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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

#### ■ Hate Crime: Prosecutions

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[12181\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what steps she is taking to ensure the prosecution of people whose acts towards fellow passengers on domestic flights are perceived to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on disability or perceived disability.

**Michael Ellis:**

Courts in the United Kingdom have the power to deal with offences which are committed on board any aircraft whilst on the ground or in the air over the United Kingdom, and on “British-controlled aircraft” whilst “in flight” outside United Kingdom airspace. In such instances, as with any crime, the CPS will prosecute cases that are referred to it by the police and other law enforcement agencies where the test set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors is met.

The Code makes it clear that where an offence involves hostility or prejudice based upon race, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity, disability, gender or age, it is more likely that a prosecution will be required in the public interest. Where a crime is found by a court to involve hostility based on a disability, this will be an aggravating factor in the sentence and the court must openly state the crime involved this hostility.

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Companies: Registration

**Damien Moore:**

[\[12290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent estimate he has made of the number of companies registered with Companies House that have addresses in the UK without the landowner's knowledge.

**Paul Scully:**

Companies House does not hold information on the number of companies registered at UK addresses without the landowners' permission.

#### ■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Dr Kieran Mullan:**

[\[12350\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what diplomatic steps the Government is taking to support the development of covid-19 vaccines (a) in the UK and (b) throughout the world.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The Government has worked at pace to find safe and effective vaccines against COVID-19 as quickly as possible. We have supported the development of COVID-19 vaccines in the UK through a number of investments, including:

- £20 million to fund clinical trials of the University of Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine.
- Over £40 million for the development of Imperial College London's vaccine.
- £33.6 million for the Human Challenge Programme.
- £22 million for a world-leading study to test the effectiveness of combinations of different COVID-19 vaccines. This will also fund the world's first study assessing the effectiveness of a third dose of vaccine to improve the response against current and future variants of COVID-19.

The Government has also funded the NHS Registry, developed by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), to enable individuals to sign up to participate in COVID-19 vaccine trials. This has made the UK well-suited to facilitate clinical trials that are essential to the development of any vaccine. As of 9 June 2021, over 502,000 people had signed up.

The UK has also joined COVAX, an international initiative to support the discovery, manufacture, and fair distribution of COVID-19 vaccines across the world. This includes contributing £548 million, as one of the largest donors, to the COVAX Advance Market Commitment, which has already helped over 72 low- and middle-income countries to receive vaccine doses.

In addition to this, the Government has invested over £300 million to secure and scale-up the UK's manufacturing capabilities to be able to respond to this pandemic, as well as any future pandemics.

**■ Drugs: Research****Chris Green:**[\[12164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to encourage R&D investment in highly-skilled pharmaceutical manufacturing in the UK.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The UK Government will invest £14.9 billion in R&D this year, bringing investment to its highest level in four decades. This is a major step towards our commitment to increase total public and private R&D investment to 2.4 per cent of GDP by 2027.

Through the Manufacturing Made Smarter Challenge, the government will invest £147 million (matched by a minimum of £147 million from industry) to transform the UK's manufacturing capabilities through the development and adoption of industrial digital technologies. The Challenge will support businesses to implement new tech to boost their manufacturing productivity, helping them reach new customers, create thousands of new highly skilled jobs, slash carbon emissions and reduce prices for customers.

The Government has also recently launched the Medicines and Diagnostics Manufacturing Transformation Fund (MDMTF), a £20 million fund offering capital grants to businesses, incentivising them to place internationally mobile high value manufacturing investments in the UK. The MDMTF will increase the production of medicines and diagnostic equipment in the UK. In doing so, it seeks also to support companies in adopting new technologies which boost productivity, drive down costs and which have less impact on the environment.

The Government will also publish a Life Sciences Vision later this year which will set out our ambition for supporting growth of the life sciences sector, including in manufacturing.

### ■ Liberty Steel: West Midlands

**Marco Longhi:**

[\[13236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support he plans to provide to people at risk of losing their jobs in Dudley North constituency due to Liberty Steel selling off plants in West Bromwich and Kidderminster.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

We recognise that this is an unsettling time for Liberty Steel's workforce. The Government stands ready to support Liberty's dedicated employees and their families affected by any developments, should the need arise. However, it is first and foremost the responsibility of the company to manage commercial decisions regarding the future of the organisation.

We hope the company is successful in their endeavours in selling these assets. We will continue to engage closely with company and trade unions as the situation develops. Conversations with Liberty or any other company are, of course, commercially confidential

## CABINET OFFICE

### ■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Dean Russell:**

[\[12327\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his Department records data on the number of deaths within 28 days of receiving a covid-19 vaccine.

**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 PQ12327 [UKSA's final response to PQ12327.pdf]

## ■ UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement

**Hywel Williams:** [\[14139\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Answer of 21 January 2021 to Question 138883 on: UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, if he will publish an update on the formation of a Parliamentary Partnership Assembly with the European Parliament as outlined in Article INST.5 of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

We welcome dialogue between Parliament and the European Parliament. At the first meeting of the Partnership Council last week, both we and the EU encouraged continuing work on the establishment of the Parliamentary Partnership Assembly, and noted its importance.

Work is ongoing between members of this House and the Other Place. We look forward to their proposals so that we can support the early establishment of the Assembly.

## ■ Veterans: Mental Health

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[13865\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 19 May 2021 to Question 91 on Veterans: Mental Health and with reference to the evidence submitted to the Defence Committee's recent inquiry on Armed Forces and veterans mental health, for what reasons the Minister for Defence, People and Veterans was advised not to discuss veterans' mental health provision on the Today programme.

**Julia Lopez:**

Further to the [answer](#) given to PQ 91 on 19 May 2021, Government Ministers regularly comment on the mental health services available to veterans, both in Parliament and in the media, and will continue to do so because it is vital that those who do require support know what is available through Op Courage in the NHS and how to access it.

## DEFENCE

### ■ Aircraft Carriers

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[12078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of furnishing the aircraft carriers with vertical launch capabilities.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Experience has proven that vertical launch of aircraft, other than helicopters, is inefficient, and does not permit the aircraft to launch with sufficient payload or endurance to be of practical use.

## ■ Ajax Vehicles: Procurement

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[13864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he plans to take on the AJAX programme, in response to the conclusion of the Millbrook Proving Ground assessment; and if he will make a statement.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The independent Millbrook trials have been commissioned and are due to conclude next month. The Ministry of Defence will carefully consider the results of the trials to determine what further steps may be required. The Ministry of Defence will not take Ajax into Initial Operating Capability until the Department are satisfied that the capability meets our requirements.

## ■ Libya: Armed Conflict

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[14221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, which opposition groups the British military provided training to during the Libya war of 2011; where that training took place; and what the nature of that training was.

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[14222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether any UK personnel were involved in training Libyan opposition forces in the Nafusa mountains during the war in Libya of 2011.

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[14223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the nature was of the contacts his Department had with the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group during the war in Libya in 2011.

**James Heapey:**

Throughout 2011, the UK Government sought to respond to rapidly changing and volatile dynamics in Libya and to make timely decisions in order to protect Libyan civilians and wider UK national interests. Our objective remained clear at all times: to protect civilians and to promote stability in Libya. UK military action was taken in accordance with the United Nations mandate to protect civilians.

In relation to the specific information requested, given the amount of time that has elapsed since 2011 I will write to the hon. Member when it is available.

## ■ Military Bases

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[12204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress he is making on implementing the commitments set out in A better defence estate.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Defence Estate Optimisation Portfolio remains on track to deliver £4.3 billion of investment in modern, greener and more sustainable facilities within the next decade. To date it has completed 290 technical surveys, capacity and assessment studies,

released enough land through the disposal of surplus sites for 5,215 new homes. It is a significant and demanding project on which Defence is determined to deliver.

### ■ Ministry of Defence: Advisory Bodies

**Zarah Sultana:** [\[14226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2021 to Question 7292 on Richard Paniguan, when the Gulf Advisory Group was established; and what steps he has taken to inform the House of the establishment of that group.

**Zarah Sultana:** [\[14227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2021 to Question 7292 on Richard Paniguan, if he will list attendees of the Gulf Advisory Group; and whether Geoffrey Tantum is included in that list.

**Zarah Sultana:** [\[14228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2021 to Question 7292 on Richard Paniguan, when the Gulf Advisory Group last met; how often that group has met since its establishment; and who has chaired the meetings of that group on each of those occasions.

**Jeremy Quin:**

We have limited information on the Gulf Advisory Group which last met on 12 September 2018.

Sir Geoffrey Tantum was invited to attend that meeting.

We are seeking further information in respect of the hon. Member's questions, and I will write to her in due course.

### ■ Ministry of Defence: Contracts

**John Healey:** [\[14136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will list the contracts awarded by his Department of a value in excess of £50 million since the publication of the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has recorded six contracts with a value in excess of £50 million, which have a start date and have been launched after the publication of the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy on 23 March 2021. A list of these contracts is below.

#### CONTRACT TITLE\*

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Challenger 2 Life Extension Programme (Demonstration, Manufacture & Initial In-Service Contract)

Marine Rotating Electrical Machinery

**CONTRACT TITLE\***

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WR21 and MT30 Capability Sustainment Contract (Gas Turbine Engines for Type 45 and Queen Elizabeth Class Ships)

Provision of P-8A Aircraft Support and Training Support

C-17 Synthetic Training Services

*\*details of one contract has been withheld due to its sensitive nature.*

Information about the contracts that we place with industry is available on GOV.uk as part of our MOD Trade, Industry and Contracts statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/defence-trade-and-industry-index>.

In addition, MOD contracts worth over £10,000 are published on the Government's Contracts Finder website, which is available on GOV.uk at:

<https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>.

**■ Royal Yacht**

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

**[10175]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment has he made of the Royal Navy's capacity to operate the successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia once that ship comes into service.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* Crewing the National Flagship is being factored into a wider assessment of the workforce necessary to operate the Royal Navy's new generation T26 and T31 frigates. The National Flagship will provide valuable experience for our personnel including complementing other high-profile Defence Engagement tasking which our ships undertake in support of wider government objectives.

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

**[10179]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the construction of a successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia on sovereign defence capability.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* The National Flagship will be the first vessel of its kind constructed in the UK. It will drive a renaissance in the UK's shipbuilding industry by helping to support skilled jobs which will be valuable to the entire shipbuilding enterprise. Building the ship in the UK will provide a boost to the British shipbuilding industry, helping develop and grow new expertise so shipyards can branch out and expand.

**■ Royal Yacht: Procurement****Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[10176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what tendering process he plans to outline for the (a) design and (b) construction of the successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* An announcement on the Design Phase tender will be made in due course. On successful conclusion of that phase procurement decisions will be made on the construction of the vessel.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[10177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how the successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia is to be funded.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* The National Flagship will be underwritten by the Government.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[10178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans his Department has to ensure that British steel is used in construction of the Royal Yacht.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* It is too early to say what the steel requirements for the National Flagship might be. Responsibility for sourcing steel for Government procured vessels rests with Prime Contractors and in line with Cabinet Office guidelines, it will be for the Prime Contractor to make its steel requirements known to the UK steel industry in order that they may consider bidding.

The joint industry and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy Steel Procurement Taskforce was launched in March 2021, with the aim of working with the sector to promote the unique selling points of UK steel and explore how best to support and position the industry for success in forthcoming major public contracts.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[10180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the costs of commissioning a successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia will be shared with private investors.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* The National Flagship will be underwritten by the Government.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[10181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the number of jobs that will be created as a result of the decision to build a successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* It is too early to say how many jobs will be created as a result of the decision to build a National Flagship. Estimates of the number of jobs created and sustained will be made following the conclusion of the competitive tendering process.

**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[11489\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department made of the (a) costs, (b) merits and (c) value for money of a successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia prior to the decision being taken to support the commissioning of that ship.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* The Cabinet Office has conducted cross Government discussions on the merits of a National Flagship. Potential costs are commercially sensitive and will be tested through the design phase.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[13197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will ensure that the successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia will be (a) built in the UK and (b) constructed using UK materials.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The National Flagship will be built in the UK. It is too early to say what the materials requirement for the National Flagship might be. We will seek to maximise the UK content throughout the vessel within the limits of our international obligations.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[13199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what estimate he has made of the annual cost to the public purse of the successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The costs of the National Flagship will be confirmed once we have concluded a competitive tendering process.

**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT****■ Culture: Coronavirus****Jo Stevens:**[\[15280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he or his ministers have had with theatres, music venues and other cultural operators ahead of the decision to delay the easing of the roadmap on 21 June 2021.

**Caroline Dinéage:**

The Government has engaged extensively with stakeholders from all DCMS sectors throughout the pandemic through regular roundtables and ministerial calls with industry representatives.

## ■ Equality

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[12206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the impact of Local Trust initiatives on tackling inequality in (a) local communities and (b) local communities in York.

**Matt Warman:**

Big Local is funded (£200m) by the National Lottery Community Fund and managed by Local Trust, who work nationally with a range of partners. The Local Trust targets places that have been overlooked for funding and resources in the past and may face issues like the decline of local industry, high levels of unemployment, or a pressing need for new support services or activities. There are 150 Big Local areas with more than 1,600 local people directly involved in the governance of them. Up to a third of those who join Big Local have never been involved in community volunteering in the past. Each Big Local area has until 2026 to spend at least £1million with residents in charge of deciding how the money is spent.

In 2012, Tang Hall in York was selected as a Big Local area and was given £1m to spend over 10 years to make Tang Hall a better place to live. Since 2015, Tang Hall has been building a relationship with the local community, by: providing advisory and support services; creating opportunities for the community to grow; supporting social, educational and recreational projects through small grants; and by commissioning large projects, such as Youth Provision, The Tang Hall Food Cooperative and TAPTY Creative Play.

The Big Local programme has a substantial evaluation plan, spanning its lifetime to 2026; early findings of which can be viewed on the Local Trust website.

## ■ Microprocessors: Shortages

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

[\[12338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to ensure that the UK manufacturing sector has access to an adequate supply of computer chips.

**Matt Warman:**

HMG recognises the severity of the current chip shortage and the difficulties it has created for a number of UK firms. This is a global market and a confluence of unexpected events, including unprecedented pandemic-driven shifts in demand, have had widespread ramifications internationally. HMG are engaging affected UK sectors and key international partners to identify any available domestic or international mitigations.

## ■ Social Enterprises: Finance

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[12209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with stakeholders on additional funding for (a) social enterprises and (b) charities over the last 12 months.

**Matt Warman:**

Government recognises the huge contribution of charities and social enterprises in the national effort against coronavirus, and the significant challenges that many have experienced.

The Minister for Civil Society, Baroness Barran, DCMS officials, and the VCSE Crown Representative, Claire Dove, have been engaging with civil society stakeholders on a regular basis throughout the pandemic. This has included engagement with the major membership bodies, as well as those specifically representing ethnic minority, women's, and disabled communities. A core Civil Society Stakeholder Group (CSSG) has provided a crucial channel for strategic engagement between government and sector leaders. These discussions have helped ensure the particular needs of the charity and social enterprise sectors are considered fully.

The sector continues to benefit from a multi-billion-pound package of government support. This includes the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, and grants for premises required to close. This support builds on over £1 billion in targeted funding, including the £750 million package for charities and social enterprises. At this time government does not have plans to offer additional targeted funding for these sectors.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Curriculum: Coronavirus

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[12199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has had with school leads in local authorities on the delivery of a recovery curriculum.

**Nick Gibb:**

There are no plans to change the curriculum framework for England. The Government has committed to a long term education recovery plan to support children aged 2 to 19 in schools, colleges, and nurseries.

The Department recognises the importance of schools and colleges teaching a broad and balanced curriculum as important to the academic, social, and personal development of children and young people. Schools should ensure that all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, vulnerable or have special educational needs and disabilities, are given the necessary support.

All maintained schools and academies are required to offer a broad and balanced curriculum and, where appropriate, teaching time should be prioritised to address the most significant gaps in pupils' knowledge. Schools can use existing flexibilities to create time to cover the most important content in which pupils are not yet secure.

The Department continues to engage regularly with representatives of local authorities on the development and implementation of the recovery programme.

## ■ Extracurricular Activities: Voluntary Organisations

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[12200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of not-for-profit organisations on helping to deliver a programme of activities for children and young people for summer 2021.

**Nick Gibb:**

Ensuring that children and young people have access to activities this summer which support their physical and mental health and wellbeing is a priority for the Government. This is especially important as many children and young people have missed out on vital education and social experiences which support their educational and personal development.

The Department is delivering a number of programmes this summer to support this aim, including the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme and the summer schools programme, which will form part of a broader programme of enrichment activities running over the summer to support children, young people and their families.

The HAF programme provides healthy food and enriching activities during the summer, Christmas and Easter holidays, giving disadvantaged children and young people opportunities they might otherwise miss. In order to support local authority HAF co-ordinators in delivering well-rounded and engaging programmes for the children and young people in their area, we have engaged with a variety of national organisations and groups, such as Sport England, Arts Council England and the National Citizens Service. We have worked with our national partners to provide local authorities with advice, support and information on a range of topics, communicated through guidance, newsletters, resource packs and webinars.

The Department is also working closely with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on a broader programme of enrichment activities, events and resources that will be available for children and young people during the school summer holidays. As part of this work, the Department has been engaging with a number of organisations including the National Literacy Trust, Royal Society and Play England .

## ■ Financial Services: Islam

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[14146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to implement sharia-compliant alternative finance product, first proposed by the Government in 2014.

**Michelle Donelan:**

I refer the right hon. Member for Kingston Upon Hull North to the answer I gave on 9 June 2021 to Question [10312](#).

## ■ Home Education: Wakefield

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

[\[12340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many children of compulsory school age in Wakefield are electively home educated in comparison to prior to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department does not collect data on the number of electively home educated children. This data is held by local authorities.

## ■ Human Papillomavirus: Curriculum

**Alex Davies-Jones:**

[\[14232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of including education on the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) in the school curriculum, to (a) help tackle stigma and misconceptions, (b) improve knowledge of cervical screening and cervical cancer, and (c) ensure informed consent for the HPV vaccine.

**Nick Gibb:**

Pupils need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal, and social lives in a positive way. That is why we have made health education compulsory in all state-funded schools in England alongside making relationships education for primary pupils and relationships and sex education for secondary pupils compulsory, collectively known as relationships, sex and health education (RSHE).

As part of the statutory curriculum at secondary school, pupils will be taught how the different sexually transmitted infections are transmitted, how risk can be reduced, and the importance of and facts about testing.

The Department has also published implementation guidance and teacher training modules covering all the RSHE topics to help schools develop their curricula and teach the subjects confidently and effectively: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-relationships-sex-and-health>. The module covering intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health, states specifically that pupils should be taught

about the NHS human papillomavirus vaccine scheme and the protection it offers and links schools to the relevant content on the NHS website.

More generally, at primary school, pupils will be taught about the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination. This knowledge is developed at secondary level to include the prevention of infection, including the facts and science related to antibiotics, the immune system, how vaccines work and the need for booster jabs.

## ■ Pupils: Shropshire

**Daniel Kawczynski:**

[\[12090\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the level of funding was per pupil in Shropshire in (a) 2018, (b) 2019 and (c) 2020.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department is increasing core schools funding nationally by £2.6 billion this year, £4.8 billion and £7.1 billion by the 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial years respectively, compared to 2019-20.

The national funding formula continues to distribute funding fairly to schools, based on the needs of the schools and their pupil cohorts, levelling up school funding and delivering resources where they are needed most. This year, every primary school will receive at least £4,000 per pupil, and every secondary school at least £5,150 per pupil, delivering on the Government's pledge to level up the lowest funded schools. On top of that, all schools will receive additional funds to cover additional teachers' pay and pension costs. This adds a further £180 and £265 respectively to the minimum per pupil amounts.

The table below sets out the per pupil levels of funding for 5-16 schools in Shropshire local authority over the past four financial years.

FINANCIAL YEAR	PER PUPIL FUNDING
2021-22	£5,036
2020-21	£4,652
2019-20	£4,467
2018-19	£4,454*

\*This includes funding for growth (ie, to support schools facing significant growth in their number of pupils), which is not included in figures from 2019-20 because from that point, growth funding was allocated separately.

## ■ Schools: Energy

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[12202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to enable schools to become more energy efficient.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department supports sustainability through our capital funding and programmes, both to reduce carbon and save schools money on energy. Responsible bodies, such as local authorities, academy trusts and dioceses can use their capital funding allocations to invest in improving energy efficiency in schools.

Since 2015, the Department has allocated £11.3 billion to maintain and improve school buildings, including improving energy efficiency. This includes £1.8 billion in the current 2021/22 financial year. In addition, the 10 year school rebuilding programme has been launched with a commitment to 500 rebuilding projects over the next decade. This will replace school buildings that are ageing or in poor condition with modern, energy efficient designs, transforming education for thousands of pupils.

The Further Education Capital Transformation Fund delivers the Government's £1.5 billion commitment to upgrade the estate of both further education (FE) colleges and designated institutions in England. This will target colleges in the worst condition whilst supporting the Government's objectives on achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

Alongside this substantial investment in the school and FE estate, we have provided schools and responsible bodies with guidance on energy efficiency such as minimising energy, water and waste within our Good Estate Management for Schools manual. This guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/good-estate-management-for-schools>.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy set up the £1 billion Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme in 2020 which provided grants for eligible public sector bodies, including schools, to fund energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation measures. Higher education institutions were also eligible for these grants. Phase 2 of this scheme opened in April 2021 and will allocate £75 million of funding.

## ■ Schools: Repairs and Maintenance

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[12201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking rebuild school buildings which are old and have high maintenance costs.

**Nick Gibb:**

My right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, announced a new, ten-year School Rebuilding Programme last June, which will replace poor condition school buildings with modern, energy efficient designs. The first 50 schools to benefit have been announced, as part of a commitment to 500 rebuilding projects over the next decade.

The department expects to confirm a further 50 projects this year and plans to consult on the approach to prioritising future projects later in 2021.

In addition, the Priority Schools Building Programme has been rebuilding or refurbishing buildings in poor condition at over 500 schools across England.

The department also allocates condition funding to schools and those responsible for school buildings to maintain and improve the condition of school buildings. £11.3 billion has been allocated in condition funding since 2015, including £1.8 billion committed in this financial year. Allocations are informed by consistent data on the condition of the school estate.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Chemicals: Health and Wildlife

**Kerry McCarthy:**

[\[14142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of endocrine disrupting chemicals on (a) human health and (b) wildlife.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Through involvement in Horizon 2020 projects, European Human Biomonitoring Initiative (HBM4EU) and the Partnership for Chemicals Risk Assessment (PARC), we are engaging in efforts to better understand human exposure to different chemicals and possible linked health effects. This includes EDCs, with phthalates and bisphenol included as priority substances in the first round of the HBM4EU project.

Work is also being carried out by the Environment Agency to understand the presence, use, emissions and sources of several chemicals groups containing recognised EDCs such as phthalates in the UK environment. This will be used to prioritise further assessment, which would include potential effect on wildlife. Last October the Environment Agency published a study of oestrogenic effects in wild fish (roach) in English rivers comparing contemporary and historical impacts.

### ■ Chemicals: Health Hazards

**Kerry McCarthy:**

[\[14143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will introduce hazard-based prevention measures for reducing exposures to endocrine disrupting chemicals.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The identification of intrinsic chemical hazards is already a principal requirement of the classification, labelling and packaging regulation (CLP). The hazard classes in CLP classify physical, health and environmental hazards. Endocrine disrupting properties are not captured by a specific CLP hazard class, however human health

endocrine disrupting properties are closely linked to existing CMR (carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic to reproduction) hazard classes.

The hazard classification of a chemical is often used as a starting point for specific controls or protective measures and is the basis for many regulatory and legislative provisions in the risk management of chemicals. Endocrine disrupting properties are specifically taken into account by the regulatory regimes covering the use of pesticides and biocides, where identification of such properties prompts specific control measures.

## ■ Environment Agency: Finance

**Luke Pollard:**

[R] [[12298](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June to Question 1390 on Environment Agency: Finance, whether she has had discussions with trade union representatives on Environment Agency funding and enforcement capacity.

**Rebecca Pow:**

My Rt Hon Friend the Environment Secretary has not engaged directly with the Environment Agency's (EA) recognised trade unions. The EA has an established infrastructure in place to ensure it engages on a regular basis with its collective recognised trade unions (GMB, Unison, Unite and Prospect). The EA provides regular updates on finance and funding impacts as well as engaging on changes to ways of working, policies and impacts to its staff.

The EA will always seek to deliver the best outcomes for people and the environment and prioritise its enforcement work in line with the funding available, focusing on the cases that pose the greatest threat, risk and harm to the environment and communities.

## ■ Fishing Catches: North Sea

**Peter Aldous:**

[[12116](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the North Sea total allowable catch limits are for the (a) common sole and (b) plaice for each year from 2016 to 2021; and what the (i) UK's and (ii) EU member states' quota allocations are for those stocks for each year from 2016 to 2021.

**Peter Aldous:**

[[12117](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the volume of catches was by (a) the UK and (b) EU member state vessels of (i) common sole and (ii) plaice in the North Sea in each year from 2016 to 2020.

**Peter Aldous:**

[[12118](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the catch levels within the UK EEZ of North Sea (a) common sole and (b) plaice for each year from 2016 to 2020.

**Peter Aldous:**[\[12119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the (a) volume of North Sea (i) common sole and (ii) plaice made available to vessels under 10m through the Pool for each year between 2016 and 2021 and (b) take up within the Pool of those stocks between 2016 and 2020.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The data requested is set out in the tables below

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>North Sea plaice</b>					
Total Allowable catch (a)	131,714	129,917	112,643	125,435	146,852
UK Opening Quota (a)	34,864	34,388	29,816	26,336	25,538
EU Opening Quota (excl. UK) (a)	87,630	86,435	74,942	90,319	111,034
UK landings	18,733	14,962	9,550	7,323	5,525
EU landings (excl. UK)	59,610	49,562	39,957	32,044	25,856
Catches from within the UK EEZ	13,203	12,663	11,513	9,391	6,038
U10m fleet pool landings	96	73	36	28	19
U10m fleet pool quota allocation	226	1,012	329	837	68
<b>North Sea sole</b>					
Total Allowable catch (a)	13,262	16,123	15,694	12,555	17,545
UK Opening	568	691	672	538	751

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Quota (a)					
EU Opening Quota (excl. UK) (a)	12,684	15,422	15,012	12,007	16,784
UK landings	705	511	432	334	543
EU landings (excl. UK)	11,750	11,207	10,263	8,005	6,384
Catches from within the UK EEZ	3,554	3,517	3,460	2,987	3,408
U10m fleet pool landings	164	159	113	103	81
U10m fleet pool quota allocation	185	324	293	232	87

(a) before adjustments (e.g. Quota banked from previous year)

## ■ Nature Conservation: Yorkshire and the Humber

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

[\[12339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the protection of endangered species which are native to Yorkshire.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Government is committed to taking action to recover our threatened native species. A number of our most threatened species, many of which can be found in Yorkshire, are protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Towards our goal to address the overall decline of species in England, we will be amending the Environment Bill to require an additional legally binding target for species for 2030, aiming to halt the decline of nature. We will publish a Green Paper later in 2021, setting out how our protections framework might deliver this better and our wider domestic ambitions.

Alongside our work at the national scale for the recovery of species and their habitats, such as through new schemes for environmental land management and the

Nature Recovery Network, we have also taken positive steps for protecting and investing in species in Yorkshire. In May this year, the Dearne Valley Wetlands was recognised by its notification as a new Site of Special Scientific Interest, for its nationally important native birds. Additionally, as part of the £80m Green Recovery Challenge Fund the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust was awarded funding for the restoration of two nationally important species in the Humber Estuary: native oysters and dwarf seagrass. The Froglife Trust also received funding for a project that aims to stop the decline of the UK's common toads in Yorkshire and replenish populations.

### ■ Poultry: Slaughterhouses

**Andrea Jenkyns:** [\[10518\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether Food Standards Agency officers physically visit facilities where chicks are slaughtered.

**Andrea Jenkyns:** [\[10519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what system is in place to count the number of chicks macerated in (a) England, (b) Wales, (c) Northern Ireland and (d) Scotland.

**Victoria Prentis:**

All four of the main laying hen hatcheries in the UK use argon and CO<sub>2</sub> gas mixtures as a permitted method of killing male day-old chicks, rather than maceration.

Maceration, or immediate crushing of the entire animal, is a lawful method of killing chicks up to 72 hours old and egg embryos (under Annex I of Regulation 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing). The method must provide for instantaneous maceration and immediate death of the animals and, as a result, they are caused no avoidable pain, distress or suffering when killed.

It is not within the Food Standards Agency's remit to inspect laying hen hatcheries.

There is no statutory requirement to keep records of chicks killed by maceration

### ■ River Thames: Whales

**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[12111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the circumstances that led to the stranding of a minke whale in the Thames in May 2021; and what steps he is taking to prevent future similar incidents from occurring.

**Victoria Prentis:**

During the recent stranding of a minke whale in the Thames, Defra officials worked closely with the Government-funded Cetacean Stranding Investigation Programme (CSIP). Unfortunately, due to the extremely poor condition of the whale, it was euthanised on welfare grounds.

CSIP investigates causes of death in stranded cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises) and carried out a post-mortem on the minke whale. This indicated the female calf was in poor nutritional condition and was likely already in a very poor state of health when she entered the Thames. This is consistent with the whale being only a few months old and having been separated from her mother and/or social group. Follow-up work is ongoing to understand whether there were any significant underlying issues to explain her unusual presence in the Thames.

The UK Government plays a leading role championing the conservation and welfare of all cetaceans both in the UK and internationally. We recently let a 10-year contract for the continuation of the extremely important CSIP to help us improve our understanding of, and ability to tackle, key threats to cetaceans.

## ■ **Seafood: Finance**

**Alan Brown:**

[\[10487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much funding was allocated to the seafood industry after the UK's departure from the EU; and how much of that funding has been allocated to companies based in (a) Scotland, (b) Wales, (c) Northern Ireland and (d) England.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The Government is committed to supporting the fisheries and seafood sector and has delivered on its manifesto commitment to maintain fisheries funding across the UK by allocating £32.7 million for the 2021/22 financial year. The allocations for each administration are based on the relative size of the fleets, aquaculture, and processing industries. This funding will enable each nation of the UK to run their own funding schemes, tailored to the needs and make up of their sectors.

The Government has also announced that £100 million will be made available across the UK for the best transformative seafood projects that will rejuvenate the industry and our coastal communities. Options for the funding are currently being explored and more detail on this funding will be made available in due course.

In addition, up to £23 million of emergency funding was utilised across the UK to address the challenges faced as a result of Covid-19 and EU exit during the early months of 2021. Over 2250 eligible businesses benefitted from this financial assistance across the UK and more details on the distribution of funding delivered will be available once all payments have been made and any appeals have been resolved. We expect this information to be available in early July.

## ■ **Tree Planting**

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

[\[12067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to increase tree planting in the UK.

**Dr Kieran Mullan:**

[\[13258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to increase tree planting.

**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 published our ambitious England Trees Action Plan on 18 May which sets out our plans to at least treble tree planting rates in England as a key contribution to that 30,000ha UK commitment – this represents an unprecedented increase in woodland creation in England, supported by £500 million from the Nature for Climate Fund.

The England Trees Action Plan sets out a framework for a range of new incentive which will be launched through the course of this year, providing significant support for 2021/22 planting season. This includes launching a new £15.9 million England Woodland Creation Offer where landowners, land managers and public bodies can apply for support to create new woodland to boost more traditional methods of tree establishment as well as natural colonisation, agroforestry, and riparian plating. We've also extended our Urban Tree Challenge Fund, delivering trees in areas of low tree cover and social deprivation, and have launched a new £2.7 million Local Authority Treescape Fund, aimed at establishing more trees in non-woodland settings such as riverbanks or hedgerows.

For the last planting season (2020/21) we kick-started tree planting efforts through a number of initiatives including, £12.1 million investment in expanding England's ten Community Forests; £1.4 million of planting along rivers through the Environment Agency; Support from the £80 million Green Recovery Challenge Fund for a range of charity projects to protect and plant trees.

## FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

### ■ **Brazil: Bilateral Aid**

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[12238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much bilateral Official Development Assistance has been allocated to Brazil in 2021-22.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[12243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much bilateral ODA his Department has allocated to Nicaragua in 2021-22.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[12244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much bilateral ODA his Department has allocated to Panama in 2021-22.

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[12245\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much bilateral ODA his Department has allocated to Paraguay in 2021-22.

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[12246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much bilateral ODA his Department has allocated to Peru in 2021-22.

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[12247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much bilateral ODA his Department has allocated to Venezuela in 2021-22.

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[12248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much bilateral ODA his Department has allocated to Guatemala in 2021-22.

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[12249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much bilateral ODA his Department has allocated to Guyana in 2021-22.

**Wendy Morton:**

FCDO programme managers are currently working to determine the precise allocations for each programme in 2021/22. Each country's full allocation will be published in the FCDO Annual Report and Accounts, and in the 'Statistics on International Development: Final UK Aid Spend' publication in due course.

We remain a world-leading aid donor, and across HMG, will spend more than £10 billion in 2021 to fight poverty, tackle climate change, and improve global health.

## ■ British Nationals Abroad: EU Countries

**Jim Shannon:** [\[13065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that British citizens living in EU countries have secure residence in those countries after the 30 June 2021 deadline; and what guidance his Department has published on the consequences of those people of not having applied for permanent residence by that date.

**Wendy Morton:**

The Government has provided extensive support to UK nationals who were lawfully resident in the EU before the end of the transition period to ensure that they are aware of their rights under the Withdrawal Agreement and the actions they need to take. The Government launched a public information campaign on 13 July 2020 which will run until December 2021 across 30 countries. Our European network of Embassies, Consulates and High Commissions has held over 785 outreach events, reaching over 495,000 UK nationals, since November 2017. Information is also available on our 'Living in Guides', the 'Living in Europe' page and our 'citizens' rights

explainer' all on gov.uk. This includes information on the consequences for failing to apply by the deadline, where an application is required.

We have allocated up to £4 million in grant funding to provide support to UK nationals and their family members, including the vulnerable and hard-to-reach, who need additional assistance when applying or registering their residence. It has enabled our implementing partners to reach nearly 320,000 people, of which 16,000 have been directly supported by a caseworker.

Thirteen Member States require an application for a new residence status to secure rights under the Withdrawal Agreement. This status may be permanent or non-permanent depending on how long the individual has been resident in the host State. UK nationals in France, Luxembourg, Latvia and Malta need to apply by the deadline on 30 June 2021, while the other Member States have set their deadline for later in 2021.

## ■ China: Muslims

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[13906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the evidence of human rights abuses contained in the report entitled Like we were enemies in a war: China's mass internment, torture and persecution of Muslims in Xinjiang, published by Amnesty International on 10 June 2021.

**Nigel Adams:**

Amnesty International's report of 10 June 2021 is a compelling addition to the already extensive and irrefutable body of evidence about systematic human rights violations taking place in Xinjiang. The Government has taken careful note of Amnesty's report and will continue to engage with a range of NGOs, and other experts, to inform our understanding of the situation in Xinjiang and guide policy development.

## ■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Dr Dan Poulter:**

[\[13026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of Government support for global covid-19 vaccine distribution.

**Wendy Morton:**

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UK has championed the importance of rapid, equitable access to safe and effective vaccines. We are among the largest donors to the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), committing £548 million, which through match-funding leveraged \$1 billion from other donors in 2020. This support to COVAX has been critical to it distributing COVID-19 vaccines to over 125 countries and economies, with the aim to provide up to 1.8 billion doses to low- and middle-income countries by early 2022. The UK has also committed to sharing 100 million vaccine doses by June 2022, with the majority going to COVAX.

The UK's investment in the research and development of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine has been a key contribution to the global vaccination effort. So far, 450 million doses of the vaccine have been distributed worldwide at non-profit prices, with two-thirds going to lower- and middle- income countries.

## ■ **Cyprus: Peace Negotiations**

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

[\[14182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps he is taking to encourage negotiation of a lasting and peaceful settlement in Cyprus that commands the support of both communities.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK remains committed to supporting the UN process to reach a Cyprus Settlement, which will be good for Cyprus, regional stability and UK interests. On 27-29 April, in support of the efforts led by the UN Secretary General to find common ground on a way forward to resolve the Cyprus Issue, the Foreign Secretary represented the UK as a Guarantor Power at informal UN talks in Geneva.

At the meeting, the Foreign Secretary continued to urge all sides to demonstrate flexibility and compromise to find a solution to the Cyprus Issue within the UN Security Council parameters. This followed UK messaging to the parties ahead of the talks, including the Foreign Secretary's visit to the island on 4 February where he met President Anastasiades, Turkish Cypriot leader Tatar and the UN. Ahead of the talks, during my visit to Cyprus (7-9 April), I reiterated this message and the UK's support for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus issue. FCDO Ministers and Officials will continue to engage with all parties in support of the UN process.

## ■ **Ethiopia: Politics and Government**

**Dr Kieran Mullan:**

[\[12349\]](#)

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

**James Duddridge:**

We remain concerned by the political situation in Ethiopia due to the impact of the continued fighting in the Tigray region and ethnic and political tensions and violence elsewhere in Ethiopia. I have a long-standing concern about the deterioration of political freedoms in Ethiopia, and I raised the delay to elections with President Sahle-Work during the 17 May Sudan Conference in Paris. On 14 April, the British Ambassador met, alongside Ambassadors and representatives from other Embassies in Addis Ababa, the Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General and pressed concerns about the narrow political and civic space and arrests of candidates. This builds on discussions the Foreign Secretary had with Prime Minister Abiy during his visit to Ethiopia on 22 January this year, which also included the situation in Tigray.

I joined a meeting of development ministers from key donor nations, including USAid Administrator Samantha Power, on 9 June to further discuss the situation in Tigray.

We agreed that the humanitarian situation is of grave concern, and that enhanced support is needed. The UK will allocate a further £16.7 million to respond to the crisis, bringing our total spend on Tigray to £47.7 million since November 2020. Whilst we scale-up our response, it is clear that the humanitarian crisis will not end whilst the conflict continues. We must see an end to fighting and the withdrawal of Eritrean forces.

## ■ Gaza: Israel

**Stephen Timms:**

[\[14132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what enquiries he has made of the Government of Israel about whether arms purchased under export licences from the UK were used in the recent action against Gaza; and if he will make a statement.

**James Cleverly:**

HM Government takes its export control responsibilities very seriously and operates one of the most robust arms export control regimes in the world. We consider all export applications thoroughly against a strict risk assessment framework and keep all licences under careful and continual review as standard. HM Government will not grant an export licence if to do so would be inconsistent with the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria.

## ■ Gender Recognition: Discrimination

**Alex Cunningham:**

[\[13052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his US counterpart on (a) ending violence against trans people around the world and (b) tackling discrimination against trans and non-binary people in national and international sporting events.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK Government is clear that all crimes directed towards LGBT+ people are completely unacceptable, and have no place in society.

On the participation of transgender and non-binary players in sport, the Government's overriding sporting objective remains the guarantee of fair and safe competition. It is therefore right that sports bodies have their own rules on trans issues, and can determine the right position for their own sport.

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:**

[\[13181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his US counterpart on ending violence against trans people around the world; and what steps he is taking to tackle discrimination against trans and non-binary in national and international sporting events.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK Government is clear that all crimes directed towards LGBT+ people are completely unacceptable, and have no place in society.

On the participation of transgender and non-binary players in sport, the Government's overriding sporting objective remains the guarantee of fair and safe competition. It is therefore right that sports bodies have their own rules on trans issues, and can determine the right position for their own sport.

**■ Hong Kong: National Security****Dr Kieran Mullan:**[\[12352\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of China's National Security Law on the people of Hong Kong.

**Nigel Adams:**

We have seen three clear breaches of the Joint Declaration in the last year, and therefore now consider China to be in a state of ongoing non-compliance with the Joint Declaration. As the Foreign Secretary wrote in the foreword of the most recent Six-monthly Report on Hong Kong covering the period of July - December 2020, the National Security Law has been used to drastically curtail the space for the expression of alternative political views and deter freedom of expression and legitimate political debate.

**■ Iran: Detainees****Lisa Nandy:**[\[14158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 20 May 2021 to Question 4590, on Iran: Detainees, when the review of detained UK dual national Anoosheh Ashoori's application for diplomatic immunity is planned to be completed and a decision announced.

**Lisa Nandy:**[\[14159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 20 May 2021 to Question 4590, on Iran: Detainees, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of supporting an application for detained British dual national in Iran, Anoosheh Ashoori, to be released on prison furlough.

**James Cleverly:**

We remain committed to securing the immediate and permanent release of Anoosheh Ashoori and other arbitrarily detained dual British nationals in Iran. Their welfare remains a top priority. Our Embassy in Tehran continues to request consular access to Mr Ashoori and we have been supporting his family since being made aware of his detention. Our Ambassador in Tehran raised our dual national cases with the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, most recently on 9 June. We have recently received Mr Ashoori's diplomatic protection application and officials are currently reviewing the extensive documentation.

**■ Iran: Guided Weapons****Jack Lopresti:**[\[12109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of Iran's ballistic missile programme.

**James Cleverly:**

Iran's ballistic missile programme is destabilising for the region and poses a threat to European security. UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which was unanimously adopted in the Security Council and underpins the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), calls on Iran not to undertake activities related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering a nuclear weapon. These UN ballistic missile restrictions remain in place until 2023. Alongside France and Germany (as E3), we have written repeatedly to the UN Secretary-General, most recently on 18 February, to bring attention to Iranian missile activity inconsistent with UNSCR 2231. We urge Iran to fully abide by UNSCR 2231 and all other relevant resolutions.

**■ Mehran Raouf****Lisa Nandy:**[\[14160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 20 May 2021 to Question 4592, on Mehran Raouf, when was the last time UK officials made contact with detained dual British national Mehran Raouf in Iran; and whether a UK official is planned to attend Mr Raouf's trial with him on 13 June 2021.

**James Cleverly:**

Officials at the British Embassy in Tehran formally requested access and attempted to attend Mr Raouf's hearing on 13th June, but were denied access. We will continue to request access to hearings for dual British nationals where the family wishes us to do so.

We remain in close contact with the family of Mehran Raouf and our Embassy in Tehran continues to request consular access. Iran does not however recognise dual nationality and does not grant access.

We continue to raise dual national cases at the most senior levels, and discuss them at every opportunity with our Iranian counterparts. Her Majesty's Ambassador in Tehran regularly raises dual national cases with the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, most recently on 9 June.

**■ Nasrin Sotoudeh****Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[14181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he raised the case of Nasrin Sotoudeh at his recent meeting with his Iranian counterpart.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK Government has repeatedly raised our concern at Nasrin Sotoudeh's ongoing detention with the Iranian authorities. On 22 September last year, the Iranian Ambassador was summoned and we handed over a letter from E3 Foreign Ministers about the human rights situation in Iran, which raised her case. On 25 September, the UK also joined 46 other countries in calling for her release at the Human Rights Council. We strongly support Human Rights Defenders worldwide to enable them to carry out their work safely and without fear.

**■ Oman: Visits Abroad****Kenny MacAskill:**[\[12314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, which senior officials from his Department attended the Sultan's Privy Council in Oman on 5-6 January 2019.

**James Cleverly:**

Richard Moore, then FCO Political Director, attended.

**■ Overseas Aid: Grants****Chris Law:**[\[13096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what plans he has to communicate the decision to defer of start dates of the provisional grants under round 4 of the UK Aid Match programme to people who donated to fundraising campaigns on the basis that (a) their donation would be matched by the Government and (b) projects would begin in June 2021.

**Wendy Morton:**

In his written ministerial statement to parliament, the Foreign Secretary protected the UK Aid Match programme including all active grants. The reduction in this year's budget has meant that projects scheduled to start between June and November 2021, will now start in April 2022. We continue to work closely with the organisations impacted and encourage them to advise patrons and donors of delays via their communications channels. It is not common for fundraising appeals to detail project start dates as they are often delayed for many reasons. To provide further assurance to the charities and their supporters, we have agreed to exceptionally sign grants in advance, reaffirming FCDO's commitment to match appeal donations pound for pound.

**■ Tigray: Famine****Wera Hobhouse:**[\[901236\]](#)

What steps he is taking in response to the recent assessment of the UK's famine prevention envoy on the situation in Tigray.

**James Duddridge:**

Our Special Envoy found growing risk of famine, primarily due to the conduct of the conflict. Last week, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification assessment estimated that 353,000 people are facing famine like conditions. The situation is extremely grave.

Last Wednesday I urged the international community to join our call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire. This call was echoed in the G7 Summit Communiqué. Yesterday, I announced the UK will reprioritise £16.7m to the crisis in Tigray. This is on top of the existing £27m in 2020-21 already directed to the response, and an additional £4m allocated to support nutrition and vaccinations in Tigray. This brings UK total funding to support response to the crisis to £47.7m.

**Turkey: LGBT People****Feryal Clark:**[\[13239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations he has made to his Turkish counterparts on the criminalisation of the rights of LGBTIQ+ communities by that country; and what recent assessment he has made of the level of risk for LGBTIQ+ people in Turkey; and if he will make a statement.

**Wendy Morton:**

We will continue to encourage Turkey to respect the rights and safeguard the welfare of all minority groups in Turkey, including the LGBTIQ+ community. Our missions in Turkey regularly engage with civil society groups, including the LGBTIQ+ community. In recent years we have funded projects supporting freedom of expression and LGBTIQ+ issues. Freedom of assembly should be defended, allowing for Pride marches, and we discourage disparaging public statements targeting the LGBTIQ+ community.

**Feryal Clark:**[\[13240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he will take with his European counterparts to help protect the rights of LGBTIQ+ people in Turkey.

**Wendy Morton:**

We will continue to encourage Turkey to respect the rights and safeguard the welfare of all minority groups in Turkey, including the LGBTIQ+ community, and cooperate with other like-minded European countries in our efforts. Colleagues in Ankara work closely with European missions to engage on all human rights issues.

**USA: Foreign Relations****Imran Ahmad Khan:**[\[12335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to strengthen relations with the US.

**Wendy Morton:**

President Biden's visit to the UK last week, which was his first overseas visit as President, demonstrated the significant synergy between our international priorities and those of the US Administration. This included a new Atlantic Charter that was agreed on 10 June, and which will set the tone for UK-US international leadership in the 21st century, including in the context of pandemic recovery. We also issued a Joint UK-US Statement on 10 June, which demonstrates our close relationship, built on open trade, vibrant democracies, and cooperation on global issues from COVID-19 to climate change.

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE****■ Acute Beds****Justin Madders:**[\[10442\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what comparative estimate he has made of the number of acute hospital beds in (a) 2019 and (b) 2021.

**Edward Argar:**

The latest data available in Quarter 4 2020/21, shows the average daily number of general and acute beds open overnight was 96,313 with an average occupancy rate of 83.0%. This compares to 129,992 beds in Quarter 4 2018/19, with an average occupancy rate of 89.1%.

**■ Air Pollution: Coronavirus****Ben Bradley:**[\[12283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the ability of photohydroionization (PHI) technology to prevent covid-19 transmission via aerosol and water droplets.

**Jo Churchill:**

We have made no specific assessment.

**■ Autism****Dr Lisa Cameron:**[\[12171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many autism services provide post-diagnostic support; and how many people have an autism spectrum condition diagnosis in their medical records.

**Helen Whately:**

The information requested about the number of autism services providing post-diagnostic services is not held centrally.

Comprehensive data is not currently available on how many people have an autism diagnosis in their medical records.

**■ Care Homes: Finance****Feryal Clark:** [\[14077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the provision of long-term financial support to (a) community and (b) residential care homes in (a) Enfield North constituency and (b) England.

**Helen Whately:**

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has regular discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a variety of issues, including funding for social care.

**■ Community Care: Autism and Learning Disability****Julian Sturdy:** [\[13048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to Government commitments in response to the Winterbourne View case, what progress his Department has made in moving all patients with learning disabilities and autism inappropriately placed in inpatient units into community care.

**Helen Whately:**

As of April 2021, there has been a 30% reduction since 2015 in the number of people with a learning disability and autistic people in specialist inpatient settings.

**■ Coronavirus****Navendu Mishra:** [\[12326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that the correct phraseology is used and promoted when referring to the delta variant of covid-19.

**Jo Churchill:**

On 31 May 2021, the World Health Organization recommended a new nomenclature system for variants under investigation (VUIs) and variants of concern (VOCs) using the Greek alphabet for non-scientific audiences. Public Health England (PHE) began using this system in all external communications as of 2 June. Not all variants designated VUI or VOC status by PHE have been assigned WHO labels. PHE will continue to incorporate the Greek alphabet labels as they are announced. The Government has adopted the WHO naming conventions in discussing and reporting on work on COVID-19 variants.

**■ Coronavirus: Contact Tracing****Rachael Maskell:** [\[13127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made, using recent contact tracing data, of the number of cases of covid-19 that have been transmitted outdoors (a) in public places, (b) in private gardens, (c) at sports venues and (d) at hospitality settings.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[13128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made, using recent contact tracing data, of the number of cases of covid-19 that have been transmitted indoors (a) in public places, (b) in homes, (c) at sports venues, (d) in hospitality settings, (e) in retail settings and (f) in entertainment settings.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[13129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made, using recent contact tracing data, of the number of cases of covid-19 that have been transmitted (a) on buses, (b) on trains and (c) in taxis.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[13130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made, using recent contact tracing data, of the number of cases of covid-19 that have been transmitted in (a) care home settings and (b) hospital settings.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* NHS Test and Trace data does not specify where a specific transmission may have taken place, therefore estimates of the number of cases of COVID-19 transmitted by setting is not available. Local Health Protection Teams and local authorities receive common exposure alerts, providing information on cases that have been linked to specific settings, so that this information can be used to investigate and manage clusters.

## ■ Coronavirus: Hospitals

**Esther McVey:** [\[12130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people received treatment in each Nightingale hospital.

**Edward Argar:**

The information is not available in the format requested. NHS England and NHS Improvement collated some data relating to patient activity in the Nightingale hospitals but has not been centrally validated.

**Esther McVey:** [\[12131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the cost to the public purse was of the Nightingale hospitals programme; and how many people were employed at each of the Nightingale hospitals.

**Edward Argar:**

Figures for spend on the Nightingale hospitals in 2020-21 are being finalised and will be published in the National Health Service final accounts in due course.

The Department does not hold the information requested on the number of staff employed at each of the Nightingale hospitals. Staffing was managed by host trusts based on safe staffing levels according to the number of patients requiring care and the type of care provided.

**■ Coronavirus: Quarantine****Daisy Cooper:** [\[12306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to ensure people quarantining have access to mental health support.

**Jo Churchill:**

Around the clock medical advice, including access to general practitioners, is available. Mental health support is provided where needed, together with access to social workers for advice and support.

**■ Coronavirus: Schools****Rachael Maskell:** [\[14007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress has been made on the test and release pilot programme for schools; and when he plans to publish the outcomes of those pilots.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2021]:* The daily contact testing clinical study for schools is due to complete on 25 June. A report on the findings will be published later in the year.

**■ Coronavirus: Screening****Richard Fuller:** [\[12094\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many coronavirus lateral flow device products were evaluated at phase 2 in the test development and evaluation programme of the SARS-CoV-2 lateral flow antigen tests; and how many of those products were fully manufactured in the UK.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Department has evaluated 142 lateral flow antigen tests at phase two. Of these, 24 were manufactured in the United Kingdom.

**Richard Fuller:** [\[12095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many of the lateral flow device products in phase 2 of the test development and evaluation programme of SARS-CoV-2 lateral flow antigen tests proceeded to Phase 3; and how many of those were products fully manufactured in the UK.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Department has evaluated 142 lateral flow antigen tests at phase two. Of these, 60 proceeded to phase three. Of the 60 tests, five were manufactured in the United Kingdom.

**Harriett Baldwin:** [\[14161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of covid-19 lateral flow tests purchased by NHS Test and Trace are manufactured in China.

**Jo Churchill:**

Approximately 90% of the lateral flow devices procured to date are manufactured in China.

**Munira Wilson:**[\[2455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether each covid-19 testing facility offers nitrile gloves as an alternative to latex gloves for people with latex allergies.

**Munira Wilson:**[\[2456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what provision is available for people with latex allergies to get a covid-19 test.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 20 May 2021]:* We are not currently distributing any latex gloves as the majority of National Health Service trusts have a non-latex policy.

The lateral flow device test kits in use are latex free and are suitable for those with latex allergies.

**■ Coronavirus: Vaccination****Charlotte Nichols:**[\[12323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the covid-19 vaccine on cancer patients once they have received the second dose.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

Data on COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness on cancer patients is still emerging. Public Health England is monitoring effectiveness of vaccination in clinical risk groups.

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**[\[12337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the Janssen vaccine can be administered at the earliest possible date.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

On 28 May 2021 the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency authorised the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine for use and 20 million doses of the vaccine have been secured. The first deliveries are expected to arrive later this year.

As with the currently deployed vaccines, all necessary preparations to receive, store and distribute the Janssen vaccine, as well as train health professionals in its handling and administration, will be in place prior to any deployment.

**Rachael Maskell:**[\[13137\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what information his Department holds on whether the efficacy of the covid-19 vaccine reduces in the period beyond six months after receipt.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

Public Health England (PHE) continues to monitor the efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccination. PHE will report the findings on efficacy after six months in due course, as more people are vaccinated.

■ **Coronavirus: Ventilation****Luke Pollard:**[\[4699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the resources the Government has allocated to improving ventilation infrastructure in public spaces during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

We have made no such assessment.

■ **Dental Services****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[12257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to increase access to NHS dental care.

**Jo Churchill:**

National Health Service dentists have been asked to maximise safe throughput, focussing first on urgent care and 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 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 working with NHS England and NHS Improvement and Public Health England to increase levels of service as fast as possible, taking into account the ongoing infection prevention and control and social distancing requirements. In resuming services, a careful balance is needed between increasing dental activity and ensuring patients and staff are protected from ongoing infection risk.

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.

**Damien Moore:**[\[12288\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of the number of people in England who are not registered with a dental practice.

**Jo Churchill:**

No estimate has been made. 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.

**Rachael Maskell:**[\[7214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the ratio is of dentists providing services per head of population in (a) York, (b) Yorkshire and (c) England.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 7 June 2021]:* This information is not held in the format requested.

**■ Eating Disorders: Children and Young People****Thangam Debbonaire:**[\[10465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that there is adequate funding for support services for children and young people with eating disorders in the South West at (a) community services, (b) in-patient services and (c) psychiatry services.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement's programmes of work for children and young people's mental health, including eating disorders, are focussed on community mental health services and inpatient services.

The funding and provision of health services, including mental health services, are the responsibility of local clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) which have the flexibility to allocate funding according to local need. CCGs are required to meet the mental health investment standard (MHIS), which means increasing the spending on mental health by at least as much as their overall budget increases and therefore increase their spend on mental health. Latest data shows that 99% of CCGs are on track to meet the MHIS in 2020/21.

Under the NHS Long Term Plan, funding for children and young people's mental health services will grow faster than both overall National Health Service funding and total mental health spending. This means that children and young people's mental health services will for the first time grow as a proportion of all mental health services, which will themselves also be growing faster than the NHS overall.

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.

**■ Electroconvulsive Therapy****Harriett Baldwin:**[\[10376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to set up an independent review of the use of electro convulsive therapy.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

We have no plans to do so.

Electroconvulsive therapy is regulated under the Mental Health Act 1983 and can only be given when a patient consents.

**■ Gambling: Health Services****Carolyn Harris:**[\[12218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what clinical assessment has been made of the effectiveness of financial controls, such as gambling transaction blocks offered by some banks, in supporting recovery for people experiencing gambling related harm as part of their treatment pathway structures.

**Jo Churchill:**

No clinical assessment has been made.

The National Health Service has committed to establish up to 15 specialist gambling clinics across England by 2024 and Public Health England will publish the first ever comprehensive evidence review of gambling-related harms later this summer.

**■ General Practitioners****Damien Moore:**[\[12287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the availability of appointments at GP practices.

**Jo Churchill:**

General practice appointment levels are now close to pre-pandemic numbers. In March 2021, an estimated 28.6 million appointments were booked in general practice in England or an average of 1.24 million per working weekday, compared to 1.25 million appointments per working weekday in March 2019. In March 2021, 15.8 million appointments were face to face, or 55.7% of all appointments. NHS England and NHS Improvement and local commissioners monitor monthly appointment data published by NHS Digital, providing support where appropriate.

**■ Health Services****Navendu Mishra:**[\[11689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to Department's report entitled Achieving Better Access to Mental Health Services by 2020 that was published in October 2014, what recent progress his Department has made to deliver parity of esteem between services for (a) mental and (b) physical illnesses.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

Since the 'Achieving Better Access to Mental Health Services by 2020' report we have introduced access and waiting time standards for both Early Intervention in Psychosis and Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services. Over one million adults already access IAPT services each year and this will be expanded

to cover a total of 1.9 million by 2023-24. Through the NHS Long Term Plan, we are expanding and transforming mental health services in England, investing an additional £2.3 billion a year by 2023-24. This will see spending for mental health services growing faster than the overall National Health Service budget.

There are now specialist perinatal mental health community services for new and expectant mothers in every part of the country and we are extending this further, with 26 new mental health hubs, offering physical health checks and psychological therapy, by April 2022. We have met our commitment for an additional 70,000 children and young people accessing NHS-funded mental health services and school or college-based mental health support teams. We are committed to further increasing this to 345,000 by 2023-24.

### ■ Hospitals: Visits

**Navendu Mishra:**

[\[11688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of ongoing restrictions on visitors at hospitals on patient care.

**Edward Argar:**

We recognise that a compassionate approach to facilitating hospital visits, balanced with the need to manage the risk of infection, is essential when supporting the care of patients. NHS England and NHS Improvement's visiting guidance is regularly assessed and reviewed for its impact on patient care.

### ■ Integrated Care Systems: Third Sector

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[13138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many local community and voluntary sector bodies are on the shadow boards of Integrated Care Systems.

**Edward Argar:**

The information requested is not held centrally.

### ■ Lung Diseases

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[11514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what is the median time to a first appointment with a specialist respiratory consultant when a serious lung condition is suspected, for each hospital Trust in England, for each of the last five years.

**Edward Argar:**

The data is not available in the format requested.

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[11515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what is the median time to a first diagnostic a) x-ray, b) CT scan, and c) spirometry test, where a serious lung condition is suspected, for each hospital Trust in England, for each of the last five years.

**Edward Argar:**

The data is not available in the format requested.

## ■ Mechanical Thrombectomy

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[12134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress his Department has made on increasing access to mechanical thrombectomy services for stroke patients.

**Jo Churchill:**

Increasing access to 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.

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, we have worked 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.

## ■ Members: Correspondence

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[12224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department plans to respond to the letter of 11 January 2021 from the hon. Member for Lewisham Deptford on rheumatoid arthritis.

**Edward Argar:**

We replied to the hon. Member on 10 June 2021.

**Rosie Cooper:**

[\[14148\]](#)

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 dated 19 February 2021, regarding Integrated Care Systems, ref ZA55687.

**Edward Argar:**

We replied to the hon. Member on 14 June 2021.

## ■ Mental Health Services

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[13019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to make mental health representation on the boards of integrated care systems mandatory as part of the Government's plans to reorganise the NHS.

**Edward Argar:**

We are proposing to establish statutory integrated care systems (ICS), made up of an integrated care board and integrated care partnership, together referred to as the ICS. The proposed legislation will set out minimum membership of the integrated care board, which should include representatives from National Health Service trusts, primary care and local authorities. Local areas, by local agreement, will be able to go beyond these requirements to meet their local needs.

We would fully expect mental health to be represented both on the integrated care board and within the integrated care partnership. NHS England will be required to sign off integrated care board constitutions and will ensure that mental health is properly represented.

**■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People****Kate Osamor:**[\[12225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the (a) target and (b) current average waiting times were for access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in England for each month from January 2020 to June 2021.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

This information is not available as an access and waiting time standard for child and adolescent mental health services has not yet been defined.

The National Health Service is piloting a four-week waiting time for access to specialist mental health treatment for children and young people in 12 areas in England. The pilots will inform a recommendation to the Government on the potential development of access and waiting time standards for all children and young people who need specialist mental health services.

**■ Mental Health Services: Young People****Sir Mike Penning:**[\[10224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to ensure that a Passenger Assistant is compulsory on bus transport for vulnerable and adolescent teenagers provided by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

**Sir Mike Penning:**[\[10225\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance his Department has issued to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services on the provision of a Passenger Assistant on bus transport for vulnerable and adolescent teenagers.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

We have no plans to do so and we have not issued any such guidance.

**■ NHS Test and Trace****Ben Bradley:** [\[11650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the (a) role and responsibilities, (b) formation date, (c) structure and (d) membership is of NHS Test and Trace Innovations and Partnerships.

**Ben Bradley:** [\[11651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the purpose was of establishing NHS Test and Trace Innovations and Partnerships; what it accomplished; and why and when it was dissolved.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Innovation and Partnerships team forms part of NHS Test and Trace's central customer office and was established in summer 2020. The purpose of the team is to engage with universities and companies to consider new ways of delivering NHS Test and Trace's programme's aims. The team works with the main research and industry networks in the United Kingdom, as well as international partners to identify new technologies and methodologies. Where any of these are adopted by NHS Test and Trace, the team provides guidance and support before handing over to one of the operation delivery teams ahead of deployment. The team has previously accomplished the identification of lateral flow devices and wastewater technologies capable of detecting COVID-19.

The team has not been dissolved and continues to operate as part of NHS Test and Trace. An organogram showing the structure of the Innovations and Partnership's team is attached. The team is comprised of Departmental staff, secondees from other Government departments and arm's length bodies.

**Attachments:**

1. Table [TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE Innovation & Partnership Team.docx]

**■ NHS: Computer Software****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[12272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people (a) in Slough constituency and (b) in total have downloaded the NHS app.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[13195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to encourage the use of the NHS app in (a) Slough and (b) England.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[13196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people in (a) Slough constituency and (b) England have downloaded the NHS app.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The information requested is not available for Slough constituency. The total number of downloads in England between 1 January 2019 and 31 May 2021 is 8,971,826.

As of 31 May 2021, the total number of verified NHS App users in England was 4,483,693.

We are working very closely with clinical commissioning groups to better understand how the NHS App fits into their local digital strategy. We are also working on a national NHS App user-facing campaign.

**■ NHS: Finance**

**Justin Madders:** [\[11578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much winter funding has been allocated to the NHS in each year in real terms since 2010-11.

**Edward Argar:**

*[Holding answer 10 June 2021]:* The information is not available in the format requested and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost

**■ NHS: Subsidiary Companies**

**Steve McCabe:** [\[13844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent representations his Department has received on the effect on (a) NHS staff and (b) NHS operations of changes implemented by wholly owned subsidiary companies.

**Edward Argar:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2021]:* There have been no recent representations.

**■ Older People: Food**

**Dr Lisa Cameron:** [\[12172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of how the recommendations of the Hospital Food Review can support improvements in nutritional care in social care and community settings.

**Edward Argar:**

No such assessment has been made.

The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014: Regulation 14 is in place to ensure that people who use care services have adequate nutrition and hydration. Registered care providers must assess people's nutritional needs and food, including prescribed nutritional supplements and/or parenteral nutrition, must be provided to meet those needs.

**■ Pharmacy: Coronavirus****Feryal Clark:** [\[12332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he has taken to reduce the financial pressures faced by community pharmacies as a result of the additional costs of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Feryal Clark:** [\[12333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the sustainability of the local pharmacy sector; and whether he plans to adjust the funding structure to allocate more funding to that sector.

**Jo Churchill:**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, £370 million extra advance payments were made to support pharmacies for maintaining medicine supplies and providing health advice. The COVID-19 support package for community pharmacy also included general COVID-19 business financial support, funding for Bank Holiday openings, social distancing measures, the medicine delivery service to shielded patients and free personal protective equipment. This also included non-monetary support, including the removal of some administrative tasks, flexibility in opening hours and the delayed introduction of new services. Discussions are ongoing with the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) about reimbursement of COVID-19 costs incurred during the pandemic and recovery of the £370 million

The Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) 2019-24 five-year deal, agreed in 2019 with the PSNC, commits £2.592 billion annually to the sector. In addition, further funding is available outside of the CPCF, for example for flu and COVID-19 vaccination and COVID-19 lateral flow testing.

**■ Social Services: Reform****Rachael Maskell:** [\[13140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to hold discussions with hon. Members on their concerns and ideas on improving social care.

**Helen Whately:**

I have held meetings with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Adult Social Care and with other hon. Members on proposals for social care reform.

We will continue to listen to views from all hon. Members on priorities for improving social care.

**■ Streptococcus: Clinical Trials****Julian Sturdy:** [\[10367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to encourage hospitals to participate in the GBS3 clinical trial investigating Group B Strep infection.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The Department is working with the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), including the NIHR's Clinical Research Network, NHS England and NHS Improvement and the GBS3 team to encourage trusts to take part in this important trial and to mitigate any individual challenges that might prevent their participation.

**■ Surgery: Waiting Lists****Dr Kieran Mullan:**[\[13270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the recommendation of the Royal College of Surgeons of England's report of 28 May 2021 entitled New Deal for Surgery, if the Government will maintain its £1 billion annual financial support for the Elective Recovery Fund in England for at least a further five years.

**Edward Argar:**

The next Spending Review will set out the Government's plans for health and social care spending in future years.

**■ Travel: Quarantine****Daisy Cooper:**[\[12305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the complaints procedure is for international travellers seeking to lodge a complaint about quarantine hotel facilities and services.

**Jo Churchill:**

The guidance for feedback or complaints is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managed-quarantine-what-to-expect/managed-quarantine-what-to-expect#how-to-provide-feedback>

**HOME OFFICE****■ Animal Experiments: Inspections****Dr Lisa Cameron:**[\[12174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Animals in Science Regulation Unit has recommenced on-site inspections of animal testing facilities following their suspension in 2020; for how long inspections were carried out by telephone or email; and whether the Government plans to carry out additional on-site inspections.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Animals in Science Regulation Unit (ASRU) assesses the compliance of the regulated community in a variety of ways, including on site and remote inspections, investigation of potential non-compliance cases and reviewing of reports. Throughout the pandemic ASRU have conducted on site visits for the investigation of significant cases of potential non-compliances or as needed. ASRU also implemented a system

of remote inspections. ASRU resumed routine on-site inspection of animal testing facilities on 7 September 2020.

During 2020, 712 remote inspections were conducted and 78 on-site inspections where there were animal welfare concerns or cases of non-compliance that could not be investigated remotely. ASRU will continue to undertake remote and on-site inspection activity as required as part of its overall programme of assessing the compliance of the regulated community.

## ■ Artificial Intelligence: Civil Liberties

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[12270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to understand the impact artificial intelligence may have to civil liberties of people within the UK.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Artificial Intelligence presents significant opportunities for Government to improve public services and analysis and insight. Its application also brings new challenges.

The Home Office has policies and procedures in place to ensure impacts are thoroughly considered on a case-by-case basis, undertaking its statutory duties including Equality Impact Assessments, Data Protection Impact Assessments, plus the Analytical Quality Assurance process. The Home Office is using cross-government initiatives to inform its work and has been actively engaged with the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation (CDEI) to address questions regarding ethical use of data within the sector.

## ■ Asylum: Napier Barracks

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

[\[14183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to publish all the advice it received from Public Health England in relation to the Napier barracks asylum accommodation.

**Kevin Foster:**

Napier is providing safe, coronavirus (COVID-19)-compliant conditions, in line with the law and Public Health England (PHE) guidance on social distancing requirements, including recommendations when using dormitories.

The accommodation has been adapted to ensure social distancing can be maintained and occupancy in dormitories is limited to ensure a minimum distance between beds of at least two metres. This is complemented by a range of additional safety measures including increased cleaning, availability of personal cleaning products and hand sanitisers, twice weekly lateral flow tests for all residents, staff and visitors and a track and trace system.

Our service providers have robust plans in place to minimise the risk of an outbreak of COVID-19 and an action plan should a COVID-19 outbreak occur.

We have established links to the appropriate leads from the local authority, PHE and statutory bodies and are committed to working with them to support the people who we accommodate and the communities where they live. Regular Multi-Agency Forums are held to ensure concerns are understood, so issues are managed and resolved accordingly.

#### ■ **Demonstrations: Luton**

**Michael Fabricant:** [\[10157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what reports she has received of members of the Jewish community in Luton being advised to avoid parts of the town on 29 May 2021 when the Luton Council of Mosques organised a demonstration in solidarity with Palestine; and if she will make a statement.

**Kit Malthouse:**

We understand that a local statement was issued by Luton United Synagogue, which referred to concerns about a protest on 29 May 2021 and incorrectly stated that Bedfordshire Police were advising members of the Jewish community to avoid parts of Luton. This statement was subsequently retracted. The protest did take place with approximately 100 attendees. No disorder was reported

#### ■ **Domestic Abuse**

**Anna McMorris:** [\[14187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the 2021 Domestic Abuse Strategy.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Government is determined to tackle domestic abuse.

Following the landmark Domestic Abuse Act, the Government will be publishing a first-ever, national Domestic Abuse Strategy, as well as a complementary Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls strategy, this year.

#### ■ **Drugs: Misuse**

**Crispin Blunt:** [\[R\] \[14126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2021 to Question 8524, with reference to the outcomes framework monitored through the Drugs Misuse Delivery Board and the monitoring and evaluation frameworks in place to monitor the impact of the Government's county lines programme and Project ADDER, how these frameworks were derived, including any relevant logic models; whether the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs were consulted to advise on their development; what metrics are being used and how data is being collected; who is responsible for the publication of the findings of these frameworks; and when the reports are expected to be published.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The County Lines Programme and Project ADDER is monitored at a number of levels including by the Combating Drug Misuse Delivery Board.

The Home Office has established the County Lines Task and Finish Group to oversee delivery of the County Lines programme. The Group meets regularly to drive forward progress, monitor the impact of the funding we are providing to tackle county lines and identify challenges. Through the Task and Finish Group we worked closely with delivery partners to develop a monitoring framework for the programme including reports on the numbers of lines closed. Since it was launched, in November 2019, our County Lines Programme has already seen more than 780 lines closed, over 5,100 arrests, £2.9 million in cash and significant quantities of drugs seized, and more than 1,200 vulnerable people safeguarded

For Project ADDER (Addiction, Disruption, Diversion, Enforcement, Recovery), the Home Office in partnership with Public Health England worked closely with delivery partners in each of the pilot areas and colleagues from across Government to develop a theory of change and monitoring and evaluation framework for the programme. This includes a variety of key performance metrics relating to enforcement, diversion into treatment, as well as treatment and recovery outputs. These metrics are being collected by areas using local data systems and are being monitored on a monthly basis through programme governance board to assess overall effectiveness of the programme

The Government works closely with the ACMD and continues to look at a range of evidence in developing its strategic approach to tackling drug misuse and identifying outcomes to monitor progress. However, given the nature of the programmes, the ACMD were not involved in the development of the county lines programme and Project ADDER outcomes framework.

**Crispin Blunt:****[R] [14127]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2021 to Question 8524, whether value for money will be assessed as part of the Government's ongoing monitoring and evaluation of its drug misuse programmes; and what steps she plans to take to deprioritise interventions that are not shown to be cost-effective in combating drug misuse.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Home Office Accounting Officer has a personal responsibility to ensure that the Department's budgets are used in a way that represents value for money for the taxpayer. A number of other departments deliver programmes to address drug misuse and their accounting officers have the same responsibility.

We have no current plans to deprioritise any aspects of our approach to tackling drug misuse, but we will continue to monitor and evaluate our drug misuse programmes across Government to learn what is most effective and inform future spending decisions.

**Crispin Blunt:****[R] [14128]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2021 to Question 7725 which noted that a number of controlled drugs have not been subject to analysis or recent analysis of harm, if she will take steps to commission a comprehensive review of the relative harms of controlled drugs to ensure that the UK drug classification and scheduling systems are consistent with the latest scientific and medical evidence available.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The Government has no plans to commission a comprehensive review of the relative harms of controlled drugs. The Government takes expert advice from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) on classification of substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and scheduling under the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001.

The Government commissions the ACMD to consider classification and scheduling of substances if, for example, new evidence about harms or legitimate uses emerges or there are issues of public concern. With regard to the scheduling of controlled drugs, the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 exempts specified activities from the scope of the offences, for example, where controlled drugs are produced and supplied by healthcare professionals for medicinal purposes. The Home Secretary places controlled drugs in the appropriate schedule following consideration of advice from the ACMD. There is an established process for the development of medicines, overseen by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), which enables medicines containing controlled drugs to be developed, evaluated in clinical trials and licensed based on an assessment of their quality, safety and efficacy before being made available to patients in the UK. When a medicine containing controlled drugs is made available following an MHRA assessment, it may be scheduled or re-scheduled under the 2001 Regulations as appropriate, following consideration of advice provided by the ACMD.

**■ Drugs: Smuggling****Crispin Blunt:****[R] [14129]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2021 to Question 8525 which noted that the cost of Operation Venetic is unknown, and to the Answer of 26 May 2021 to Question 5143 which noted that no assessment of the effects of Operation Venetic on the drugs markets has been made, if she will take steps to commission a full evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of Operation Venetic to the taxpayer, including estimates of (a) total costs across all relevant UK agencies; (b) total income raised from seized assets; (c) impacts on drug availability, rates of use, drug-related harms, and the associated costs and savings; and (d) impact on market-related violence and the associated costs and benefits, with reference to the finding of the Home Office's 2017 evaluation of the 2010 drug strategy that drugs market violence is an unintended consequence of enforcing drug laws.

**Kit Malthouse:**

Operation VENETIC is an ongoing operation yielding tangible results on a weekly basis. As law enforcement continue to act on the significant volume of intelligence received from Operation VENETIC, we are not currently evaluating its impact. We will keep this under review. The National Crime Agency has led a number of investigations under Operation VENETIC and publishes regular press notices on the outcomes of these investigations. A wider overview of Operation VENETIC can also be found in the NCA's [2021 National Strategic Assessment](#).

**■ Hassockfield Immigration Removal Centre: Equality**

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[14169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the equality impact assessment on the opening of the Immigration Removal Centre at the former Hassockfield Secure Training Centre in County Durham.

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[14170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the equality impact assessment on the repurposing of Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre.

**Chris Philp:**

Hassockfield immigration removal centre (IRC) will open as an IRC for women by the autumn. Yarl's Wood is expected to begin operating as a predominantly male IRC, at a similar time. To ensure that decisions about the development of both sites have due regard to eliminating discrimination and inequality, equality impact assessments (EIAs) will remain ongoing as plans progress to completion. The Home Office will publish both completed EIAs in due course.

**■ Hate Crime**

**Navendu Mishra:** [\[12324\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many instances of hate crime were reported in (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019 and (e) 2020.

**Navendu Mishra:** [\[12325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many instances of hate crime towards people of Indian heritage were reported in (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019 and (e) 2020.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Home Office collects and publishes statistics annually on the number of hate crime offences recorded by the police in England and Wales by five centrally monitored strands: race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and transgender.

Information on the number of hate crime offences recorded by the police can be found in 'Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2019/20' statistical bulletin, available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2019-to->

[2020](#) Information has not previously been collected on the race or ethnicity of victims but will be during 2021/22 and published in due course.

## ■ Immigration: EU Nationals

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[14153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2021 to Question 11534, how many applications to the EU Settlement Scheme have waited more than three months for a decision as at 1 June 2021.

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[14154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2021 to Question 11535, how many applications to the EU Settlement Scheme have waited more than six months for a decision as at 1 June 2021.

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[14155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2021 to Question 11536, how many applications to the EU Settlement Scheme have waited more than 12 months for a decision as at 1 June 2021.

### **Kevin Foster:**

The latest published information shows the total number of concluded applications to the EU Settlement scheme was 5.27 million up to 31 May 2021 out of a number of 5.61 million applications received.

The latest figures can be found on the Home Office's 'EU Settlement Scheme statistics' web page available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/eu-settlement-scheme-statistics>

Applications concluded by month and decision type are published in the detailed quarterly release which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/eu-settlement-scheme-quarterly-statistics-march-2021>

Our aim is to process all applications to the EU Settlement Scheme as expeditiously as possible. It usually takes around 5 working days for completed applications to be processed, but it can take longer if the Home Office needs to request more information, for example: if the applicant has submitted a paper application or if the applicant has a relevant criminal record, including pending prosecutions.

More information about processing times for applications under the scheme is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-application-processing-times/eu-settlement-scheme-pilot-current-expected-processing-times-for-applications>

**■ LGBT People: Hate Crime****Lloyd Russell-Moyle:** [\[13174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what legislative and other steps she is proposing to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crimes in the UK ahead of the UK's Safe To Be Me international LGBT+ conference in 2022.

**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:** [\[13175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle rising homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crimes and hate incidents in the UK.

**Victoria Atkins:**

All forms of abuse and hatred are unacceptable.

The UK has a robust legislative framework to respond to hate crimes, which target race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity. The Government published the hate crime action plan (Action Against Hate: The UK Government's plan for tackling hate crime) in 2016 and refreshed this Plan in October 2018.

The Government has commissioned a Law Commission review of the adequacy of current hate crime legislation. The review will report this year and we will respond to it when it is complete.

Also, the Home Office has funded multiple projects aimed at tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crime including:

- Kick It Out, who produced resources to raise awareness of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse in football stadia;
- Barnardo's, who worked with schools in East Ridings of Yorkshire to promote understanding of LGBT lives and prevent homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crime;
- Galop, who produced and distributed a series of factsheets and research to understand tackle online homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse; and
- The Proud Trust who worked with the British Transport Police and rail companies to make public transport safer for LGBT people and encourage the reporting of hate crime.

Government action to tackle broader discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people includes:

- A commitment to holding an international conference on LGBT rights in 2022.
- Announced a further £3.2 million of UK-funded projects in September 2020 to help Commonwealth Governments and civil society groups reform outdated laws and end the legacy of discrimination and violence.
- The DfE announced £750k of funding in June 2020, including a project for victims of hate-related bullying.

- We will bring forward legislation to ban conversion therapy as soon as parliamentary time allows and we will make new funds available to ensure that victims have better access to the support they need.

The Government will continue to work with relevant stakeholders, including Galop and Stonewall, to ensure that these actions are having a positive impact on the range of LGBTQ+ communities affected by hate crime and wider discrimination.

## ■ **Members: Correspondence**

### **Rosie Cooper:**

[\[12996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for West Lancashire of 9 April 2021 on the treatment of a BBC broadcaster, reference ZA56222.

### **Kit Malthouse:**

A response was provided by the Minister for Crime and Policing on 10 June 2021.

## ■ **National Crime Agency: Colombia**

### **Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[14219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which Colombian security units the National Crime Agency has trained since 2015 through the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund; and what the nature of that training was.

### **Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[14220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the National Crime Agency continues to train Colombia's security units in light of the recent internal repression in that country.

### **Kit Malthouse:**

The NCA works with law enforcement counterparts around the world, including in various South American countries. In Colombia, the NCA works with a number of Colombian departments including the Colombian National Police and the Office of the Attorney General of Colombia. This activity is focused on reducing the threat to the UK from the cocaine trade in Colombia and the region, as well as disrupting the money laundering and other criminal economies linked to drugs trafficking and other organised crime. All of NCA's activity overseas, including the provision of security and justice assistance to partners is conducted in accordance with International Human Rights Legislation and HMG policy. Projects delivered under the Conflict Stability and Security Fund are subject to a robust governance framework to ensure they are delivered effectively and in accordance with HMG government objectives.

**■ Nature Conservation: Crime****Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[12110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of potential links between wildlife crime and serious and organised crime in the UK.

**Kit Malthouse:**

This government recognises the importance of tackling wildlife crime and is providing £136,000 in 2021/22 to the National Wildlife Crime Unit to support our efforts to tackle wildlife crime.

Further information on the illegal wildlife trade and its links to serious organised crime in the UK can be found in the National Strategic Assessment published by the NCA on 25 May 2021 and the third National Risk Assessment, produced on 18 December 2020.

**■ Police: Recruitment****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[13201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 June 2021 to Question 7245, whether the Government's policy on recruiting 20,000 additional police officers increases the number of police officers above the level of policing in 2010.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The government is committed to recruiting 20,000 additional police officers in England and Wales by March 2023. This uplift in officers is based on a headcount starting figure of 128,434 at the beginning of the programme and will be achieved with an officer headcount of 148,434.

The police officer headcount in England and Wales as at 31 March 2010 was 146,030

The final figure for uplift will therefore exceed the officer headcount in England and Wales as at 31 March 2010 by 2,404 officers.

**■ Safer Streets Fund: Sefton****Damien Moore:**[\[12286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council has applied to the Safer Streets Fund.

**Kit Malthouse:**

No application was received from Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council to the second round of the Safer Streets Fund.

On 3 June we announced that 50 projects have been awarded a total of £18.4 million from the second round of the SSF to invest in crime prevention projects to tackle neighbourhood crimes, such as burglary, vehicle theft and robbery.

**HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT****■ Building Safety Fund****Lucy Powell:****[14162]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June to Questions 11562 and 11563, if he will publish the (a) industry standard approach to specification and procurement of works, and (b) cost benchmarks established from comparable projects, that his Department uses when scrutinising managing agents' fees in applications to the Building Safety Fund.

**Christopher Pincher:**

It is the responsibility of the applicant to the Building Safety Fund to ensure that costs for eligible works under the Fund, including any management fees, are informed by an industry standard approach to specification and procurement of works. This requirement is set out in the Building Safety Fund Application Guidance available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/992252/BSF\\_Fund\\_Application\\_Guidance\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/992252/BSF_Fund_Application_Guidance_.pdf)

As set out in the answers to Questions UIN 11562 and UIN 11563, costs are benchmarked against comparable projects and higher than expected costs will be challenged and will be subject to further scrutiny, and the level of grant may be reduced. Costs benchmarks are commercially sensitive and so cannot be published.

**Royston Smith:****[14174]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether homeowners of high-rise residential buildings with unsafe cladding are still able to register for the Building Safety Fund.

**Royston Smith:****[14175]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether homeowners of high-rise residential buildings with unsafe cladding need to register for the Building Safety Fund before making an application.

**Royston Smith:****[14176]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether homeowners of high-rise residential buildings with unsafe cladding that missed the registration deadline of 3 July 2020 can still make an application to the Building Safety Fund by the 30 June 2021 application deadline.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The announcement on 10 February of an additional £3.5 billion of funding provides assurance for residents that all eligible applications to the Building Safety Fund will be able to proceed. We will publish more details on how the additional funding will work alongside the existing funds soon.

**■ High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention**

**Lucy Powell:** [\[14163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when he plans to publish his response to the consultation, Fire safety: risk prioritisation in existing buildings, which closed on 17 February 2020.

**Christopher Pincher:**

We are considering the information provided by respondents to the call for evidence, and will be publishing a response.

**■ Housing: Construction**

**Peter Gibson:** [\[12301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, (a) how many and (b) which local authorities have used the Government New Homes Bonus Scheme to provide authorised traveller pitches for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.

**Christopher Pincher:**

We do not centrally hold data on how local authorities spend New Homes Bonus allocations. Bonus payments paid to local authorities are unringfenced, meaning the bonus can be spent as they see fit. This approach is in recognition of local areas being best placed to understand local priorities.

**■ Parking**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[14003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Department for Transport's recent research, Switching to sustainable transport: a rapid evidence assessment, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of his Department and its agencies ceasing to plan, promote, develop or invest in new car parking facilities in their current project pipelines.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[14004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Department for Transport's analysis, Switching to sustainable transport: a rapid evidence assessment, published on 12 February 2021, what guidance has he provided to local authorities on (a) planning, (b) developing (c) and investing in new car parking infrastructure in towns and city centres.

**Luke Hall:**

In light of the report Switching to sustainable transport: a rapid evidence assessment, commissioned by the Department for Transport, there are currently no plans to prevent Government agencies and public bodies from planning or developing new city centre car parks in towns and cities. Government recognises the link between parking provision, local transport policy and the vitality of our high streets and towns

centres. However, operationally, parking is the responsibility of local authorities and it is for them to determine what is appropriate in their own area.

## ■ Royal Parks

**Sir John Hayes:**

[\[12066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will make it his policy to prohibit new buildings in open spaces managed by the Royal Parks that are not directly connected with those open spaces' leisure purposes.

**Christopher Pincher:**

It is not Government policy to entirely prohibit new buildings in open spaces, however the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that existing open space, which would include open space within the Royal Parks, should not be built on unless there is evidence to demonstrate that it is no longer required, or it will be replaced by equivalent or better provision at a suitable location.

The pandemic has shown how vital green spaces are for the wellbeing of our nation, from sharing our national parks together, to being able to invite loved ones over to our gardens.

That is why we have a very clear commitment to protect our environmental assets and ensure more green spaces are provided through our planning reforms.

## ■ Travellers: Caravan Sites

**Peter Gibson:**

[\[12302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the level of unmet demand for authorised traveller sites across the UK.

**Peter Gibson:**

[\[12303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that local authorities are providing a sufficient quantity of traveller pitches to meet the needs of the Gypsy, Roman and Traveller community.

**Peter Gibson:**

[\[12304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what standards his Department sets for authorised permanent sites and traveller sites for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community; and what level of inspection is carried out to ensure that local authorities' provision of sites meets those standards.

**Eddie Hughes:**

We encourage local planning authorities to make their own assessment of need for traveller sites and in producing their local plan, to identify sites to meet that need. Local authorities are best placed to make decisions about the number and location of such sites locally, having had due regard to national policy and local circumstances.

Privately run Gypsy and Traveller sites with appropriate planning permission are subject to the local authority site licencing regime under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. Local authorities have discretion to attach conditions to a licence and can issue a compliance notice for a breach of a condition.

Local authorities are responsible for repairs and maintenance of permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites they own, under the Mobile Homes Act 1983. Local authorities set out these responsibilities in individual Mobile Homes pitch agreements.

## ■ Urban Areas: Racial Discrimination

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[8670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he plans to support cities establish anti-racism charters.

**Luke Hall:**

The Government is clear that no one in this country should have to endure racism and we are committed to building a fairer Britain and taking the action needed to address disparities wherever they exist.

The Government welcomes community-led action which tackles racism. It is for local leaders, including local authorities and other local partners, to decide how best to take this forward in their communities.

The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities was appointed by the Prime Minister to conduct a detailed, data-led examination of inequality across the entire population, and to set out a positive agenda for change.

The Commission reported at the end of the March and the Government will respond to this in due course.

## JUSTICE

### ■ Crime: Victims

**Anna McMorris:** [\[14185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to announce proposals for the consultation on a Victims' Bill.

**Kit Malthouse:**

This Government is committed to ensuring that victims are supported at every stage of the criminal justice system, so that justice can be secured, victims and the public protected, and offenders punished. This is why we committed to legislation for victims in the Queen's Speech and will be consulting on a Victims' Bill later this year. The public consultation will ensure that a truly bipartisan approach can be taken and will allow a wide range of stakeholders and interested parties to input into our careful deliberations.

The new Victims' Code, which came into force in April, is the culmination of two years of extensive work, including hearing from victims and victims' groups, to ensure that we have a clear and comprehensive framework for victims' rights. This vital work has laid the foundations for effective legislation in this area, and it is our intention to proceed without delay.

We will consult on how we will enshrine the 12 key rights in the new Victims' Code in law and ensure that those rights of victims are upheld. We will consult too on the provision of community-based domestic abuse and sexual violence services to set the expectations for the availability of support, as well as a statutory underpinning for the roles of independent sexual and domestic violence advisers to ensure that victims receive a high standard of care.

Ahead of the consultation, we are working across government and with victims and those who support them to understand the key issues that need to be addressed by the Victims' Bill. This work is vital to ensure that the Victims' Bill is as comprehensive and impactful as intended.

This builds on the huge amount of work already underway from the Government in this area. We will publish new Violence Against Women and Girls and Domestic Abuse strategies this year to help drive a step-change in the response to these crimes, building on the existing landmark legislation in this area, the Domestic Abuse Act and the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, and we are investing record amounts in support for victims, more than £300 million this year.

## ■ Homicide: Sentencing

**Anna McMorris:**

[\[14186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to publish details of the independent review into the sentencing of domestic homicides.

**Chris Philp:**

This Government fully recognises the devastation that domestic homicides cause and is committed to improving outcomes for victims of domestic abuse in all its forms and, crucially, preventing more victims in the future.

A number of concerns have been raised over the way in which sentencing outcomes are reached in cases of domestic homicide, and therefore we have committed to undertake a review of sentencing practice in domestic homicide cases. We have already worked with the Crown Prosecution Service to identify relevant cases, in order that sentencing outcomes and remarks can be analysed. We will provide further detail on the review in due course.

## ■ Offenders: Hyperactivity

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

[\[12176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to improve the quality of care for adults in the criminal justice system with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

**Alex Chalk:**

We are committed to improving the interaction that individuals with neurodivergent conditions have with the criminal justice system (CJS), and we are exploring what improvements can be made. An independent call for evidence on neurodiversity has been completed and the findings are expected to be reported in the summer. This will enable us to understand current practices and how we can improve these to realise better outcomes.

Once the MoJ receive the full written report from the Call for Evidence, a 'Neurodiversity Toolkit' is to be developed, as announced in the Sentencing White Paper. This will aim to improve our staff's awareness and understanding of neurodivergent needs, including ADHD, and enable them to feel confident to make referrals to health services if needed.

**NORTHERN IRELAND****■ Abortion: Northern Ireland****Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[13878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with reference to the commissioning of abortion services in Northern Ireland, what urgent steps he is taking to ensure that those services are fully (a) funded and (b) staffed.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2021]:* Funding for all health services is a matter for the NI Executive.

It is our clear position that these are devolved policy matters to be implemented through devolved bodies. As a result, the costs should be met from the Northern Ireland Block grant. The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) will continue to work closely with the Department of Health in taking forward implementation of this important devolved issue. The NIO will also provide advice as appropriate around any relevant requests for funding, and I continue to encourage the Health Minister to ensure that women and girls in Northern Ireland are provided with local, safe and high-quality healthcare.

We made the Abortion Regulations in March 2020 - and remain disappointed with the continuing failure to commission abortion services that are consistent with the Regulations to ensure women and girls have safe local access to this healthcare service. While medical professionals have taken forward some service provision on the ground in Northern Ireland from last April and over 1,100 abortions have been provided to date, more needs to be done.

We have always said that we believe that the commissioning of services by the Department of Health would remain the most appropriate way to progress the matter. However, after a year of engaging to see positive progress made, with no success, the legal duties and moral obligations are such that we have taken further action.

The Abortion (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2021, which came into effect on 31 March 2021, give the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a power to direct relevant Northern Ireland Ministers, departments and agencies to commission abortion services, consistent with the conditions set out in the 2020 Regulations.

We will not let progress be drawn out indefinitely. We are clear that we want to see concrete progress towards the commissioning of abortion services before summer recess, and if this is not achieved, we will not hesitate in issuing a direction immediately so direct action is taken so that the rights of women and girls can be properly upheld and they can have safe and lawful access to abortion services locally.

We will continue to engage with the Department of Health to try and find a way forward and will provide every opportunity to move forward with commissioning before we have to issue the direction.

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[13880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with reference to the commissioning of abortion services in Northern Ireland, whether he has plans to allocate long-term funding for the maintenance of a central access point for abortion care.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2021]:* The Government recognises the importance of consulting with experts, counselling and other support services to support women and girls in accessing services and making individual decisions on these matters. I put on record my thanks to Informing Choices NI for providing a central access point for early medical abortion services, working alongside medical professionals in all Health and Social Care Trusts. I also appreciate the wider support and post pregnancy counselling services Informing Choices NI is providing to women and girls in Northern Ireland.

Funding for all health services is a matter for the NI Executive. It is our clear position that these are devolved policy matters to be implemented through devolved bodies. As a result, the costs should be met from the Northern Ireland Block grant.

The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) will continue to work closely with the Department of Health in taking forward implementation of this important devolved issue. The NIO will also provide advice as appropriate around any relevant requests for funding, and I continue to encourage the Health Minister to ensure that women and girls in Northern Ireland are provided with local, safe and high-quality healthcare.

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[13881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what assessment his Department has made of the mental health impact on pregnant women in Northern Ireland during the covid-19 pandemic of a lack of access to abortion services in Northern Ireland.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2021]:* I thank the Hon Lady for raising this issue. In discussing this issue, we must remember the women and girls who are impacted by

the lack of safe, local and accessible healthcare. The health and safety of women and girls remains paramount in providing access to abortion services right across the UK.

We made the Abortion Regulations in March 2020 - and remain disappointed with the continuing failure to commission abortion services that are consistent with the Regulations to ensure women and girls have safe local access to this healthcare service, including access to counselling.

We laid further Regulations on 23 March 2021, which provide the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland with a power to direct a Northern Ireland Minister, a Northern Ireland department, the Health and Social Care Board of the Public Health Agency to take action necessary to implement all of the recommendations in paragraphs 85 and 86 of the CEDAW Report. We took this action because we understood the impact the delays have had on women and girls in Northern Ireland, who cannot access safe and local healthcare.

I recognise that this delay continues to affect women and girls in Northern Ireland and we will not let progress be drawn out indefinitely. We are clear that we want to see concrete progress towards the commissioning of abortion services before summer recess. If this is not achieved, we will not hesitate in issuing a direction immediately so that the rights of women and girls can be properly upheld and they can have safe and lawful access to abortion services locally.

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[13882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the Department of Health's decision not to commission abortion services in Northern Ireland.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

*[Holding answer 15 June 2021]:* I recognise the Hon Lady's work on this important issue, and appreciate the engagement we have had to date. The Hon Lady will be aware that my department carried out an Equality Impact Assessment before the framework for abortion in Northern Ireland was set out in Parliament last year. As a designated public authority for the purposes of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, if a further Equality Impact Assessment is required on the Department of Health's decision not to commission services, then this would be a matter for that department to take forward.

Service provision should be delivered and overseen locally by the Department of Health and relevant health bodies with the relevant legal powers, policy and operational expertise to do so. We are disappointed with the subsequent and continuing failure of the Department and Health and the Northern Ireland Executive to commission abortion services that are consistent with those Regulations - despite having extensively engaged with the Minister for Health, his Department and wider members of the Executive on this issue for over a year now.

We laid further Regulations on 23 March 2021, which provide the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland with a power to direct a Northern Ireland Minister, a Northern Ireland department, the Health and Social Care Board of the Public Health Agency to take action necessary to implement all of the recommendations in paragraphs 85 and 86 of the CEDAW Report. We took this action because we understood the impact the delays have had on women and girls in Northern Ireland, who cannot access safe and local healthcare,

I recognise that this delay continues to affect women and girls in Northern Ireland and we will not let progress be drawn out indefinitely. We are clear that we want to see concrete progress towards the commissioning of abortion services before summer recess. If this is not achieved, we will not hesitate in issuing a direction immediately so that the rights of women and girls can be properly upheld and they can have safe and lawful access to abortion services locally.

**Dame Diana Johnson:**

[\[14144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of anti-abortion protests outside clinics in Northern Ireland on the accessibility of abortion services to women requiring abortion care.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

We recognise that there are strongly held views on abortion, and that everyone has the right to express their views, including the right to peaceful protest. Equally, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is under a clear legal duty under section 9 of the NIEF Act to ensure that the recommendations in paragraphs 85 and 86 of the CEDAW report are implemented in respect of Northern Ireland. That includes Recommendation 86(g) - 'Protect women from harassment by anti-abortion protesters by investigating complaints and prosecuting and punishing perpetrators'.

We previously committed to keeping the matter of exclusion zones under review for 12 months following the making of the 2020 abortion regulations, and we will continue to keep the matter under close review as and when abortion services are commissioned.

There are a range of existing public order offences under Northern Ireland that can be relied on, depending on the individual circumstances of the incident.

## ■ **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

**Marco Longhi:**

[\[901174\]](#)

What recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on co-ordinating a UK-wide response to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The Secretary of State and I continue to hold regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues and Ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive on this important issue.

Although each devolved administration controls its own public health policy, we have been coordinating our responses to Covid, seeking alignment in policy and approach where appropriate, to ensure we were able to tackle the pandemic.

This joined up approach resulted in the UK-wide vaccine rollout for which over 75% of Northern Ireland's adult population have received at least one dose of the vaccine. It will be important that we maintain this collective approach as we seek to recover from the pandemic.

## ■ **Levelling Up Fund: Northern Ireland**

**Chris Green:** [\[901183\]](#)

What assessment he has made of the benefits of the Levelling Up Fund for Northern Ireland.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The Government is firmly committed to levelling up and bringing new benefits and opportunities to communities right across the UK. Through our excellent Levelling Up Fund, £4.8 billion is being made available to fund capital projects that will regenerate town centres and high streets, upgrade local transport, and invest in cultural and heritage assets.

In Northern Ireland, the Levelling Up Fund is open to a range of business, voluntary and community sector organisations until 18 June. The successful bids will help drive the recovery of communities and areas hardest hit by Covid. I am confident that this new funding can make a real difference in Northern Ireland and I have enjoyed some enthusiastic early engagements with local government across NI.

## ■ **Madden and Finucane**

**Johnny Mercer:** [\[13144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether money has been disbursed from the public purse to Madden and Finucane Solicitors for any purpose in each of the last five years.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The UK Government does not hold this information as Justice and legal aid is devolved in Northern Ireland. The Legal Services Agency, an executive agency sponsored by the Northern Ireland Department of Justice, administers the provision of legal aid in Northern Ireland. The total payments made from the legal aid fund to barristers and solicitors' practices have not been published since 2015.

## ■ **NHS: Northern Ireland**

**Rosie Cooper:** [\[901175\]](#)

What assessment he has made of the effect of Budget 2021 on the ability of the Northern Ireland Executive to reduce NHS waiting times in Northern Ireland.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

It is clear that waiting times in Northern Ireland are too long and the Executive has committed to the transformation of the health service and tackling waiting times.

Naturally, the Executive's focus over the last year has been on responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. But, as we now recover from the pandemic, I know the Executive will want to build back better and I welcome the fact that the Executive's Health Minister yesterday set out his plan to tackle these waiting times by 2026. That is why it is important we continue to see the Executive in place to deliver for all the people of Northern Ireland.

In support of this, the UK Government is providing substantial funding to enable the Executive to deliver excellent public services, with £15.6bn provided in 2021/22. This is in addition to £445m explicitly to support the transformation of public services from NDNA and Confidence and Supply.

**Liz Twist:**[\[901177\]](#)

What assessment he has made of the effect of Budget 2021 on the ability of the Northern Ireland Executive to reduce NHS waiting times in Northern Ireland.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

It is clear that waiting times in Northern Ireland are too long and the Executive has committed to the transformation of the health service and tackling waiting times.

Naturally, the Executive's focus over the last year has been on responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. But, as we now recover from the pandemic, I know the Executive will want to build back better and I welcome the fact that the Executive's Health Minister yesterday set out his plan to tackle these waiting times by 2026. That is why it is important we continue to see the Executive in place to deliver for all the people of Northern Ireland.

In support of this, the UK Government is providing substantial funding to enable the Executive to deliver excellent public services, with £15.6bn provided in 2021/22. This is in addition to £445m explicitly to support the transformation of public services from NDNA and Confidence and Supply.

**■ Northern Ireland Office: Artificial Intelligence****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[14051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, to what extent their Department makes use of artificial intelligence in the implementation of its policies; and how much was spent from their Department's budget on artificial intelligence in each of the last three years.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The Northern Ireland Office does not currently use artificial intelligence in the implementation of its policies. No money was spent on artificial intelligence in each of the last three years.

**■ Politics and Government: Northern Ireland****Mr Richard Holden:**[\[901176\]](#)

What steps he is taking to promote Northern Ireland's links with the (a) North East of England and (b) rest of the UK.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The Government places great importance on the Union, and Northern Ireland's integral place within it. We are using Northern Ireland's centenary to promote Northern Ireland and showcase the contribution of its people and places to our United Kingdom.

Through the Union Connectivity Review, we are committed to continuing to find new ways to connect our towns and cities through better transport links. This will help not only to fuel economic recovery, but also to level up and seize the best opportunities for all communities across the UK. I am delighted that daily direct flights between Belfast City and Teesside resumed in February, operated by Loganair.

Our support to businesses post-Brexit further promotes these links. For example, under the support offered to businesses, the Trader Support Service has moved over 690,000 consignments between Great Britain and Northern Ireland, linked to over 13,500 businesses. A number of these businesses will be based in the North East of England.

**■ Sex and Relationship Education: Northern Ireland****Dame Diana Johnson:**[\[14145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what steps his Department is taking to ensure children and young people in Northern Ireland are taught about all pregnancy options, including abortion, as part of comprehensive relationships and sex education.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

We recognise that sexual and reproductive health education is an important component in ensuring women and girls are well informed of the choices available to them.

Following the restoration of devolution, the Minister for Education agreed to continue funding the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) for the 2020/21 FY and now from 2021/22, and further funding was made available to develop a Relationship and Sexual Education hub. This further funding will continue to develop resources, but also provide Teacher Professional Learning. My officials continue to work with the Department for Education to ensure appropriate implementation of recommendation 86(d) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW report) in Northern Ireland.

**■ UK Internal Trade: Northern Ireland****Matt Western:** [\[901171\]](#)

What assessment the Government has made of the potential benefits for frictionless trade between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK of a veterinary agreement between the UK and the EU.

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [\[901173\]](#)

What discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the potential contribution to easing trade flows between Northern Ireland and Great Britain of the UK securing veterinary and phytosanitary agreements with the EU.

**Christine Jardine:** [\[901195\]](#)

What discussions he has had with his Cabinet colleagues on the prospects for concluding negotiations on a UK-EU veterinary agreement that is compatible with the Northern Ireland protocol.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The UK is working hard and in good faith to ensure the Protocol operates in a sustainable way that works for the people of Northern Ireland. We have proposed an ambitious veterinary agreement, based on our respective high standards, to reduce checks and controls. We need the EU to meaningfully engage with these proposals to ease burdens in Northern Ireland and provide a sustainable basis for the Protocol.

**SCOTLAND****■ Energy: Scotland****Alan Brown:** [\[13125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to the Answer of 9 June 2021 to Question 10486 on Energy: Scotland, if he will list the Scottish Renewable companies he has met in the last 12 months and the dates of those meetings.

**Mr Alister Jack:**

I refer the Hon. Member for Kilmarnock and Loudoun to the answer of 9 June 2021 to Question 10486. Ministerial meetings with external organisations are published on gov.uk.

**TRANSPORT****■ Cycleways: Southport****Damien Moore:** [\[12285\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on how many occasions Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council has submitted monitoring reports in respect of cycle lanes in Southport.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) has provided the Department for Transport with a completed monitoring and evaluation form for schemes funded in Tranche 1 of the Active Travel Fund and has submitted the first monitoring and evaluation form for the packages being delivered in Tranche 2 of the Fund. In addition, officials from the Department and LCRCA have held regular meetings to discuss scheme progress. The scheme in Southport town centre experienced delays with the provision of materials which have recently been made available, and the scheduled completion date is now March 2022.

**Department for Transport: Staff****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[13187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many civil servants employed within his Department have also been employed at the same time by other organisations in the last five years; and who those organisations are.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

There is no central database where a record is kept of instances when Department for Transport employees are employed at the same time by other organisations.

The Department for Transport Staff Handbook requires staff to seek permission for appointments and roles in addition to their civil service employment. The general principles of these rules are:

- Individuals must seek the Department's permission.
- The Department's interests must not be likely to suffer as a result of the appointment or role.
- Individuals must not take part in activities inconsistent with their official position.

If an employee is considering taking up an outside offer of employment, approval is required under the business appointment rules. The following approach should be taken and the outcome of the decision followed;

1. Permanent Secretaries must inform the Secretary of State.
1. Other members of the Senior Civil Service (or their equivalents) must inform the Permanent Secretary, but may wish to consult Human Resources before doing so.
1. All other employees must inform their countersigning officer (or a senior line manager), who may wish to consult Human Resources.'

**Electric Vehicles: Charging Points****Emma Hardy:**[\[13207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department are taking to ensure availability of electric vehicle charging facilities across England.

**Rachel Maclean:**

We are investing an additional £1.3 billion to accelerate the roll out of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across the UK. Today, a driver is never more than 25 miles away from a rapid chargepoint anywhere along England's motorways and major A roads. The new Rapid Charging Fund will fund new and upgraded electricity connections at motorway and major A road services to support the installation of thousands of new rapid chargers on England's major roads. By 2023, we aim to have at least six high powered, open access chargepoints at every motorway service area in England, with some larger sites having as many as 10-12. By 2035 we expect the number to increase to around 6,000 high powers chargers across the network. Government is also providing funding to support the installation of chargepoint infrastructure in local communities, at homes, workplaces and residential streets, accelerating the market to provide the infrastructure that is needed to support 100% uptake of zero emission vehicles ahead of need. This year we will publish an infrastructure charging strategy and provisions for chargepoints to be installed in new homes, where appropriate, in England.

**■ Electric Vehicles: Speed Limits****Rachael Maskell:**[\[14005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward legislative proposals to require electric vehicles to be fitted with technology to limit vehicle speed in urban areas.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Department for Transport is currently considering a proposed package of measures, which include requirements for Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA), which would aid the driver in maintaining the appropriate speed for the road environment by providing dedicated feedback through the digital observation of road signs and signals or the use of electronic map data.

**■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers****Hywel Williams:**[\[13862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment has he made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on the availability of heavy goods vehicle drivers in the UK.

**Rachel Maclean:**

Prior to the pandemic, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) conducted over 70,000 LGV tests in a normal year with more than 40,000 drivers passing their LGV test each year over the last four years. The shutdown of vocational driver training and testing during the pandemic resulted in the loss of about 30,000 test slots.

Testing has now restarted, and DVSA is making available 3,000 slots per week for vocational tests. This is double the number of LGV tests normally conducted each week before the pandemic.

## ■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Recruitment

**Hywel Williams:**

[\[13861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment has he made of the effect of migration provisions in the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement on the ability of UK road transport businesses to hire drivers.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The economic impacts of the measures necessary to tackle Covid-19 have changed the UK labour market with many UK-based workers needing to find new employment opportunities.

Therefore, our focus is on supporting the industry to address the driver shortage by training more UK-based drivers. This is being facilitated through apprenticeships and support for jobseekers to access driver training, including support to renew their Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC).

The Department has provided grant funding for the non-profit initiative Road to Logistics to train military service leavers, ex-offenders and the long term unemployed, and to Think Logistics/Career Ready to change perceptions of the industry among young people.

## ■ Roads: Litter

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[13909\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of a transfer of responsibility for litter clearance for all All-Purpose Trunk Roads in all local authority areas to Highways England on (a) the environmental impact of roadside litter and (b) access arrangements for maintenance.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Department is working closely with Highways England and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to determine the potential effects of any transfer of responsibility for roadside litter clearance on All-Purpose Trunk Roads from Local Authorities to Highways England, in relation to cost, effectiveness of litter clearance and safe access for regular road maintenance. This work is ongoing.

It is important to take a proportionate, evidence-based approach which recognises the pressures on Local Authority resources and costs associated with roadside litter clearance, especially considering the pressures which they have faced in the last year. At present, the Department has no plans to transfer responsibility of litter clearance of All-Purpose Trunk Roads on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) to Highways England.

DEFRA is due to publish a roadside litter report on All-Purpose Trunk Roads shortly and this may inform future work in reallocating responsibility for managing relevant cleaning activities from any Local Authority that is not fulfilling its statutory duties on the road network.

## ■ Rolling Stock: Leasing

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[13188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reasons the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail White Paper does not include proposals for controlling the increasing costs of rolling stock leases; and if he will make a statement.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

Private sector investment in rolling stock will continue. Great British Railways will be able to take a strategic overview while private sector Train Operating Companies will retain responsibility for procuring value from the market in respect of rolling stock to meet service requirements and improve the passenger experience in reliability accessibility and comfort.

The government will take forward work to assess options to ensure reliable delivery and value for money for the taxpayer and users of rolling stock. This work will also consider supply chain sustainability and how to sustain and generate high-value jobs and economic activity.

## ■ Transport: Carbon Emissions

**Jane Hunt:** [\[14079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to publish (a) the outcome of the Creating a plan to decarbonise transport call for ideas and (b) the Government's transport decarbonisation plan.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The "call for ideas" was one of several routes for stakeholders to provide their views on decarbonising transport. We received over 7,000 responses from the public all of which have fed into the development of the Transport Decarbonisation Plan. We will be publishing the Plan shortly.

## TREASURY

### ■ Cash Dispensing: Fees and Charges

**Philip Davies:** [\[12081\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of which region of the UK has the (a) most and (b) least access to free-to-use cash machines.

**Philip Davies:** [\[12082\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of which parliamentary constituency has the (a) most and (b) least access to free-to-use cash machines.

**Philip Davies:** [\[12083\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of interchange fee reductions on consumers' access to free-to-use cash machines.

**Philip Davies:** [\[12084\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect of interchange fee reductions on the ability of cash machine operators to provide free-to-use cash machines.

**Philip Davies:** [\[12085\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of bank branch closures on consumers' access to free-to-use cash machines in (a) the Bradford district, (b) Shipley constituency and (c) England.

**Philip Davies:** [\[12086\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the contribution of access to cash to the economic recovery of (a) high streets after the covid-19 outbreak and (b) the UK more generally.

**Philip Davies:** [\[12087\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of reversing the reductions made to the interchange fee as part of the Government's forthcoming legislative proposals on access to cash.

**Philip Davies:** [\[12088\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will meet with representatives of the ATM industry to hear their concerns on maintaining access to free-to-use cash machines.

**John Glen:**

LINK (the scheme that runs the UK's largest ATM network) has commitments to protect the broad geographic spread of free-to-use ATMs and is held to account against these commitments by the Payment Systems Regulator.

Specifically, LINK has committed to protect free-to-use ATMs more than one kilometre away from the next nearest free ATM or Post Office, and free access to cash on high streets (where there is a cluster of five or more retailers) that do not have a free-to-use ATM or a Post Office counter within one kilometre. Furthermore, LINK's members have made £5 million available to fund ATMs at the request of communities with poor access to cash.

LINK also publishes the total number of free-to-use ATMs across the UK online. As of April 2021, they reported that there were around 41,000 free-to-use ATMs in the UK. LINK's Monthly ATM Footprint Report also publishes information monthly on the breakdown by constituency.

On bank branch closures, these decisions are taken by the management team of each bank on a commercial basis. However, the Government firmly believes that the impact of branch closures should be understood, considered, and mitigated where

possible. In September 2020, the Financial Conduct Authority published guidance setting out their expectations of firms when they are deciding to close a branch or free-to-use ATM. Firms are expected to carefully consider the impact of a planned closure on their customers' everyday banking and cash access needs, and other relevant branch services, and consider possible alternative access arrangements.

More broadly, the Government recognises that cash is important to the daily lives of millions of individuals and businesses across the UK, and has therefore committed to legislating to protect access to cash for those who need it and ensuring that the UK's cash infrastructure is sustainable for the long term.

The Government made legislative changes to support the widespread offering of cashback without a purchase by shops and other businesses as part of the Financial Services Act 2021, and has announced that it will consult this summer on further legislative proposals for protecting cash for the long term.

Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. Details of ministerial and permanent secretary meetings with external organisations on departmental business are published on a quarterly basis and are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>

## ■ Job Retention Bonus

**Peter Aldous:**

**[12122]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of reintroducing the Job Retention Bonus to help support employment after the furlough scheme ends.

**Jesse Norman:**

The purpose of the Job Retention Bonus (JRB) was to encourage employers to keep people in work until the end of January 2021. However, when it was announced in December 2020 that the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) would be extended to the end of April 2021, the policy intent of the JRB fell away.

As the health situation deteriorated rapidly last autumn and winter, it was right that the Government instead extended the CJRS to reflect the increased number of closures that were expected over autumn and winter. However, the situation has changed moving into summer 2021 with the roll-out of the vaccine and the firm footing that gives to economic reopening. In this context, extending the CJRS further at Budget 2021, to the end of September, allowed the Government to strike the right balance between supporting the economy as it reopens, continuing to provide support and protect incomes, and ensuring incentives are in place to get people back to work as demand returns.

**■ Raw Materials: Overseas Trade****Mr Richard Holden:****[14229]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much (a) raw natural fibres comprising thread and raw materials such as wool and cotton and (b) man made fibres comprising thread and raw materials from for example polyester were (i) imported to and (ii) exported from the UK in each of the last 30 years.

**Jesse Norman:**

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) are responsible for the collection and publication of data on imports and exports of goods to and from the UK. HMRC release this information monthly, as a National Statistic called the Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics (OTS), which is available via their dedicated website ([www.uktradeinfo.com](http://www.uktradeinfo.com)). From this website, it is possible to build data tables based upon bespoke search criteria.

HMRC use an 8-digit coding system to classify UK imports and exports which is used for UK Customs Tariff and trade statistics purposes. This coding system is based upon the internationally recognised Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) developed by the World Customs Organisation:

<http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/nomenclature/overview/what-is-the-harmonized-system.aspx>.

HMRC are unable to provide the requested trade data as the HS system does not classify goods as described in this question.

**Mr Richard Holden:****[14231]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much finished garment product made with (a) raw natural fibres such as wool and cotton and (b) man made fibres such as polyester were (i) imported to and (ii) exported from the UK in each of the last 30 years.

**Jesse Norman:**

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) are responsible for the collection and publication of data on imports and exports of goods to and from the UK. HMRC release this information monthly, as a National Statistic called the Overseas Trade in Goods Statistics (OTS), which is available via their dedicated website ([www.uktradeinfo.com](http://www.uktradeinfo.com)). From this website, it is possible to build data tables based upon bespoke search criteria.

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<http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/nomenclature/overview/what-is-the-harmonized-system.aspx>.

HMRC are unable to provide the requested trade data as the HS system does not classify goods as described in this question.

## ■ Research and Development Expenditure Credit

**Chris Green:**

[\[12163\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government is taking to amend the existing R&D tax credits scheme to expand qualifying criteria to encourage larger companies to invest in research and innovation.

**Jesse Norman:**

At Budget 2021, the Chancellor announced a review of R&D tax reliefs, supported by the publication of a wide-ranging consultation on the nature of private-sector R&D investment in the UK, how that is supported or otherwise affected by the R&D tax reliefs, and where changes may be appropriate.

The consultation closed on 2 June and next steps will be set out in due course.

## ■ Revenue and Customs: Apprentices

**John McDonnell:**

[\[14135\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether HM Revenue & Customs consulted its recognised trade unions on the contract of employment that applies to apprentices working in the HMRC Surge & Rapid Response Team; and if he will make a statement.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Surge and Rapid Response Team (SRRT) was established in May 2015, following a request from the Cabinet Office, Civil Service People Board to find innovative ways to improve operational resilience across Government.

Recognised Civil Service trade unions FDA and PCS were informed of the SRRT contracts prior to advertising the posts.

All contracts were drafted and reviewed by Civil Service Employee Policy, and Treasury Solicitors were also consulted. Any subsequent changes to contracts and the relationship with broader HMRC contractual changes were also done with union consultation.

## ■ Sanitary Protection: VAT

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

[\[14184\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of removing VAT from sustainable sanitary products.

**Jesse Norman:**

A zero rate of VAT has applied to women's sanitary products since 1 January 2021. This applies to those products which were previously subject to the reduced rate of 5 per cent, for example, tampons and pads, and to reusable menstrual products, such as keepers.

## ■ Shipping: Assets

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[14164\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions his Department has had with relevant stakeholders on changing the classification of long-term assets in the maritime sector.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[14166\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions his Department has had with HMRC on the classification of long- and short-term vessels under the Capital Allowance scheme for commercial maritime vessels.

**Jesse Norman:**

Treasury officials are in regular contact with HMRC colleagues.

HMRC do not classify which assets should be written down at the main or special rate of writing down allowances. Instead, businesses should identify whether an asset they have acquired has a useful economic life (UEL) of more or less than 25 years when new. This UEL test for plant and machinery should be applied on the asset as a whole, rather than individual components, since for tax purposes the asset is depreciated as a single unit.

**Brendan O'Hara:** [\[14165\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions his Department has had with relevant stakeholders on HMRC's enforcement of classification of long- and short-term assets for commercial maritime vessels.

**Jesse Norman:**

Treasury officials are in regular contact with HMRC colleagues.

HMRC do not classify which assets should be written down at the main or special rate of writing down allowances. Instead, businesses should identify whether an asset they have acquired has a useful economic life (UEL) of more or less than 25 years when new. This UEL test for plant and machinery should be applied on the asset as a whole, rather than individual components, since for tax purposes the asset is depreciated as a single unit.

## ■ Tax Avoidance

**Ian Lavery:** [\[12141\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people are subject to the Loan Charge as at 8 June 2021.

**Jesse Norman:**

HMRC's latest estimates for those affected by the Loan Charge are included in their GOV.UK publication titled Independent Loan Charge review: HMRC report on implementation.

As set out in this report, in January 2020, HMRC wrote to more than 55,000 individuals and employers who were identified as potentially affected by the Loan Charge. HMRC estimate the changes to the Loan Charge enacted in Finance Act 2020 took 11,000 people out of paying the charge altogether.

The report goes on to state that 5,600 employers and individuals settled their use of disguised remuneration schemes in the period to 30 September 2020.

## ■ Taxation: Artificial Intelligence

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[12180\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for which taxes artificial intelligence is being used to assist in (a) processing and (b) auditing returns; and what plans he has to extend its use to other taxes.

**Jesse Norman:**

HMRC are using the most up to date technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities to deliver data and insight into the hands of their decision makers. This will help HMRC to focus on minimising the tax gap and make the tax system more intuitive for taxpayers.

HMRC use AI methods across all their business areas. AI outputs are validated with human oversight before being implemented.

HMRC are in the process of standardising their AI ethical framework in order to ensure it is consistently applied across the organisation. They are working with other public sector bodies to produce an AI strategy publication this autumn.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Department for Work and Pensions: Artificial Intelligence

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[14046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, to what extent their Department makes use of artificial intelligence in the implementation of its policies; and how much was spent from their Department's budget on artificial intelligence in each of the last three years.

**Guy Opperman:**

The Department is undergoing significant Digital modernisation and making use of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence where it is appropriate to enhance those products and services.

The specific information requested on Artificial Intelligence spend within Digital budgets is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate costs.

■ **Health and Safety Executive: Staff**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[12263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 1 June 2021 to Question 6431 on Health and Safety Executive: Staff, for what reason the Health and Safety Executive's use of contingent labour has increased from seven in 2016-17 to 227 at the end of April 2021.

**Mims Davies:**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has traditionally engaged a few contractors, but the numbers increased substantially during 2019/20 and 2020/21 in order to deliver significant programmes of work, including:

- A Programme to establish a new Building Safety Regulator as part of HSE in accordance with the recommendations of Dame Judith Hackitt's Independent Review of 'Building Regulations and Fire Safety' and the Building Safety Bill which will shortly be introduced in the Commons.
- Establishment of UK Chemicals regimes during the EU exit transition period, including development to ensure HSE could carry out functions previously carried out on our behalf by EU institutions.
- To complete a targeted and proactive programme of spot checks to ensure workplaces are COVID-secure and respond to workplace and localised outbreaks using a blend of regulatory interventions supported by multi-channel communications. The short-term nature of this funding has meant a greater use of contingent labour to deliver the activity.

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[12264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 1 June 2021 to Question 6431 on Health and Safety Executive: Staff, what the (a) mean and (b) median salary was of HSE (i) staff and (ii) contingent labour for the period End of Apr-21.

**Mims Davies:**

The mean and median salary for the different employee groups within the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is shown in the table below (median source data is taken from the draft Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21 which is still under audit review and anticipated to be published in July 2021).

	MEAN	MEDIAN
<b>All HSE and Contingent</b>	45,442	42,087
<b>HSE Staff only</b>	43,837	41,612
<b>Contingent Labour only</b>	71,111	50,600

Note: The mean and median figures above are calculated using data from 01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. Higher rates paid to contingent labour reflect that this is

specialist resource and that HSE does not provide access to a contributory pension scheme or paid leave

## ■ Personal Independence Payment

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[12178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many applicants for a personal independence payment have waited for longer than four months from the (a) lodging an application to (b) receipt of an initial assessment in the most recent period in which that information is available.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

We are committed to ensuring that people can access financial support through Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in a timely manner. We always aim to make an award decision as quickly as possible, taking into account the need to review all available evidence.

We are currently operating within expected levels. Average clearance times from initial claim to a decision being made for new claims are currently 19 weeks (January 21), including the time permitted to complete and return their "How your disability affects you" questionnaire, which is the same as average clearance times achieved in January 2020.

In September 2020, 64,600 people registered a claim for PIP, of which 58,130 were referred for an assessment.

In the latest available data, to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021, 32,330 of these were returned from the Assessment Provider within 4 months of registration, and 25,800 of these were returned after 4 months/are still outstanding.

### Notes

#### Source: PIP ADS

- PIP analytical data held by the Department does not contain the date the assessment takes place. As a proxy, we use the date an assessment was returned from the Assessment Providers to the Department. This is usually a few days following the assessment.
- Figures are for Great Britain only.
- These figures include claims made under normal rules and special rules for terminally ill claimants and include new claims and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to PIP reassessment claims.
- Not all claimants are referred for assessment, claims can be disallowed prior to assessment, for example, for not returning the PIP2 form.
- This is unpublished data. It should be used with caution and it may be subject to future revision.

**■ State Retirement Pensions: Dual Nationality****Fleur Anderson:**[\[13235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many letters have been sent to dual UK nationals in error informing them of changes to their entitlement to state pension.

**Guy Opperman:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* The Government has been running a national communication campaign to make sure individuals are aware of the need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme ahead of the 30 June deadline.

In addition to the national campaign, HM Government has been contacting DWP claimants to make sure that they are aware of the need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme ahead of the deadline to protect their rights. The letter also made it clear for individuals who had already attained British citizenship to disregard the letter.

State Pension remains payable without regard to nationality based on an individual's national insurance record.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### CABINET OFFICE

#### ■ **Electoral Commission's Performance Standards for Electoral Registration Officers**

**Minister of State for the Constitution and Devolution (Chloe Smith):** [\[HCWS94\]](#)

In accordance with section 9A of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, I am laying before Parliament the Electoral Commission's new Performance Standards for Electoral Registration Officers.

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 gave the Electoral Commission powers to set and monitor performance standards for electoral services. Under these provisions, the Commission can determine and publish standards of performance for relevant electoral officers in Great Britain.

Following a consultation, the Electoral Commission established a new set of standards which will be used by Electoral Registration Officers and the Commission throughout the year to understand and improve Election Registration Officers performance, ensuring that registers are as accurate and complete as possible, enabling everyone who is eligible and wants to, to be able to vote.

I welcome the Electoral Commission's updates to the performance standards to reflect the current environment for Electoral Registration Officers, though more broadly, further measures are needed to strengthen electoral integrity and prevent electoral fraud - which will be delivered through the forthcoming Elections Bill. It is important that performance standards keep pace as we improve electoral registration further.

**Attachments:**

1. Performance Standards [(Unnumbered Act Paper) - Performance Standards for Electoral Registration Officers, Standard Print.pdf]
2. Performance Standards (Large Print) [(Unnumbered Act Paper) - Performance Standards for Electoral Registration Officers, Large Print.pdf]

### HOME OFFICE

#### ■ **Post-legislative scrutiny of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015**

**The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel):** [\[HCWS95\]](#)

The Government has today submitted a Memorandum to the Home Affairs Committee regarding post-legislative scrutiny of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

The Home Office has carried out the post-legislative scrutiny, which includes an assessment of how the Act has worked in practice, and set out its findings in a Command Paper to the Committee.

The Memorandum has been laid before the House as a Command Paper (CP 455) and published on GOV.UK. Copies will also be available from the Vote Office.