it being on the Red List, this includes a requirement to enter the Managed Quarantine Service on arrival in the UK.

Any proposed travel to the UK from India, including any which forms the basis of a visa application, will need to be in line with the prevailing health restrictions.

Information on numbers of people coming to the UK is routinely published as part of the quarterly and annual Immigration statistics.

We do not publish data on the number of visas issued by country, our published data is issued by nationality.

Data for Quarter 1 (January 2021 – March 2021) was published in the most recent data release but will not cover the period requested. Later publications will cover the period requested and can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021)

## HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Buildings: Insulation

**Gareth Thomas:**

**[7080]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the Government plans for its proposed loan scheme for people affected by unsafe cladding to be offered to all leaseholders, including those who are (a) owner-occupiers and (b) owners of buy-to-let properties; and if he will make a statement.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The new finance scheme which will provide leaseholders with protection from the costs of cladding remediation and limit their payments to £50 per month will be available for leaseholders in residential buildings between 11 and 18 metres. This is in line with longstanding independent advice on which buildings are at the highest risk. We will publish further details of the scheme as soon as we are in a position to do so.

### ■ Council Housing: Greater London

**Feryal Clark:**

**[6507]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he has taken to provide housing options to households on local authority housing waiting lists in London.

**Christopher Pincher:**

Statutory guidance on the allocation of social housing issued in 2012 and updated in 2021 (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/allocation-of-accommodation-guidance-for-local-authorities>) encourages all local authorities to adopt a housing options approach as part of a move to a managed waiting list.

The guidance recognises that a strong housing options approach brings several benefits, ensuring: that people are offered support to make use of the housing solution which best meets their needs, that expectations about access to social housing are properly managed, and that social housing is focused on those who need it most.

## ■ Domestic Abuse: Housing

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

**[6414]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has made an assessment of the effect of a lack of both social housing and available refuge spaces on a domestic abuse survivors' ability to move-on into secure and affordable housing and rebuild their lives.

**Eddie Hughes:**

The Government is committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing and is investing over £12 billion in affordable housing over 5 years, the largest investment in affordable housing in a decade. This includes the new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme, which will leverage up to £38 billion of private finance and provide up to 180,000 new homes across the country, should economic conditions allow.

Many local areas already provide safe accommodation, including refuge services that ensure victims have somewhere safe to go. To support these services further we have introduced a new statutory duty on local authorities within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 to ensure that all victims, including children, have access to safety and support within safe accommodation when they need it.

In 2018, the Government published statutory guidance to assist local authorities ensure that victims of domestic abuse are able to move into social housing from a refuge or other form of temporary accommodation, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-access-to-social-housing-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse>.

## ■ Freehold

**Andrew Bridgen:**

**[6295]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to make it easier and cheaper for existing leaseholders to extend to 999 years or purchase the freehold.

**Eddie Hughes:**

Under the current system, too many leaseholders find the process for extending their lease or buying their freehold (a process known as enfranchisement) too complex, lacking transparency and prohibitively expensive.

Through our reforms, the length of a statutory lease extension will increase to 990 years, from 90 years (for flats) and 50 years (for houses). Leaseholders will be able to extend their lease with zero ground rent on payment of a premium.

We will also reform the process of enfranchisement valuation that leaseholders must follow to calculate the cost of extending their lease or buying their freehold. The Government will abolish marriage value, cap the treatment of ground rents at 0.1% of the freehold value, and prescribe rates for the calculations at market value. The Government will also introduce an online calculator, further simplifying the process for leaseholders and ensuring standardisation and fairness for all those looking to

enfranchise. These changes to the enfranchisement valuation process will result in substantial savings for some leaseholders, particularly those with less than 80 years left on their lease.

Our leasehold reform measures will be translated into law as soon as possible, starting with the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rents) Bill, which was introduced into Parliament on 12 May. This Bill will be the first part of major two-part legislation to implement leasehold and commonhold reforms in this Parliament.

## ■ High Rise Flats: Insulation

**Gareth Thomas:**

**[7079]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the Government plans for its proposed financial assistance for people affected by unsafe cladding in properties that are 18 metres and over to be provided to all leaseholders, including those who are (a) owner occupiers and (b) owners of buy-to-let properties; and if he will make a statement.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The Government will support leaseholders by funding the cost of replacing unsafe cladding in residential buildings 18 metres and over in England. Leaseholders who are buy-to-let landlords are able to benefit from funding for eligible remediation works, subject to the relevant subsidy control requirements.

## ■ Housing: Construction

**Feryal Clark:**

**[6506]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department has taken to allocate additional resources to local authorities in London to build affordable and social housing.

**Christopher Pincher:**

London will receive £4.8 billion of the Affordable Homes Programme funding to deliver at least 116,000 affordable housing starts by March 2023, and a further £4 billion to deliver 35,000 new affordable homes by 2026 to help with the acute housing challenge in London. We actively encourage local authorities to put themselves forward and play a key role in the delivery of the Affordable Homes Programmes alongside housing associations.

In March we announced that we are giving local authorities in England more freedom on how they spend the money from homes sold through Right to Buy, making it easier for local authorities to fund homes using Right to Buy receipts, including homes for social rent. We encourage local authorities to make the most of the flexibilities available to them to build a new generation of council housing.

## ■ Housing: Insulation

**Karin Smyth:**

[\[7203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what his timescale is for publishing the (a) eligibility for and (b) timetable for implementation of the scheme of Government backed loans to leaseholders for fire safety works in buildings under 18 metres in height announced in February 2021.

**Christopher Pincher:**

Public safety is our first priority and we are working to ensure unsafe cladding is remediated as swiftly as possible. We will publish further details of the finance scheme as soon as we are in a position to do so.

## ■ Levelling Up Fund: Historic Buildings

**Stephen Morgan:**

[\[7259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if his Department will make an assessment of how bids to the Levelling Up Fund from sites that are in the ownership of Historic England can be supported.

**Luke Hall:**

As the Levelling Up Fund Prospectus recognises, investment in culture and heritage assets can play a crucial role in rejuvenating places, leading to positive economic and social outcomes.

The Levelling Up Fund Technical Guidance sets out an assessment framework that will be used to assess all applications, including those that fall within the culture and heritage theme, to inform the shortlisting of bids. Further details can be found on Gov.UK.

## ■ Local Plans: Nature Conservation

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[7139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what his policy is on the level of emphasis that should be given to nature recovery networks in local plans developed by local planning authorities; and what weight his Department will attach to local authorities' consideration of nature recovery networks when deciding whether to approve local plans.

**Christopher Pincher:**

Our existing national planning policy is clear that local plans should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing habitat networks, and identify opportunities to enhance natural capital. Looking to the future, we are determined that our planning reforms will leave an inheritance of environmental improvement, and my Department has been working closely with colleagues in DEFRA so that the implications of the Environment Bill are fully considered with this aim in mind.

This includes capitalising on the potential of Local Nature Recovery Strategies and biodiversity net gain as we seek to make the system clearer and more positive. My

Department will set out our full policy position in our response to the *Planning for the Future* White Paper later this year.

#### ■ **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Correspondence**

**Afzal Khan:** **[6462]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what proportion of correspondence sent by hon. Members to his Department received a substantive response within the service standard in each month of (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Eddie Hughes:**

The Government recognises the great importance of the effective and timely handling of correspondence.

The Cabinet Office is currently compiling data on the timeliness of responses to Hon. and Rt Hon. members from Government Departments and Agencies. This data will be released, and made available to Members, in due course.

#### ■ **Parking: Private Sector**

**Martyn Day:** **[5219]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department has plans to encourage private companies that levy car parking charges to introduce clearer signage for the public on the charges and potential consequences of parking in private car parks.

**Martyn Day:** **[5220]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department has made an assessment of the implications for its policies of the practice of car parking companies (a) sending letters threatening legal action and (b) passing details to debt collection agencies in cases of unpaid parking charges.

**Luke Hall:**

My department is leading on the implementation of the Parking (Code of Practice) Act 2019, which includes creation of an independent Code of Practice for private parking companies to improve standards.

MHCLG is developing the Code of Practice through the British Standards Institution (BSI) in close consultation with key stakeholders, including landowners, consumer organisations, and the private parking industry, who are advising on its impact. The draft Code, which is available online at <https://standardsdevelopment.bsigroup.com/projects/2020-00193> and on which the BSI recently publicly consulted, includes a requirement for a clear signage, surface markings, and clear and accessible displays of terms and conditions, as well as appropriate terminology used in operator notices or by debt recovery agents.

In parallel to the BSI consultation on the Code, my department consulted on the Parking Code of Practice Enforcement Framework and on 20 March 2021 published

the response to the consultation, available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/parking-code-enforcement-framework>

The consultation response announced our intention to develop a series of fairer parking measures which will benefit motorists and encourage people to return to high streets and town centres. This includes the creation of a single independent appeals service for motorists to turn to if they receive a private parking charge and an Appeals Charter, which will protect motorists from charges that are unfair or issued in error.

## ■ **Property Development: York**

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[5210]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many jobs Network Rail and Homes England estimate have been (a) lost and (b) displaced within the York Central Development Outline Planning redline area since March 2019; and of those how many are rail jobs.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government does not hold this information. However, the Ministry's position is that development and regeneration are good for local economies, and are therefore likely to boost job numbers in the area.

## ■ **Social Rented Housing: Construction**

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[6355]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many times he has visited families living in social housing; and what steps he will take to fast track the building of social housing.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The Government's Charter for Social Housing Residents (published in November 2020) was informed by an extensive programme of engagement with residents, during which Ministers met almost 1,000 residents at events across England. The Charter includes a clear commitment to ongoing Ministerial engagement with residents, to ensure that residents are kept at the heart of future policymaking. As part of this, the Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing met residents of the G15 group of housing associations in May and a programme of face-to-face visits is being planned for when coronavirus restrictions allow

The Government is committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing and is investing over £12 billion in affordable housing over 5 years, the largest investment in affordable housing in a decade. This includes the new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme, which will leverage up to £38 billion of private finance and provide up to 180,000 new homes across the country, should economic conditions allow.

## ■ Welfare Assistance Schemes

**Feryal Clark:** [\[6508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has plans to allocate additional funding to local welfare assistance schemes.

**Luke Hall:**

Councils have powers to determine the right local welfare assistance schemes for their area

Resources made available through the 2020 Spending Review and annual Settlement allowed councils in England access to an overall increase in Core Spending Power from £49 billion in 2020-21 to up to £51.3 billion in 2021-22, a 4.6% increase in cash terms. This is in line with last year's available increase. This recognises the resources councils need to meet their pressures and maintain current service levels

We have also introduced our Covid Winter Grant Scheme providing funding to local authorities in England to help the most vulnerable children and families stay warm and well fed during the coldest months. It is now running until June as the Covid Local Support Grant, with a total investment of £269 million.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Agriculture: Free Trade

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[7118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she is taking to ensure that UK farmers can benefit from free trade deals.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

British agricultural products are of the highest quality and our trade deals help to open new markets for British farmers. The interests of the British agricultural sector are taken into account at every step in trade negotiations – from public consultations at the start, dedicated Trade Advisory Groups during, and independent scrutiny of the final deal through the Trade and Agriculture Commission.

My Department supports farmers to export using our trade deals too. For example, the recently launched 'Open Doors' campaign helps farmers to unlock opportunities in the world's most valuable markets for British products, and the 'Food is GREAT' campaign builds global recognition of brilliant British agriculture, food, and drink.

### ■ Overseas Trade: Caribbean

**Imran Ahmad Khan:** [\[7320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent steps her Department has taken to help increase the quantity of trade between the UK and the CARIFORUM trade bloc.



**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

Trade with CARIFORUM states was worth £2.6bn in 2020. The United Kingdom-CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) successfully came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 and provides certainty and continuity for business.

The tenth United Kingdom-Caribbean Ministerial Forum took place in March, where we agreed to further promoting and expanding bilateral trade flows and reducing market access barriers for exporters.

**Overseas Trade: Chile**

**Imran Ahmad Khan:** [\[7319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent steps her Department has taken to help increase the quantity of trade between the UK and Chile.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

Trade between the United Kingdom and Chile was worth £1.4bn in 2020. Last year, my Department successfully negotiated and brought into force the United Kingdom-Chile Association Agreement that maintains preferential trading conditions, providing certainty for businesses.

Chile is also a member of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and is supportive of the United Kingdom's planned accession.

In October 2020, I co-chaired the inaugural Anglo-Chilean dialogue where we agreed to work together to boost trade in important sectors such as Financial Services, Life Sciences, and Infrastructure.

**Overseas Trade: Oman**

**Imran Ahmad Khan:** [\[7302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of the bilateral trade agreement with Oman.

**Imran Ahmad Khan:** [\[7303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of securing a bilateral trade agreement with Qatar.

**Imran Ahmad Khan:** [\[7304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of securing a bilateral trade agreement with Bahrain.

**Imran Ahmad Khan:** [\[7318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of securing a bilateral trade agreement with the United Arab Emirates.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

Britain has strong bilateral trading relationships with our friends in the Gulf and a clear ambition to deepen them. The Gulf is already one of our largest export destinations, with trade of over £30 billion in 2020, but there are many sectors in which we can collaborate further.

We are currently conducting a Joint Trade and Investment Review with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Upon completion of the review shortly, we will look to deliver on its recommendations, as we continue to broaden and deepen our trade and investment relationships with countries in the Gulf.

**JUSTICE****■ Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act 2020****Navendu Mishra:**[\[5273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will ensure that any proposed reforms to the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act 2020, will apply equally to (a) same-sex marriages, (b) heterosexual marriages and (c) civil partnerships.

**Chris Philp:**

The Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act 2020 received Royal Assent on 25 June 2020 and the Government is working to implement its provisions. When implemented, the Act will deliver important reforms to minimise the potential for conflict in the legal process for obtaining a divorce, dissolving a civil partnership or obtaining a separation order.

**■ Domestic Abuse: Victims****Andrea Jenkyns:**[\[6372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to help victims of domestic abuse access support services in the criminal justice system.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Addressing domestic abuse and improving support and outcomes for victims is a top priority for the government. In 2021-22, the Ministry of Justice will provide just under £151m for victim and witness support services. This includes an extra £51m to increase support for rape and domestic abuse victims, building on the emergency funding from the last financial year to help domestic abuse and sexual violence services meet Covid-driven demand. The funding will improve access to support services including local community based support for domestic violence victims and introducing over 400 Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs).

**Andrea Jenkyns:**[\[6373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what comparative data his Department holds on the number of criminal cases involving domestic abuse in which there has been victim attrition in the year ending March (a) 2020 and (b) 2021.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) does not hold data directly on “victim attrition”. No data is available centrally for the Magistrates Court. The closest data available relates to trials that are cracked due to witness absence/withdrawal at the Crown Court. A cracked trial refers to a trial that does not go ahead on the planned day as an outcome is reached in advance and so does not need to be re-scheduled. This occurs when either an acceptable plea is offered by the defendant, or the prosecution offers no evidence against the defendant.

Our data relates to ‘Violence against the person’ as opposed to ‘domestic abuse’, as a domestic abuse flag is not available within our datasets. Just over one-third (35%) of the 1,680,884 ‘violence against the person’ offences recorded by the police in England and Wales in the year ending March 2020 were domestic abuse-related (ONS, year ending March 2020).

As the next publication of this data is not until June, the PQ cannot be answered comparatively at this point. The MoJ can however provide alternative comparative data on the number of criminal cases involving ‘violence against the person’. The latest data relating to January-December 2019 and January-December 2020 was published in December 2020 and shows:

- Between January-December 2019, 224 ‘violence against the person’ trials were cracked due to witness absence/withdrawal at the Crown Court (Ministry of Justice trial effectiveness data).
- Between January-December 2020, there were 94 cracked trials for this reason; a 58% decrease. This coincides with a 24% decrease in the total number of trials in the same period (from 11,510 in Jan-Dec 2019 to 8,784 in Jan-Dec 2020).
- The proportion of ‘violence against the person’ trials becoming cracked due to witness absence/withdrawal increased by one percentage point between Jan-Dec 2019 and Jan-Dec 2020 (from 8% to 9% of cracked trials).
- N.B. cracked trials data relates to trials which become cracked only on the day of trial and does not include trials which fall through before this day.

**Andrea Jenkyns:**[\[6375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that family lawyers sufficiently support victims of domestic abuse through the family courts process.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The use of legal representation in family proceedings for victims of domestic abuse is governed by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012 which sets out that legal aid funded representation is available for domestic abuse victims in some private family proceedings, subject to providing the required evidence and meeting the means and merits tests. Whilst the legal profession in England and Wales is independent of government, all lawyers must comply with strict codes of conduct set by their independent regulators, such as the Bar Standards

Board, the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) and CILEx Regulation. These codes of conduct make clear that lawyers must act in the best interests of their clients at all times as well as honouring their responsibilities as officers of the court. For example, the SRA specifically provides guidance for legal professionals on expectations in dealing with victims of domestic abuse and vulnerable consumers.

For those victims who do not qualify for legal aid representation, we are providing £800k until 2022, to the Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors (FLOWS) project, run by RCJ advice. FLOWS provide free legal support to victims of domestic abuse who wish to apply for an emergency protective order from the courts. The funding is used to provide a helpline and email service for domestic abuse victims, where they can be referred to a legal aid solicitor to assist them with making their application. Victims can also receive free advice directly from FLOWS legal team if they are ineligible for legal aid.

This Government is committed to ensuring that everyone gets the timely support they need to navigate the justice system and is currently conducting a review of the means test for legal aid. This review is assessing the effectiveness with which the means test protects access to justice, and we are specifically considering the experiences of victims of domestic abuse, including where there has been economic abuse. As part of the review, we have explicitly committed to look at the capital thresholds for victims of domestic abuse, which will include considering how assets are assessed for means testing purposes. We plan to conclude the review in late 2021, at which point we will publish a full consultation paper setting out our future policy proposal.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 goes even further to support victims of domestic abuse that are proceeding through Family Courts. This Act prohibits cross-examination of victims by perpetrators. It also provides automatic eligibility for special measures for victims of domestic abuse. This includes the use of video links and screens so as victims do not have to see potential abusers.

As we implement DA Act provisions in the family courts, we will work with all professionals, including family lawyers, to ensure they are ready to support victims to benefit fully from additional measures as soon as they come into force.

## ■ Judiciary: Training

**Andrea Jenkyns:**

[\[6379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what training members of the judiciary have received on working on cases involving domestic abuse in the last 12 months.

**Andrea Jenkyns:**

[\[6380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many judges attended training in relation to working on cases which involve domestic abuse in the most recent period for which figures are available; and whether that training was (a) delivered by specialist domestic abuse organisations and (b) evaluated for its effect on those who undertook that training.

**Chris Philp:**

To preserve the independence of the judiciary, the Lord Chief Justice (LCJ), the Senior President of the Tribunals, and the Chief Coroner have statutory responsibility for judicial training, under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007, and Coroners and Justice Act 2009 respectively. These responsibilities are exercised through the Judicial College. The judiciary and professional staff in the Judicial College are responsible for the design, content, and delivery of judicial training.

Judicial training in domestic abuse is included in family law and criminal courses run by the Judicial College. It is prioritised for induction and continuation training for judges. All judges must complete their induction training before they can hear such cases. During the 2020/21 training year all judges newly appointed to sit in crime and family received this training. The training is undertaken by judges of all levels, and speakers and tutors range from district judges to judges from the Court of Appeal and the training always includes lectures from academics and experts in psychiatry, psychology and other professions and agencies working to address domestic abuse.

The training reflects the wide nature of domestic abuse and covers all areas recognised by the Government as abuse, ranging from serious sexual and other assaults, emotional abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour, including financial coercion and control. Training is kept under constant review and is regularly updated to reflect latest developments.

**■ Ministry of Justice: Correspondence**

**Afzal Khan:** [\[6463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of correspondence sent by hon. Members to his Department received a substantive response within the service standard in each month of (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Chris Philp:**

The Government recognises the great importance of the effective and timely handling of correspondence.

The Cabinet Office is currently compiling data on the timeliness of responses to Hon. and Rt Hon. members from Government Departments and Agencies. This data will be released, and made available to Members, in due course.

**■ Prison Accommodation: Females**

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[5236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, which women's prisons provide facilities for women and their children to spend time together overnight.

**Ellie Reeves:**

**[5237]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) women and (b) children can access overnight accommodation in HMP (i) Drake Hall, (ii) Styal and (iii) Askham Grange.

**Ellie Reeves:**

**[5239]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, on how many occasions facilities enabling women and their children to spend time together overnight at (a) HMP Drake Hall, (b) HMP Styal and (c) HMP Askham Grange operated at full capacity in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019 and (iii) 2020.

**Alex Chalk:**

There are six Mother and Baby Units (MBUs) across the women's prison estate located at HMP Askham Grange, HMP Bronzefield, HMP Eastwood Park, HMP New Hall, HMP Peterborough and HMP Styal. MBUs are a national resource and enable mothers to maintain a bond with their children during an important period in their development and aim to reduce the negative impact imprisonment can have on young children, if evidence suggests it is in their best interests to remain with their mother.

The MBU also allows for children from the community to come and join their mothers in an MBU up to the age of 18 months. The environment is safe and nurturing for children, with development opportunities you would see in other nurseries, including toys and trips into the community. There is a national capacity of 64 mothers and 70 babies (to allow for multiple births). The national capacity has not been exceeded.

In addition to the existing MBUs, HMP Drake Hall and HMP Askham Grange offer overnight facilities that enable mothers and their children to spend time together. These facilities are available to all children up to the age of 18 years old. There is no additional overnight accommodation available at HMP Styal however, HMP Eastwood Park have enhanced the use of their MBU to provide an opportunity for risk assessed women to spend an overnight stay with one child, up to 12 years of age in the specifically arranged family room.

In regard to capacity, the HMP Askham Grange unit has five double bedrooms to accommodate large families, however only one mother can use the facility at one time. Although information is not held in the time periods requested, the facility was used 144 times in 2018-19 and 98 times in 2019-20.

HMP Drake Hall has two separate units that can accommodate one mother, up to three children aged toddler to 18 years of age, and one baby in a travel cot. For larger families, the two suites can be combined to provide facilities for up to 6 children, which is assessed on a case by case basis. Full information relating to the number of occasions this facility was used is not held however, the suite has not been used during 2020 due to COVID restrictions.

## ■ Prison Sentences: Females

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[5240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average length of time spent in prison by women has been since March 2020.

**Alex Chalk:**

The table below shows for each quarter the average (mean) number of months, women who were released in that quarter, served in prison including on remand.

QUARTER	JAN-MARCH 2020	APRIL-JUNE 2020	JULY-SEPTEMBER 2020	OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2020
Mean time served including remand in months	6.6	8.3	9.1	8.1

Source: [Prison releases October to December 2020](#), Table 3.2i.

The Female Offender Strategy (2018) committed to working towards fewer women serving short custodial sentences with a greater proportion managed successfully in the community. Our Strategy commitment to pilot residential women's centres, with the first to be located in south Wales, is a key part of this work. We are piloting a Problem-Solving Court approach in up to five locations for certain community and suspended sentence orders. The aim of this is to support offenders who could be both prolific and vulnerable to complete their sentences in the community. Female offenders will be one area of focus given the high proportion who receive short prison sentences, building on the promising outcomes of Manchester's women's Problem-Solving Court.

## ■ Probation: Females

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[5241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much funding was allocated to the (a) women's services lot and (b) accommodation services lot in the Dynamic Purchasing Framework for probation services.

**Alex Chalk:**

A total of around £54 million has been allocated to women's services to address their specific needs and the underlying causes of their crimes as part of the Government's pledge to see fewer women go to prison. Contracts worth over £45 million have already been awarded with women's services procured at Police and Crime Commissioner level in 10 of the 12 probation regions. This significant investment provides long-term support to women's centres and other dedicated services for women serving community sentences or leaving prison.

A total of around £41 million has been allocated to accommodation services with over £33 million allocated in 11 of the 12 probation regions. These have been awarded at

a regional level except in Wales where they have been procured at Police and Crime Commissioner level.

For the first time, the Probation Service is jointly commissioning the full range of rehabilitative services in Greater Manchester with the region's Combined Authority from July 2021.

In London, women's services will be commissioned jointly with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) by providing funding to MOPAC's existing providers for an extension and expansion of the current service. A new commissioning process will be undertaken for services from 2022.

## ■ Public Sector: Interpreters

**Alex Sobel:**

**[7265]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that only remunerated, registered and regulated interpreters are used by the (a) courts and (b) other public services.

**Chris Philp:**

The Ministry of Justice is committed to ensuring the justice system is supported by a suite of high- quality language service contracts, that meet the needs of all those that require them.

The Ministry commissions the services of suitably qualified language professionals through its contracted service providers, thebigword and Clarion Interpreting.

Language professionals provided by our contracted language service providers are sourced from the Ministry's register. Only language professionals who meet the Ministry's contractual requirements are included on the register, which is managed and audited by an independent language service provider, The Language Shop.

The contract has a clearly defined list of qualifications, skills, experience and vetting requirements language professionals must meet, which have been designed to meet the needs of the justice system.

The full details of the standards required for our Language Professionals is set out in our contracts, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/975cb99e-fec6-430f-8f31-fd532a907137>

The Language Shop make regular and independent assessments of language professionals carrying out assignments via the Ministry's language services contracts, to ensure they meet the requirements of the contract between the Ministry and the supplier.

The Ministry is only responsible for services used under the Ministry of Justice contract.



**NORTHERN IRELAND**■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]****Jim Shannon:****[6291]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what steps he is taking to scrutinise the effects of the UK's withdrawal from the EU on Northern Ireland.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The agreement reached with the EU gives us full control over our own laws, courts, borders and seas. It will help unlock investment and protect jobs right across the UK, giving us fantastic opportunities as an independent trading nation, striking trade deals with other partners around the world.

The Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol is a unique, and delicately balanced, solution to a unique and sensitive set of problems. It aims to uphold the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in all its aspects; safeguard Northern Ireland's integral place in the United Kingdom, its customs territory and internal market, while preventing a hard border on the island of Ireland.

It is clear over the months that the Protocol has been in force that there have been issues having a direct, and often disproportionate, impact. It is critical that these issues can be addressed in order to protect the political, social and economic fabric of life in Northern Ireland and to restore confidence on the ground. It is our priority to move discussions with the EU forward and to ensure the Protocol is given effect in the pragmatic and proportionate way intended.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and I have met, and will continue to meet, with business and community representatives to listen to their experiences, to understand what the data tells us about impacts under the Protocol and to reaffirm the Government's commitment to addressing issues with the Protocol. We will continue to work closely with all sectors of opinion in Northern Ireland as talks with the EU Commission continue.

**TRANSPORT**■ **Bus Services: West Yorkshire****Imran Ahmad Khan:****[7312]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of journeys undertaken by bus in (a) Wakefield and (b) West Yorkshire.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The National Bus Strategy, published on the 15 March, will deliver better bus services for passengers across England, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered, to make local bus services more frequent, more reliable, easier to understand and use, better co-ordinated with simpler fares.

We expect Local Transport Authorities to produce Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs) by the end of October 2021, setting out an ambitious vision for travel by bus in their area, meeting the goals and expectations in the strategy. BSIPs will influence the share of the £3 billion transformation funding that each authority receives.

## ■ Cycleways

**Damien Moore:** [\[7272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the use of cycle lanes under the emergency active travel fund.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The Department has commissioned a formal national evaluation of the Active Travel Fund (ATF) which will consider this matter in some detail. A baseline report of schemes selected for evaluation is scheduled to be received by the Department in December 2022 as we know it takes time to understand the long-term impacts of new cycling infrastructure. This will be followed by a final report in late 2024. Local authorities have also been required to submit regular monitoring reports to the Department on their use of active travel funding. In the meantime, the Department's 2020 Road Traffic Estimates for Great Britain, published on 28 April 2021, suggest that the amount of cycling in 2020 was 46% higher than it was in 2019, and the highest level of cycling on the public highway since the 1960s.

## ■ Cycling and Walking: Local Government

**Damien Moore:** [\[7273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether local authorities are required to participate in the emergency active travel fund.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The Department's statutory guidance to local authorities on the management of their road networks in response to COVID-19 strongly encourages them to introduce measures to support more cycling and walking in their areas, but it does not require them to do so. All combined authorities and local transport authorities were allocated funding from the Emergency Active Travel Fund in 2020/21, but there was no obligation on any authority to accept the funding or to introduce active travel schemes: these are decisions for local authorities. The Department plans to write to the same authorities shortly inviting bids for capital funding for active travel schemes to be delivered in 2021/22.

## ■ East West Rail: Electrification

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[6418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the East-West Rail line from Cambridge to Oxford will be an electrified line, using fully electrified trains, from the date services on that line begin.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

We are keen to ensure passengers realise the benefits of East West Rail as early as possible. This means it is likely that diesel rolling stock could be used between Oxford and Bedford when services commence. This also allows East West Rail Company to explore a wider range of green energy technologies that could replace diesel rolling stock so that they can move closer towards becoming a net-zero carbon railway by the time services run from Oxford to Cambridge.

**Members: Correspondence****Afzal Khan:**[\[6448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of correspondence sent by hon. Members to his Department received a substantive response within the service standard in each month of (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The Government recognises the great importance of the effective and timely handling of correspondence.

The Cabinet Office is currently compiling data on the timeliness of responses to Hon. and Rt Hon. members from Government Departments and Agencies. This data will be released, and made available to Members, in due course.

**Motor Vehicles: Construction****Charlotte Nichols:**[\[7295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will reverse his decision to reduce the weight of construction vehicles from 38.4 and 44 tonnes to 32 tonnes; and what environmental assessments his Department has undertaken prior to making that decision.

**Rachel Maclean:**

There has been no recent change to the weight limits applicable to construction vehicles. The general maximum laden weight for the heaviest (four axle) rigid construction vehicles has never been higher than 32 tonnes. Following consultation, a derogation was introduced in 2018 permitting a limited and specific number of volumetric concrete mixers (also known as mobile concrete batching plant) to operate at higher than the standard applicable weights for vehicles of their design. This derogation is for a defined period. Due to the small number of vehicles and legislative nature of this derogation, no environmental impact assessment was conducted.

**Public Transport: Carbon Emissions****Kate Griffiths:**[\[6478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that local authorities are adequately supported with decarbonising public transport networks.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Government has allocated £25m in 2021/22 to support local authorities with the skills and people needed to implement the National Bus Strategy. We have already given an initial £100k to each Local Transport Authority, with more capacity funding to be allocated soon. We are also developing a Bus Centre of Excellence to serve as a repository of information and guidance for local authorities and bus operators, helping to build capabilities into the future.

Our Transport Decarbonisation Plan, due to be published shortly, will include further commitments to drive the decarbonisation agenda at the local level.

**■ Railway Stations: Safety**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[6425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how regularly railway station roofs are subject to a safety inspection.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Network Rail advises that visual inspections take place every twelve months and detailed inspections every five years with additional examinations as necessary.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[7254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much has been spent on inspecting railway station roofs in the UK in the last five years.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Train Operators and Network Rail are responsible for conducting visual inspections at the stations they manage every twelve months and detailed inspections every five years.

As the responsibility for maintaining stations is split between Network Rail and the various Train Operating Companies, there is no central record of cost for the regular station roof inspections that are undertaken.

**■ Railways: Construction**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[7239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the impact of the construction materials shortage on (a) HS2 and (b) all other major rail infrastructure projects.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

Working with their supply chains, the availability of construction materials is regularly reviewed by High Speed Two (HS2) Limited, Network Rail Limited, East West Rail Limited and the Department for Transport. Our latest assessments do not currently predict an impact on the cost and schedule ranges, published in the HS2 March 2021 Parliamentary Report, or Network Rail's Control Period Budget, or those currently estimated by East West Rail Limited.

## ■ Railways: Freight

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

[\[7315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps his Department has taken to increase the proportion of freight trains powered by renewable energy sources.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

While rail freight is already a comparatively green mode of moving goods, we have been working alongside the rail industry to make it even greener.

In the last three years (for which data is available), we have completed almost 700 miles of electrification in England and Wales. As we deliver more electrification schemes in an efficient and affordable way, this will increase the opportunity for freight operating companies to use more electric and bi-mode locomotives, therefore using more renewable energy from the grid and from Network Rail's renewable power purchase agreements.

Since 2019, the Department has contributed just under £750,000 to fund two First of a Kind projects that focus on the potential use of renewable new traction technologies (battery and hydrogen) to power freight trains, and over £2.5m to fund a project to enable renewable power sources to feed-in directly into the rail network. The Department also funds an ongoing programme of research, led by the Rail Safety and Standards Board, that includes reducing carbon and air quality emissions from rail freight.

We will be setting out further plans to support the decarbonisation of rail freight, and reduce the use of diesel, in the forthcoming Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP).

## ■ Railways: Tickets

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[6422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions as he had with Train Operating Companies on staff recommencing ticket inspections; and what steps he is taking to ensure that staff safety is prioritised and safely managed as covid-19 restrictions are relaxed.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

As COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, the safety of all rail workers and passengers continues to be our priority. The job of revenue protection staff is a vital one in ensuring that journeys are properly paid for and also their presence and visibility creates an essential sense of security for passengers. We have issued guidance to train operators on the steps they need to take to protect staff in line with Public Health England advice, as well as safer travel guidance for passengers, both of which are regularly reviewed and updated.

Within the context of this guidance, Train Operating Companies are expected to carry out risk assessments regularly and consider how best to implement safe methods of working, including how and when to resume revenue protection duties.

**■ Railways: West Yorkshire****Imran Ahmad Khan:****[7305]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of journeys undertaken by train in (a) Wakefield and (b) West Yorkshire.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

We have just announced an investment of £317 million as part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade which will boost punctuality, reliability and connectivity across West Yorkshire.

The region has the latest high-tech trains which stop at Wakefield, the city's Westgate station has recently undergone a major £8.8 million rebuild, its Kirkgate station has been redeveloped and furthermore we are investing in two new stations for Leeds.

**■ Roads: Freight****Imran Ahmad Khan:****[7316]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to increase the proportion of road freight journeys made in vehicles powered by renewable energy.

**Rachel Maclean:**

Decarbonisation of the UK's road freight sector will play a critical role in delivering on our climate ambitions. The Government is rewarding the supply of renewable fuels for use in road transport, including heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), through the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation scheme. We have also made funding available through multimillion-pound industry demonstration competitions, such as the Future Fuels for Flight and Freight Competition (the F4C), which support projects capable of producing low carbon waste-based fuels for use in aviation and HGVs.

The Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution announced that we are investing £20m this financial year in planning for zero emission road freight trials which will support UK industry to develop cost-effective, zero-emission HGVs and their refueling infrastructure in the UK. These trials will advance research and development in the technologies of catenary electric, battery electric and renewable hydrogen-powered HGVs, allowing us to begin the commercial roll-out of the appropriate new technologies before the end of the decade.

We will also be consulting on a date for phasing out the sale of new diesel HGVs to drive innovation and development and increase the uptake of zero emission alternatives within the HGV sector.

In November 2020, HM Treasury published the National Infrastructure Strategy. This confirmed that the £950m Rapid Charging Fund (RCF) was to be made available to future-proof electrical grid capacity at service areas on motorways and major A-roads. Whilst the RCF is currently targeting cars and vans, the additional electrical capacity will support charging infrastructure for zero emission HGVs. We are

currently analysing the demand from zero-emission HGVs at Motorway Service Stations and considering how the infrastructure installed as part of the RCF can be used by zero emission HGVs in the future.

## ■ Roads: Noise

**Damian Hinds:** [\[5181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 7 October 2020 to Question 98205 on roads: noise, when his Department plans to publish the results of the initial trials of a prototype acoustic camera.

**Rachel Maclean:**

Due to the pressures on the Department arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the necessity to temporarily redeploy staff, consideration of the research on the initial trials of a prototype acoustic camera has been re-phased.

The Government anticipates the results will be published in the summer.

## ■ South Western Main Line: Rolling Stock

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhese:** [\[7246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent progress he has made on the delivery and rollout of the Class 701 train on the South Western Railway network.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhese:** [\[7250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent progress he has made on the cascading of South Western Railway's Class 455, 456 and 707 fleet.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Since the sale of Bombardier to Alstom, the Alstom team has been reviewing the production programme of the 701s in discussion with South Western Railway (SWR). This will establish when the first 701s will enter passenger service on SWR suburban lines, and at what rate the full fleet will be delivered. The new depot at Feltham is now operational in readiness for the arrival of the fleet.

Six class 707 units have been cascaded to Southeastern; the remaining are planned to be cascaded in line with the sub-lease dates (July to October 2021), while the Class 455 and 456 units are all still on lease to SWR.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhese:** [\[7247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the cost to the public purse (a) was of the Class 442 Wessex Electric renovation programme and (b) is planned to be of the refurbishment of the Class 458 Juniper stock by South Western Railway.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhese:** [\[7248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, who is liable for the financial costs of the withdrawal from service of South Western Railway's Class 442 Wessex Electric units.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The impact of Covid-19 on passenger numbers travelling on South Western Railway services has been significant, and is not expected to return to previous levels when restrictions are lifted for some time. The Class 442 fleet is no longer needed to deliver SWR's planned timetable.

SWR has decided to withdraw the fleet with immediate effect and cease the programme of modifications that were underway to avoid incurring further costs to the taxpayer to reintroduce and operate these trains. The aborted cost of the 442 project is £32m and the withdrawal of the fleet is expected to save circa £8m per year.

The Class 442s would have been withdrawn in August 2024 in any event as the trains are not compliant with requirements for Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM). This decision brings this forward and removes a fleet that is not fully accessible from the Rail Network sooner than originally planned.

Under the current Emergency Recovery Measures Agreement, revenue and cost risk are borne by the DfT.

**■ Suicide: Orwell Bridge****Dr Dan Poulter:**[\[6255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans his Department has to ensure that suicide prevention measures are in place at Orwell Bridge in Suffolk.

**Rachel Maclean:**

Highways England takes its responsibility to support vulnerable people extremely seriously. Highways England works closely with the Samaritans and, since March 2021, it has installed newer Samaritan signs on the Orwell Bridge's approaches, abutments and in nearby laybys to increase their visibility.

There are four telephones on the Orwell Bridge that directly link to the Samaritans. These were upgraded in 2017 to provide more modern equipment away from the A14 carriageway. Highways England is currently preparing to carry out a series of inspections and surveys to identify further measures to help prevent suicides.

**■ Trains: Hitachi****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[7240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the net effect on employment in the UK was as a result of his Department's decision to award Hitachi a contract for the Intercity Class 800 series trains over competing UK suppliers.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The IEP contract led to Hitachi investing over £80million in a rail vehicle manufacturing facility in Newton Aycliffe in the North East, generating direct employment for over 700 people and many more in the wider local and national supply chain.



It has also created opportunities for many new suppliers to access the rail industry leading to an investment of over £1.8bn in the UK supply chain since 2013.

The opening of the factory has also created a legacy for future skills as Hitachi Rail became co-founders of South Durham University Technical College specialising in engineering skills for 14-18-year-olds.

## ■ **Travel: Coronavirus**

**Stephen Morgan:** [\[7261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of using NHS covid-19 testing centres to support international travel.

**Robert Courts:**

The government have helped to establish a network of private testing providers for international travel in order to safeguard the availability of NHS tests and testing centres for those who have COVID-19 symptoms. We maintain a comprehensive list of test providers on gov.uk.

## TREASURY

## ■ **Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman**

**Taiwo Owatemi:** [\[7291\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will allocate additional resources to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman to help clear the backlog of cases awaiting investigation.

**Steve Barclay:**

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's funding is decided by Parliament and sanctioned by HM Treasury. Any additional funding will be a matter for the forthcoming spending review.

## ■ **Scottish Government: Borrowing**

**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[7284\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent representations he has received from the Scottish Government on requesting additional borrowing powers.

**Steve Barclay:**

The fiscal framework we have agreed with the Scottish Government already includes significant borrowing powers.

The Scottish Government can borrow up to £450m per year for capital spending and, in normal times, borrow up to £300m per year to help manage day-to-day spending in relation to tax and welfare forecast error.

However, under the terms of the fiscal framework, we are doubling this day-to-day borrowing from £300m to £600m per year in 2021-22 and the following two years.

This is on top of the share of UK Government borrowing the Scottish Government receives through the Barnett formula. Since the start of the pandemic the Scottish Government has received an additional £14.5bn of Barnett funding.

## WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

### ■ Gay Conversion Therapy

**Dr Kieran Mullan:** [\[4757\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps her Department is taking to bring forward legislative proposals to end conversion therapy.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

We have set out in the Queen's Speech our intention to ban conversion therapy. This government is committed to ensuring people in this country are free to live their lives, judged on the basis of their character and talents alone. Ahead of bringing forward legislative action, we will launch a public consultation. We will also be putting new support in place for victims of conversion therapy.

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[5268\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, with reference to the announcement in the Queen's Speech that the Government plans to introduce a Bill to ban conversion therapy, when that draft Bill will be published; and when the consultation on that draft Bill will open.

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[5269\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, when she plans to publish the findings of her Department's research into conversion therapy practices in the UK.

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[5270\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will make it her policy that there should be no exemption for religious practices when the draft Bill to ban conversion therapy is introduced.

**Daisy Cooper:** [\[5271\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what weighting her Department plans to give to responses from (a) survivors of conversion therapy and (b) organisations that support those survivors to the consultation on draft legislation to ban conversion therapy.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

As set out in the Queen's Speech earlier this month, we will bring forward legislation to ban conversion therapy. We will also launch a consultation before details of the ban are finalised to hear from a wide range of voices on how best to protect people from conversion therapy while protecting the medical profession, defending freedom of speech and upholding religious freedom. We are considering all options for the scope of a ban and will be engaging the appropriate stakeholders to gather views. We will ensure the action we take to stop this practice is proportionate and effective,

with no unintended consequences. We have also undertaken research to understand practices, experiences and impacts associated with conversion therapy and will publish this in due course.

## ■ **Gay Conversion Therapy: Victoria**

**Dawn Butler:** [\[6208\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of the Australian State of Victoria's Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 as a model for legislation to ban conversion therapy in England and Wales.

**Wera Hobhouse:** [\[6400\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, when she plans to publish the findings of her Department's research into conversion practices in the UK that was conducted in 2020.

**Wera Hobhouse:** [\[6401\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps she will take to consult (a) survivors of conversion therapy and (b) organisations who support those who have been subjected to conversion therapy as part of any consultation on banning conversion practices.

**Wera Hobhouse:** [\[6402\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of Australia's Victoria State Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 as a model of best practice for banning conversion therapy.

### **Kemi Badenoch:**

As set out in the Queen's Speech earlier this month, we will bring forward legislation to ban conversion therapy. We will also launch a consultation before details of the ban are finalised to hear from a wide range of voices on how best to protect people from conversion therapy while protecting the medical profession, defending freedom of speech, and upholding religious freedom. We are considering all options for the scope of a ban and will be engaging the appropriate stakeholders, including organisations who support survivors of conversion therapy, to gather views. We have also already met with conversion therapy survivors, to hear about their experiences.

We have also undertaken research to understand practices, experiences and impacts associated with conversion therapy and will publish this in due course. Officials are also in discussion with international policy counterparts, to fully understand the detail and impact of other jurisdictions' measures, in order to inform the UK's next steps.

**WORK AND PENSIONS**■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]****Jim Shannon:****[6292]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to support people subject to the limit on welfare benefits for households with more than two children.

**Will Quince:**

The Government continues to take action to help families with the cost of living, including raising the national living wage, reducing the UC earnings taper, raising the income tax personal allowance, introducing tax-free childcare and 30 hours a week of free childcare for 3 and 4 year olds.

Families are able to claim support for up to two children, and there may be further entitlement for other children if they were born before 6 April 2017 or if an exception applies. It is important to support families, but it is also important to be fair to the many working families who do not see their budgets rise when they have more children. This does not apply to Child Benefit, nor the disabled child element of Universal Credit.

Throughout the pandemic, we have taken great steps to protect family incomes, including spending an additional £7.4 billion last year to strengthen the welfare system for those most in need. This took our total expenditure on welfare support for people of working age to an estimated £112bn in 2020/21.

As the economy recovers, our ambition is to help parents move into and progress in work as quickly as possible. This is based on clear evidence around the importance of parental employment, particularly where it is full-time, in substantially reducing the risks of child poverty. We are investing over £30 billion in our ambitious Plan for Jobs which is already delivering for people of all ages right across the country.

■ **Betting Shops: Staff****Mark Pritchard:****[6242]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will hold discussions with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on the potential effect of the gambling review on the employment of women in retail betting shops.

**Mims Davies:**

The Secretary of State regularly meets with Cabinet colleagues to discuss a range of policy issues and topics.

## ■ Chemicals: Regulation

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[6432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the Health and Safety Executive's (a) capacity and (b) level of expertise to regulate chemical safety.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[6433\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Health and Safety Executive employees worked on chemicals regulation in (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019, (e) 2020 and (f) May 2021.

### **Mims Davies:**

The Health and Safety Executive's Chemicals Regulation Division (CRD) regulates the supply and conditions for subsequent use of chemicals in Great Britain to ensure both environmental and human health protections are provided.

In preparing for the UK's exit from the EU HSE assessed the resources required to continue to regulate chemicals supply onto the market following EU exit. This assessment identified the need for CRD to recruit additional staff and expertise for 1 January 2021. Further recruitment is planned during 2021/22 workyear and beyond.

The number of Health and Safety Executive employees working in CRD regulating the supply and use of chemicals are:

YEAR	FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS (FTE) AT 1 JANUARY EACH YEAR
2016	227
2017	280
2018	258
2019	266
2020	244
2021	311
<b>1st May 2021</b>	<b>312</b>

## ■ Children: Poverty

**Afzal Khan:** [\[6445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the impact of the £20 uplift in universal credit on levels of child poverty in (a) England and (b) Manchester Gorton constituency.

**Will Quince:**

No assessment has been made.

This Government is wholly committed to supporting those on low incomes, including by increasing the living wage, and by spending an estimated £112 billion on welfare support for people of working age in 2020/21. This included around £7.4 billion of Covid-related welfare policy measures.

We introduced our Covid Winter Grant Scheme providing funding to Local Authorities in England to help the most vulnerable children and families stay warm and well fed during the coldest months. It will now run until June as the Covid Local Support Grant, with a total investment of £269m.

As the economy recovers, our ambition is to help people move into and progress in work as quickly as possible based on clear evidence around the importance of employment, particularly where it is full-time, in substantially reducing the risks of poverty. We are investing over £30 billion in our ambitious Plan for Jobs which is already delivering for people of all ages right across the country.

## ■ Health and Safety Executive: Finance

### Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[6430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the Health and Safety Executive's budget has been in each of the last five years.

#### Mims Davies:

The table below shows what the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) budget has been in each of the last five years.

		16/17 £M	17/18 £M	18/19 £M	19/20 £M	20/21 £M
Government Funding	133	128	126	128	168	
Income	91	93	91	95	77	
Annual Spending	224	221	217	223	245	

The increased government funding in 20/21 was mainly as a result of:

- o Establishing the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) in shadow form ahead of legislation, which has included creation of a new Building Safety and Construction Division.

- o Establishing new UK regulatory regimes, to ensure that HSE were fully prepared for the end of the EU transition period on 31 December 2020.

o The impact on HSE's activities as they have played a critical role in the supporting the government response to the COVID 19 pandemic. This necessary diversion of resources resulted in the reduction in cost recovery and commercial income, as well as additional government funding and spend on:

- establishing an inbound enquiry service to offer advice and guidance to both employers and employees;
- undertaking proactive spot checks and inspections, to ensure workplaces are COVID-secure;
- leading a [COVID-19 national core study](#) on the transmission of the virus in the environment, including in workplaces, transport and other public settings.

### ■ Health and Safety Executive: Staff

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** **[6431]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many staff the Health and Safety Executive employed in (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019, (e) 2020 and (g) May 2021.

**Mims Davies:**

The table below shows how many staff the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) employed in (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019, (e) 2020 and (g) May 2021:

ALL STAFF (FTE)	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	END OF APR- 21
<b>HSE Staff</b>	2517	2466	2408	2343	2432	2443
<b>Contingent Labour</b>	7	12	18	28	161	227
<b>Total</b>	<b>2524</b>	<b>2478</b>	<b>2426</b>	<b>2371</b>	<b>2593</b>	<b>2670</b>

**Notes:**

- Figures for (g) May 2021 are not available until month-end so figures for April 2021 have been provided.
- 2020/21 figures are as reported in draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2020/21 due to be published in July 2021.
- Contingent labour is defined as temporary staff not on HSE's payroll which may include agency workers, specialist contractors, interim managers etc.

### ■ Job Entry Targeted Support

**Matt Vickers:** **[6517]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have enrolled on the Job Entry Targeted Support (JETS) programme in (a) England, (b) Wales and (c)

Scotland, broken down by region, since its inception; and how many of those people have gained employment as a result of that programme.

**Mims Davies:**

Up to the end of April 2021 there have been 94,560 starts on the Job Entry: Targeted Support (JETS) scheme in England and Wales (launched 5 October 2020) and 3,795 starts on JETS Scotland (launched 25 January 2021).

By region:

<b>JETS ENGLAND &amp; WALES</b>	<b>TOTAL STARTS</b>
Central	9,790
North East	26,615
North West	8,470
Southern	12,925
Home Counties	8,630
Greater Manchester	6,160
Central London	5,415
West London	2,610
South London	2,305
Local London	6,315
Wales	5,325
<b>Total England &amp; Wales</b>	<b>94,560</b>
JETS Scotland	3,795
<b>Total</b>	<b>98,360</b>

So far there have been 12,665 job outcomes in England and Wales, and 160 job outcomes for JETS Scotland (a job outcome is defined as when an individual achieves £1000 cumulative earnings within eight months of starting).

By region:

<b>JETS ENGLAND &amp; WALES</b>	<b>TOTAL EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES</b>
Central	1,160
North East	3,600
North West	1,430



<b>JETS ENGLAND &amp; WALES</b>	<b>TOTAL EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES</b>
Southern	1,760
Home Counties	1,090
Greater Manchester	915
Central London	570
West London	360
South London	325
Local London	680
Wales	770
<b>Total England &amp; Wales</b>	<b>12,665</b>
JETS Scotland	160
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,825</b>

It should be noted that JETS provides support for up to six months and many people who have started on the scheme will not yet have had time to achieve a job outcome.

#### ■ **Jobcentres: West Yorkshire**

**Imran Ahmad Khan:** [\[7309\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many of the new Jobcentre Plus Work Coaches will be located in (a) Wakefield and (b) West Yorkshire.

**Mims Davies:**

As of 26th May, there has been 551 Work Coaches recruited in the West Yorkshire District, 51 of these were recruited for Wakefield Jobcentre.

#### ■ **Social Security Benefits**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[6423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many reviews the Government has undertaken after people claiming benefits have died or come to serious harm; and of those reviews how many have (a) concluded and (b) commenced following a Prevention of Future Death report.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Internal Process Reviews form a core part of the Department's overall approach to investigating the circumstances of a case where potential issues have been identified.

We have made significant improvements to Internal Process Reviews, which including forming the Internal Process Review Group, chaired by the Customer Experience Director in 2020, to established to increase oversight of IPRs at a more senior level.

We are improving the tracking and monitoring of improvements from all IPRs to ensure IPR reports are now being drafted to new consistent standards, raising the visibility of IPRs across the Department.

DWP have undertaken 4 Peer Reviews and 139 Internal Process Reviews involving either a customer death or serious harm from the operational year 2015-16 to date.

The Department replaced Peer Reviews with Internal Process Reviews in 2015. Due to the Department's document retention policies, we do not hold a complete record of cases prior to 2015-16.

The Department has commenced and concluded 2 Internal Process Reviews following receipt of a Prevention of Future Death Report.

## ■ State Retirement Pensions: National Insurance Contributions

### Wendy Chamberlain:

[\[1397\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many (a) men and (b) women (i) built up a qualifying year towards the state pension by paying National Insurance Contributions, (ii) built up a qualifying year towards the state pension through National Insurance credits and (iii) did not build up a qualifying year towards the state pension in (A) 2011-12 and (B) the latest year for which figures are available.

### Guy Opperman:

We do not have the specific data. However, the Local Labour Market Statistics of 2019 provides us with a 1% sample data. If that was to be scaled to 100% the probability is that the 100% data would show the following:

The tables below show a breakdown of how qualifying years were built up for the tax years 2011/12 and 2018/19.

### 2011/12

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
<b>NI Contributions only</b>	13,851,200	11,157,100	<b>25,008,300</b>
<b>NI Credits only</b>	2,352,600	3,047,500	<b>5,400,100</b>
<b>NI Contributions and Credits</b>	445,700	840,200	<b>1,285,900</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,649,500</b>	<b>15,044,800</b>	<b>31,694,300</b>
	2,546,600	2,027,500	4,574,100

	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>No full qualifying year</b>			
<b>2018/19</b>			
	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>NI Contributions only</b>	13,863,400	12,378,800	<b>26,242,200</b>
<b>NI Credits only</b>	1,518,900	2,918,300	<b>4,437,200</b>
<b>NI Contributions and Credits</b>	210,300	682,700	<b>893,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,592,600</b>	<b>15,979,800</b>	<b>31,572,400</b>
<b>No full qualifying year</b>	2,168,900	2,017,100	4,186,000

The line 'NI Contributions and Credits' indicates where a qualifying year includes some periods of contributions and some of credits within the year.

The line 'No full qualifying year' refers to those individuals who may have had some contributions or credits recorded, but did not build a qualifying year in the respective years.