



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 23 June 2021 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:31 P.M., 23 June 2021). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Conditions of Employment

Marsha De Cordova:

[\[16216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Government response entitled Good work: a response to the Taylor Review of modern working practices, published on 7 February 2018, what plans he has to help end exploitative working practices as part of the Government's recovery plans as covid-19 restrictions are eased. .

Paul Scully:

We have already made good progress on delivering on Matthew Taylor's recommendations to help end exploitative working practices, including introducing legislation that quadruples the maximum fine for employers who treat their workers badly and closing a loophole which sees agency workers employed on cheaper rates than permanent workers.

Government has also continued support workers throughout the pandemic, including protecting the earnings of furloughed workers who take Maternity Pay and other forms of Parental or Adoption Pay, and published a review into how employers can support victims of domestic abuse in the workplace.

We will continue to build on this record as we build back better from the pandemic and to deliver on our ambition to make the UK the best place in the world to work and grow a business. We are consulting on proposals to help achieve this ambition and will bring forward details in due course.

Marsha De Cordova:

[\[16947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices, published in July 2017 and the Government's Good Work response and consultations of 2018, what plans have been put in place to end exploitative working practices as part of the Government's covid-19 outbreak recovery plans.

Paul Scully:

We have already made good progress on delivering on Matthew Taylor's recommendations to help end exploitative working practices, including introducing legislation that quadruples the maximum fine for employers who treat their workers badly and closing a loophole which sees agency workers employed on cheaper rates than permanent workers.

The Government has also continued support workers throughout the pandemic, including protecting the earnings of furloughed workers who take Maternity Pay and

other forms of Parental or Adoption Pay, and published a review into how employers can support victims of domestic abuse in the workplace.

We will continue to build on this record as we build back better from the pandemic and to deliver on our ambition to make the UK the best place in the world to work and grow a business. We are consulting on proposals to help achieve this ambition and will bring forward details in due course.

■ **Consumer Goods: Safety**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[16194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2021 to Question 12262, what steps is the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) taking to promote its call to evidence on the UK product safety review to (a) leading e-commerce companies and (b) consumer rights organisations; and what is the timeframe for the OPSS to (i) complete and (ii) report on that review.

Paul Scully:

The OPSS has undertaken extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders to promote the Call for Evidence and to hear their views. This has included engagement with leading e-commerce companies and consumer rights organisations, who have participated in a number of thematic roundtable meetings across the Call for Evidence. A crosscutting consumer-focused roundtable was also held as part of our programme of engagement.

Following closure of the Call for Evidence on 17 June, submissions will be assessed and analysed, alongside wider evidence, to inform the Government's review of the product safety framework and a response, including a list of contributors, will be provided in due course. The OPSS will continue to engage with a wide range of stakeholders as it takes forward its review.

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[18556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many surplus covid-19 vaccines the UK will have accumulated by the end of 2021.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Government has announced that the UK will donate at least 100 million surplus COVID-19 vaccine doses within the next year, including 5 million by the end of September and a further 25 million by the end of 2021.

The Government has committed that 80% of our surplus vaccines will go to COVAX, the multilateral facility responsible for distributing COVID-19 vaccines to ensure equitable global access. The remainder will be shared bilaterally with countries in need. The Government will set out more detail in due course.

■ Global Challenges Research Fund**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[18550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much funding was allocated to the 12 International Research Hubs from the Global Challenges Research Fund for (a) 2019-20, (b) 2020-21 and (c) 2021-22.

Amanda Solloway:

For financial year 2019/20, £40m was allocated to the Global Challenges Research Fund International Research Hubs. For each of financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22 they were allocated £41m. Final spend amounts are reported on a Calendar Year basis through the Statistics on International Development reporting process, published by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

■ Hospitality Industry: Coronavirus**Julian Sturdy:** [\[16098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Government's announcement of 14 June 2021 not to move ahead with Step 4 of the Government's roadmap for the easing of covid-19 restrictions from the 21 June 2021, whether his Department has made an estimate of the value of business that will be lost by the hospitality sector as a result of continued limits on capacity for that sector.

Paul Scully:

The Department regularly meets with representatives from across the sector to discuss how it can recover and build back better from the pandemic. The Government recognises the impact the pandemic has had on hospitality businesses. That is why we have provided an unprecedented support package of £352 billion including grants, loans, business rates relief, VAT cuts and the job retention scheme.

Sam Tarry: [\[16252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when shisha businesses will be allowed to open under the roadmap for easing covid-19 restrictions.

Paul Scully:

From Step 3 which took place on 17 May, indoor areas of hospitality venues reopened. Venues are prohibited from providing smoking equipment such as shisha pipes, for use on the premises.

The Government's COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021 set out that the Government aims to reopen the remaining closed settings by Step 4. We have always said that we would be led by data, not dates. We have looked at the data very closely and assessed it against the four tests. It is on the basis of worsening data that we have taken the difficult call not to proceed with Step 4 reopening at this point, but to pause for four weeks until 19 July.

■ Innovation

Alex Sobel: [\[18585\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish his Department's Innovation Strategy.

Amanda Solloway:

In the recent 'Build Back Better: our plan for growth' published alongside Budget, the Government announced the publication of a new Innovation Strategy in the summer. In line with its commitment, BEIS is currently working across government to develop the Strategy in time for then.

The Strategy will outline how we will achieve our ambitions in innovation and where we want to focus our efforts over the next decade. It will aim to set out the strategic objective and create the confidence for increased business investment in R&D and innovation.

■ Paternity Leave

Zarah Sultana: [\[17866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he has taken to encourage shared parental leave amongst fathers.

Paul Scully:

On 17 June 2021, we launched a new online tool which will make it easier for parents to access Shared Parental Leave and Pay and easier for employers to administer the scheme. The launch of the tool was accompanied by targeted communications activity, including social media and an exclusive with one of the national newspapers. We have also run significant communications campaigns in the past, including a £1.5 million campaign in 2018.

The Government is currently evaluating the Shared Parental Leave and Pay scheme to better understand the barriers and enablers to parents taking Shared Parental Leave. This exercise has included commissioning, and interrogating information collected from, large scale, representative, surveys of employers and parents and a qualitative study of parents who have used the scheme. We intend to publish our findings later this year.

■ Tax Avoidance

Stephen Hammond: [\[16056\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will regulate umbrella companies.

Paul Scully:

Agency workers' rights are protected by legislation that covers employment businesses and employment agencies. Umbrella companies are not covered by this legislation, and they fall outside the remit of the Employment Agency Standards (EAS) Inspectorate, which is the body responsible for enforcing these protections.

The Government has committed to expand state enforcement for agency workers to cover umbrella companies. This will enable inspectors to investigate relevant complaints involving umbrella companies and take action where necessary. This will require primary legislation, which the Government will bring forward in due course.

■ Travel Agents: Coronavirus

Bill Wiggin: [\[18480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support is available to travel agencies who used coronavirus grants to refund their customers for cancelled holidays and therefore have inadequate funds to keep their business open.

Paul Scully:

We know how difficult these continued restrictions are for the tourism sector, with businesses having already faced many months of reduced trade.

In total, over £25bn has been provided to the tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors in the form of grants, loans and tax breaks. On top of the Government's wider economic support package, we have extended business rates relief and introduced new Restart grants of up to £18,000 for many in the sector.

We have also extended the cut in VAT for tourism and hospitality activities to 5% until the end of September. In order to help businesses manage the transition back to the standard rate, a 12.5% rate will then apply for a further six months.

Bill Wiggin: [\[18481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department plans to take to provide adequate support to travel agencies that are obliged to issue reimbursements as a result of short notice changes in covid-19 restrictions.

Paul Scully:

We recognise that these are very challenging conditions for businesses in the travel sector, including travel agents, which is why we have provided a range of measures to support the sector. On top of our wider economic support package, we have provided business rates relief and one-off grants for eligible hospitality and leisure businesses – and we have cut VAT for tourism and hospitality activities from 20% to 5% until the end of September. In order to help businesses manage the transition back to the standard rate, a 12.5% rate will then apply for a further six months.

We are working closely with the Department for Transport and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport to support the reopening of international travel, in line with the Government's reopening roadmap and the work of the Global Travel Taskforce.

Bill Wiggin: [\[18482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has to support travel agencies after (a) covid-19 restrictions are eased and (b) coronavirus support grants have ceased in the context of travel agents being obliged to refund holidays as a result of changing covid-19 restrictions.

Paul Scully:

We recognise that these are very challenging conditions for businesses in the travel sector, including travel agents, which is why we have provided a range of measures to support the sector.

Most of our support schemes do not end until September or after, to provide continuity and certainty for businesses and families.

Additionally, on 6 April, we introduced a new Recovery Loan Scheme, providing loans from £25,000 up to £10 million, with an 80% government guarantee, to replace existing loan schemes coming to an end.

Bill Wiggin:[\[18483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of granting travel agencies additional support in response to the financial impacts of covid-19 restrictions.

Paul Scully:

In total, over £25bn has been provided to the tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors in the form of grants, loans and tax breaks. On top of the Government's wider economic support package, we have extended business rates relief and introduced new Restart Grants of up to £18,000 for many in the sector.

We have also extended the cut in VAT for tourism and hospitality activities to 5% until the end of September. In order to help businesses manage the transition back to the standard rate, a 12.5% rate will then apply for a further six months.

Bill Wiggin:[\[18484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department is taking steps to help ensure travel agencies receive adequate coronavirus support to keep their businesses open.

Paul Scully:

The Government will continue to support businesses and individuals during this period - including through various Government-backed loans, new grants and the extended furlough and self-employed support schemes.

In the March Budget, my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer announced new 'Restart Grants' of up to £6,000 per premises for non-essential retail businesses and up to £18,000 per premises for hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym businesses in England. The Government is also providing all Local Authorities in England with an additional £425 million of discretionary business grant funding, on top of the £1.6 billion already allocated.

■ Weddings: Coronavirus**Julian Sturdy:**[\[16100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Government's announcement of 14 June 2021 not to move ahead with Step 4 of

the Government's roadmap for the easing of covid-19 restrictions from the 21 June 2021, whether his Department has made an estimate of the value of business that will be lost by the weddings industry as a result of continued limits on capacity for that sector.

Paul Scully:

BEIS Ministers and officials meet with representatives of the sector-led UK Weddings Taskforce on a regular basis to discuss the challenges faced by the sector and how best to support it through the reopening period.

Over the course of the pandemic the Government has provided an unprecedented package of financial support to businesses, including those in the wedding industry, which we keep under regular review.

CABINET OFFICE

■ 11 Downing Street: Repairs and Maintenance

Carol Monaghan: [\[18539\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, which Department is responsible for approving the funding for the Prime Minister's Downing Street residence.

Carol Monaghan: [\[18540\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, which Department is responsible for determining the level of funding for the Prime Minister's Downing Street residence.

Carol Monaghan: [\[18541\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how often the funding level for the Prime Minister's Downing Street residence is reviewed.

Julia Lopez:

I refer the hon. Member to the answers given to [PQ 7856](#) on 7 June 2021 and [PQ HL14191](#) on 23 April 2021.

■ Civil Service: Conditions of Employment

Grahame Morris: [\[18512\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 21 May 2021 to Question 5182 on Civil Service: Conditions of Employment, if he will specify (a) whether the legislative provisions which apply to civil servants but are not binding on the Crown refers solely to those arising from paragraph 5 of the Civil Service Management Code or (b) what other such legislative provisions apply on that basis.

Grahame Morris: [\[18513\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to Paragraph 5 of the Civil Service Management Code, what guidance governs

(a) the circumstances in which Ministers may make undertakings that legislation which does not bind the Crown will be applied as if it did so and (b) the procedure for issuing such undertakings; and if he will publish that guidance.

Julia Lopez:

As referenced in my answer to PQ [5182](#) on 26 May 2021, the Civil Service has not applied any legislation which is not binding on the Crown as if it were so binding. Paragraph 5 simply makes clear that departments must fully comply with legislation that binds the Crown. There is no guidance covering when legislation that does not bind the crown should be applied as if it did so.

■ **Electoral Register**

Feryal Clark:

[\[16244\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to Answer of 2 June 2021 to Question 6510 on Electoral Register, if he will list the meetings he has had, and on what dates, with representatives of (a) civil rights organisations, (b) Black, Asian and ethnic minority groups, (c) disability rights groups and (d) interest groups representing elderly people to discuss electoral participation, voter turnout and the proposals set out in the Electoral Integrity Bill since February 2020.

Chloe Smith:

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

Details of meetings with external organisations are included in regular transparency reports and can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ministers-transparency-publications>.

■ **Electoral Register: Enfield North**

Feryal Clark:

[\[16242\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 2 June 2021 to Question 6509 on Electoral Register: Enfield North, how many people in Enfield North (a) are eligible to vote and (b) possess a form of Government-approved photo ID broken down by (i) ethnic background and (ii) age in each local authority ward for each of the last five years.

Feryal Clark:

[\[16243\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 2 June 2021 to Question 6509 on Electoral Register: Enfield North, how many people in Enfield North are (a) registered to vote and (b) possess a form of Government-approved photo ID broken down by (i) ethnic background, (ii) age and in each local authority ward for each of the last five years.

Chloe Smith:

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 PQ16242, 16243 [[UKSA's final response to PQ16242_16243.pdf](#)]

■ **GREAT****Emily Thornberry:**[\[16051\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2021 to Question 12994, in which of the 67 non-EU countries with which the UK has signed continuity trade agreements is there currently insufficient diplomatic presence to support activity under the GREAT campaign.

Emily Thornberry:[\[16052\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2021 to Question 12994, in which of the 53 other Commonwealth nations there is currently insufficient diplomatic presence to support activity under the GREAT campaign.

Emily Thornberry:[\[16053\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2021 to Question 12994, in which of the 11 members of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership is there currently insufficient diplomatic presence to support activity under the GREAT campaign.

Julia Lopez:

GREAT campaign activity has taken place in all 11 member countries of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

GREAT is resourced in line with Government trade and investment priorities.

DEFENCE■ **Courts Martial: Offences against Children****Stephen Morgan:**[\[18561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many offences against service law involving victims under the age of 18 have been tried in the Court Martial in the last five years.

Leo Docherty:

The requested information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ Deepcut Barracks: Death

Dan Jarvis: [\[18522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to investigate the circumstances into the death of Pte. Anthony Bartlett at Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut in 2001; and if he will make a statement.

Dan Jarvis: [\[18523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, for what reason the death of Pte. Anthony Bartlett at Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut in 2001 was not examined in the Deepcut Review published on 29 March 2006.

Dan Jarvis: [\[18524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will take steps to investigate whether the senior officer for Surrey Police investigating the deaths of Pte. Geoff Gray and Pte. James Collinson at Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut was informed of the death of Pte. Anthony Bartlett at the same barracks in 2001; and if he will make a statement.

Leo Docherty:

Pte Bartlett's death on 16 July 2001 was subject to a coroner's inquest and was ruled an accidental death caused by acute poisoning. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is not conducting any further investigation into the circumstances of his death at this time. My deepest sympathy goes out to Pte Bartlett's family and all those affected by this tragic accident.

The Minister for the Armed Forces set the Terms of Reference for an independent review: 'The Deepcut Review'. This review was launched on 22 March 2004 and was led by Sir Nicholas Blake QC. The terms of reference were to investigate the deaths of four soldiers by gunshot wounds at Princess Royal Barracks Deepcut between 1995-2002. Within those terms, the scope of the Review and the matters to be examined, were a matter for Sir Nicholas Blake QC to decide. The MOD co-operated fully with the Review into the Deepcut deaths and made documentation available to it.

Surrey Police had complete jurisdiction for the investigation into Pte Bartlett's death, with assistance offered by the Royal Military Police where requested. There is an agreement between the civil and service police which clearly states that the local Home Office Police Force will lead all investigations involving death or very serious injury that occurs on MOD property in the United Kingdom.

■ Ministry of Defence: Written Questions

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[16035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to provide a substantive answer to Question 10177, tabled on 4 June 2021 by the hon. Member for North Durham.

Mr Ben Wallace:

I responded to the right hon. Member's question on 16 June 2021.

■ Oman: Demonstrations**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[18602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2021 to Question 11674 on Oman: Demonstrations, what experience on responding to protests UK military personnel have shared with the Omani authorities since 23 May 2021.

James Heappey:

Oman is an important partner and we have regular contact with the Omani authorities. UK personnel provide advice and share experience on a wide range of security related issues. Since 23 May, UK military and civilian personnel in country have continued their work with the Omani authorities. All advice is always in line with the rule of law and respect for human rights.

■ Yemen: Military Intervention**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[18600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether British air defence units in Saudi Arabia helped to identify or track the Houthi drone that was reported to have been intercepted near Khamis Mushait on 17 June 2021.

Kenny MacAskill: [\[18601\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether British air defence units in Saudi Arabia helped to identify or track the Houthi drone that was reported to be targeting an area near Khamis Mushait on 6 June 2021.

James Heappey:

As I stated in my answer to the hon. Member to his question 15401 of 15 June, British Air Defence units in Saudi Arabia help identify and track objects in Saudi airspace. Any action is decided upon and conducted by Saudi forces. For security reasons it is not appropriate to provide specific details of the operational activity of British air defence units in Saudi Arabia.

Attachments:

1. Yemen: Military Intervention [15401 Yemen Military Intervention.docx]

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Broadband: Voucher Schemes****Ben Lake:** [\[16191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2021 to Question 12253 on Broadband: Voucher Schemes, when his Department next plans to conduct a performance review of the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme.

Matt Warman:

We monitor the performance of the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme as part of the day to day operation of the scheme. We also conduct a detailed performance review every 6 months. The next product review is due at the end of September/beginning of October. We are aiming to prepare the review towards the end of September which should see the evidence ready to be presented for assessment at the beginning October. However, this timeline may be subject to change.

Charities: Coronavirus**Rachael Maskell:**[\[16887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Government's announcement of 14 June 2021 not to move ahead with Step 4 of the Government's roadmap for the easing of covid-19 restrictions from 21 June 2021, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the potential merits of providing additional resources to support charities .

Rachael Maskell:[\[16888\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Government's announcement of 14 June 2021 not to move ahead with Step 4 of the Government's roadmap for the easing of covid-19 restrictions from 21 June 2021, what assessment he has made of potential changes in the levels of demand for support from charities by the public.

Matt Warman:

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

My department continues to work closely with other government departments, academic institutions and stakeholders to review evidence on the impact of ongoing restrictions on charities in terms of financial resilience and demand for services.

The sector continues to benefit from a multi-billion-pound package of government support, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. The Government has provided a £750 million package for charities and social enterprises, which has helped support organisations providing key services to those most in need. Many organisations have used funding to make changes that will continue to benefit their work over the longer term.

Charities: Finance**Rachael Maskell:**[\[16901\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much of the £750 million allocated to charities on 8 April 2020 has been returned to HM Treasury by way of underspend on the fund.

Matt Warman:

The £750 million sector funding package offered unprecedented support to allow charities and social enterprises to continue their vital work and adapt their service delivery to support our national response to the pandemic.

The financial reconciliation for the financial year ending 31 March 2021 is currently being completed. This process will determine any underspends on the VCSE Covid-19 Support Package which may need to be returned to the Exchequer.

Over the past year, DCMS has been as flexible as possible under the terms of the grant agreements to allow charities to repurpose or reprofile funding in order to meet the needs of their communities arising from the pandemic, and minimise potential underspends.

■ Events Industry: Coronavirus**Julian Sturdy:**[\[16099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Government's announcement of 14 June 2021 not to move ahead with Step 4 of the Government's roadmap for the easing of covid-19 restrictions from 21 June 2021, whether his Department has made an estimate of the value of business that will be lost by the events sector as a result of continued limits on capacity for that sector.

Nigel Huddleston:

We recognise the challenging times currently facing all sectors, and continue to support in line with the prime minister's roadmap to the full reopening of the economy. Events sectors experienced a 50-60% drop in GVA in Spring 2020, relative to 25% in other sectors. The Department has been working closely with stakeholders across the events sector throughout the pandemic to understand both the nature and scale of the impact that this sector has faced.

Since 17 May, events have been able to reopen subject to capacity caps which vary depending on whether the event is indoors or outdoors. The Government has also launched the Events Research Programme which is looking at how best to mitigate transmission risks across a number of event settings.

We are committed to helping the events sector reopen fully, and while we know that the loss of some business that may occur as a result of the delay to step 4, public health must remain the top priority. The roadmap sets out a cautious and gradual approach, led by data, not dates.

Throughout the pandemic, businesses have had access to an unprecedented £350 billion package of support including cash grants, government-backed loans, the extended furlough scheme and £5 billion for new Restart Grants.

To ensure that people and businesses have time to plan as the economy reopens in line with the easing of restrictions, schemes such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) and Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) will continue

until September 2021. Support for businesses through grants and loans, business rates and VAT relief is also still available.

■ Exercise: Young People

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[18492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to support the promotion of physical activity among young people.

Nigel Huddleston:

The Government is committed to ensuring that all children and young people have the best opportunities to engage in sport and physical activity. Our Sporting Future strategy sets out how important it is for all children to have a good experience of sport and physical activity while they are young.

The Government's arm's-length body, Sport England, has invested over £190 million into physical activity for children and young people over 2016-2021, including programmes such as the £40 million Families Fund, which encourages low-income families with children to do sport and physical activity together. Initiatives such as the Studio You video platform, funded by Sport England and powered by This Girl Can, are also encouraging more teenage girls to be active.

The Government's School Sport and Activity Action Plan (jointly published by the Department for Education, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and Department for Health and Social Care in July 2019) sets out a commitment to ongoing collaboration to support the delivery of high-quality PE lessons and to ensure that sport and physical activity are an integral part of both the school day and after-school activities. This is supported by £320 million per year through the PE and sport premium. More recently, the Government has hosted roundtables on how to take support for young people even further, and has committed to updating the Government sport strategy, with children and young people central to this.

■ Loneliness

Rachael Maskell: [\[16899\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will publish the (a) amount of funding and (b) source of funding his Department spent on tackling loneliness since March 2021.

Rachael Maskell: [\[16900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much of the £750 million allocated to charities on 8 April 2020 has been spent on tackling loneliness; and whether the funding strand can be identified from which that funding was spent.

Matt Warman:

The £750 million sector funding package offered unprecedented support to allow charities and social enterprises to continue their vital work and adapt their service

delivery to support our national response to the pandemic. £35m of the £750m funding package has been spent on tackling loneliness. This includes:

- Big Night In - £1,174,257
- Coronavirus Community Support Fund - £17,228,490
- Community Match Challenge - £3,344,170
- VCSE Winter Loneliness Fund - £7,512,143
- Comprising: a £2m uplift to the Loneliness Covid-19 Fund; £5.03m to Arts Council England (including £3.5m to The Reading Agency); £300k to the Audio Content Fund; and £200k to the Community Radio Fund.
- Other Government Departments - £5,725,743
- Includes the £5m Loneliness Covid-19 Fund, launched May 2020, to enable national organisations working to tackle loneliness and build social connections to continue and adapt their critical work

All of the above funding had been spent by 31st March 2021.

In addition to this, we have launched the £4m Local Connections Fund, in partnership with The National Lottery Community Fund, to provide targeted funding to small grassroots organisations, to build relationships in communities to help reduce loneliness. £2m of government funding was spent by 31st March 2021, and the second round comprising £2m of Lottery Funding will be launched on 28th June 2021. This funding was from DCMS core budgets.

■ Platinum Jubilee 2022: Medals

Dan Jarvis:

[\[18525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what the qualifying criteria are for the Platinum Jubilee medal; and what plans the Government has to award the medal to former members of the armed forces.

Caroline Dinenage:

Recipients of the Platinum Jubilee Medal will include members of the Armed Forces, frontline members of the Prison Service that are publicly employed, frontline emergency services and members of the Royal Household. Recipients must also have completed the relevant period of qualifying service.

It is for the relevant Government Department, Devolved Administration or Crown Dependency to apply these broad criteria, and any additional sub-criteria they deem relevant. The Ministry of Defence has confirmed that recipients must be serving members of the armed forces on 6th February 2022 to be eligible to receive the Platinum Jubilee Medal.

■ Running: Coronavirus

Dawn Butler:

[\[18500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to allow outdoor group running activities to return safely during the covid-19 outbreak; and what guidance his Department has published for the organisations involved in running such activities.

Nigel Huddleston:

The importance of sport and physical activity for the nation's physical and mental health has never been more apparent. They are powerful defences against Covid-19, and as we prepare to return to our normal lives, we will need to do all we can to improve people's fitness and wellbeing.

The government has prioritised the safe return of sport, including team sports, contact combat sports and organised sports participation events. Organised outdoor sport is exempt from legal gathering limits and can take place with any number of participants, as long as undertaken in line with published Covid-secure guidance. This includes organised sport participation events which includes outdoor running group activities. These events were allowed from 29 March as part of step 1 of the roadmap.

Guidance on Organised Sports Participation Events is available here - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-safe-provision-including-team-sport-contact-combat-sport-and-organised-sport-events>

■ Telecommunications: Infrastructure

Virginia Crosbie:

[\[16271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he has (a) met or (b) had discussions with with representatives of the Protect and Connect campaign since 1 January 2021; and how many times he has (i) met or (ii) had discussions with representatives from mobile phone operators in that time.

Matt Warman:

The full list of Ministerial meetings is published on gov.uk on a quarterly basis.

Ministers and officials engage regularly with the telecoms industry on a range of issues. However, it would not be appropriate to have conversations with stakeholders about reforms to the Electronic Communications Code while the responses to the consultation on that issue are being considered.

■ Telecommunications: Local Government Finance

Virginia Crosbie:

[\[16270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local

Government on the potential effect of the proposed Electronic Communications Code changes on local government finances.

Matt Warman:

Ministers and officials regularly engage with their counterparts in other government departments as part of the policy making process. Our proposals for amending the Electronic Communications Code are no exception and we will continue to work together to ensure that the proposals reflect the importance of both digital infrastructure and the vital role that local government has in supporting deployment.

EDUCATION

■ Educational visits: Coronavirus

Emma Hardy:

[18557]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will issue guidance to schools and colleges on whether educational coach trips planned after 21 June can still take place.

Nick Gibb:

The Department's guidance on educational visits can be viewed at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-coronavirus-covid-19-operational-guidance#educational-visits>.

■ Higher Education: Fees and Charges

Matthew Pennycook:

[16174]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of reducing the maximum tuition fee limit in response to the impact of the covid-19 outbreak on the wider student experience.

Michelle Donelan:

The government remains committed to driving up the quality of higher education (HE) provision, ensuring that student finance is sustainable, and promoting genuine social mobility.

We recognise that tuition fees must continue to represent value for money for students and taxpayers, both during the COVID-19 outbreak and after. The independent panel chaired by Sir Philip Augar that reported to the review of post-18 education and funding made many recommendations regarding HE, including on fees and finance. We continue to consider those recommendations carefully and will conclude the review at the next Comprehensive Spending Review.

Our income-contingent student loan system helps remove financial barriers to study and means that no eligible student needs to pay tuition fees upfront. The government has already announced that the maximum tuition fee cap will remain at £9,250 for the 2021/22 academic year in respect of standard full-time courses at approved (fee cap) providers. We are also freezing the maximum tuition fee cap for the 2022/23

academic year - the fifth year in succession that maximum fees have been frozen - to deliver better value for students and to keep the cost of HE under control. HE providers are autonomous and responsible for setting their own fees under this level. In deciding to keep charging full fees, providers should ensure that they can continue to deliver courses that are fit for purpose and that help students to progress towards earning their qualifications.

If students have concerns, there is also a complaints process in place. They should first raise their concerns with their university. If their concerns remain unresolved, students at providers in England or Wales can ask the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) to consider their complaint. The OIA website is available via the following link: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/>.

The government has worked closely with the Office for Students to make clear that providers can draw upon existing funding to increase hardship funds and support disadvantaged students impacted by COVID-19. Providers are able to use the funding, worth around £256 million for the academic year 2020/21, towards addressing student hardship.

We have also made an additional £85 million of student hardship funding available to higher education providers in the 2020/21 academic year. Support can include assistance to help students access teaching remotely.

■ National Tutoring Programme

Peter Kyle: [\[18546\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2021 to Question 11547, what the anticipated regional breakdown is of the 750,000 pupils expected to receive tutoring under the National Tutoring Programme in academic year 2021-22.

Peter Kyle: [\[18547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 22 April 2021 to Question 183135, how many children are currently receiving tutoring by (a) local authority and (b) region.

Nick Gibb:

The National Tutoring Programme will provide additional, targeted support for children and young people who have been hardest hit by disruption to their education as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Since the launch of the programme in November 2020, over 232,000 pupils have been enrolled to receive tutoring, and of those enrolled over 173,000 have already commenced tutoring.

For this year's programme, which is on track to meet its target of reaching 250,000 pupils, the Department will ensure there is good provision of tutoring across the regions so that schools can provide tutoring to pupils who need it most. We will also ensure that tutors offer a mix of both face-to-face and online tutoring to allow remote access to pupils if required.

■ Overseas Students: Visas**Daniel Zeichner:**[\[16132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for the Home Department on providing urgent assurances to international students applying to UK universities that they will be granted a visa under the Student Route in the event that their institution adopts a blended learning approach for 2021-22 in response to ongoing covid-19 restrictions.

Michelle Donelan:

My department and I speak regularly with our counterparts in the Home Office about how visa and immigration policies may affect students.

International students are permitted to start a course from overseas through distance learning without a visa. These concessions are kept under regular review.

■ Pupils and Students: Mental Health**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**[\[16026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to invest in improving the mental health of (a) primary school pupils, (b) secondary school pupils and (c) 18-25 year olds in further or higher education.

Vicky Ford:

Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing is a priority for this government. While education settings cannot provide specialist clinical care, the support that schools and colleges are providing to their pupils, following the return to face-to-face education, should include time devoted to supporting mental health and wellbeing, which will play a fundamental part in supporting recovery. We want schools to have the freedom to decide which wider pastoral and extra-curricular activity to put in place, based on the needs of their pupils and drawing on evidence of effective practice.

We are supporting recovery action with significant additional funding. In June 2021, we announced £1.4 billion of additional funding for education recovery. This is in addition to the £1.7 billion already committed, bringing total investment announced for education recovery over the past year to over £3 billion. The package provides support to children aged 2 to 19 in schools, 16-19 providers and early years. It will expand our reforms in 2 areas where the evidence is clear that our investment will have significant impact: high-quality tutoring targeted at those that need it most and high-quality training for teachers.

The one-off Recovery Premium for state-funded schools will help schools to provide their disadvantaged pupils with a boost to the support, both academic and pastoral, that has been proved most effective in helping them recover from the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. This is in addition to the £650 million catch-up premium shared across state-funded schools over the 2020 to 2021 academic year, which is also supporting education settings to put the right catch-up and pastoral support in place.

The Education Endowment Foundation have published a COVID-19 support guide to support schools, which includes further information about interventions to support pupils' mental health and wellbeing:

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

Our Mental Health in Education Action Group has been looking further at what more can be done to help education settings support mental wellbeing as part of recovery. The department has recently brought together all its sources of advice for schools and colleges into a single site, which includes signposting to external sources of mental health and wellbeing support for teachers, school staff and school leaders:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-in-schools-and-colleges#mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources>.

It also includes guidance to support relationships, sex and health education curriculum planning, covering the key issues children and young people have been concerned about throughout the COVID-19 outbreak: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teaching-about-mental-wellbeing>.

On 10 May, as part of Mental Health Awareness Week, we announced more than £17 million of mental health funding to improve mental health and wellbeing support in schools and colleges. This includes £9.5 million for up to 7,800 schools to train a senior mental health lead in the next academic year, and £7 million in additional funding for local authorities to deliver the Wellbeing for Education Recovery programme. This builds on Wellbeing for Education Return in the 2020/21 academic year, which offered schools in every local authority and reached up to 15,000 schools with free expert training, support and resources for staff dealing with children and young people experiencing additional pressures from the last year, including trauma, anxiety, or grief.

For further education, the College Collaboration Fund (CCF), a £5.4 million national programme of competitive grant funding delivered in the 2020/21 financial year, is helping to support learner and staff mental health and wellbeing through online programmes and remote support. One of the funded projects was Weston College's 'Let's Chat' programme, which delivered a number of wellbeing support packages accessible at any time to keep staff, students and their families safe and well during lockdown. We are now assessing bids for the CCF 2 for the 2021/22 financial year.

With regards to higher education, student mental health and suicide prevention are key priorities for this government. We continue to work closely with the HE sector to promote good practice. Universities are not only experts in their student population, but also best placed to identify the needs of their student body. The Department of Health and Social Care has overall policy responsibility for young people's mental health. We continue to work closely with them to take steps to develop mental health and wellbeing support.

We have also increased funding to specialist services. In March, we announced a £79 million boost to children and young people's mental health support, which will include increasing the number of Mental Health Support Teams. The support teams - which provide early intervention on mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in

schools and colleges - will grow from the 59 set up by last March to around 400 by April 2023, supporting nearly 3 million children. This increase means that millions of children and young people will have access to significantly expanded mental health services. In total, £13 million will be used to accelerate progress to support young adults aged 18 to 25. This group includes university students and those not in education or training, who have reported the worst mental health outcomes during the COVID-19 outbreak, and who sometimes fall through the gap between children and adult services.

While it is for HE providers to determine what welfare and counselling services they need to provide to their students to offer that support, the government is proactive in promoting good practice in this area. We continue to work closely with Universities UK on embedding the Stepchange programme within the sector. Stepchange calls on HE leaders to adopt mental health as a strategic priority and to take a whole-institution approach, embedding it across all policies, cultures, curricula, and practice. The Stepchange programme relaunched in March 2020 as the Mentally Healthy Universities programme. Further information on the programme is available here: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/stepchange>.

The University Mental Health Charter, announced in June 2018, is backed by the government and led by the HE sector. The Charter, developed in collaboration with students, staff and partner organisations, aims to drive up standards of practice, including leadership, early intervention, and data collection. Further information on the Charter is available here: <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/charter.html>.

The department has also worked with the Office for Students (OfS) to provide Student Space, a dedicated mental health and wellbeing platform for students. Student Space has been funded by up to £3 million from the OfS in the 2020/21 academic year. We have asked the OfS to allocate £15 million towards student mental health in the 2021/22 academic year through proposed reforms to Strategic Priorities grant funding, to help address the challenges to student mental health posed by the transition to university, given the increasing demand for mental health services. This will target students in greatest need of such services, including vulnerable and hard to reach groups.

■ Pupils: Coronavirus

Julian Sturdy:

[16091]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether school children can be included in the pilot to test the viability of daily covid-19 tests rather than self-isolation following an alert of a close contact from NHS Test and Trace.

Nick Gibb:

Daily contact testing, used as an alternative to self-isolation if a positive case is detected, continues to have the potential to be a valuable tool to identify positive contacts and break chains of transmission, while keeping more students and staff at school and college, which is the best place for their development and wellbeing.

A trial is being coordinated by the Department of Health and Social Care, the Department for Education, and the Office of National Statistics. It is being overseen by an independent Data Monitoring Committee and evaluated by researchers at the University of Oxford. The trial was also given ethical approval by the Public Health England Research Ethics and Governance Group.

The findings of the independent clinical trial are due to report in the summer and, if beneficial, a roll out could commence in secondary schools and colleges during the autumn term.

With respect to daily contact testing for the adult population, on the 29 April 2021, a randomised controlled study started in England to evaluate the home use of seven daily lateral flow tests plus two polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests, with the option for study participants to be released from self isolation for up to 24 hours following a negative result. A business as usual comparison group will be offered a single PCR test and asked to self-isolate for the 10 day period as usual.

■ Social Services: Children

Zarah Sultana:

[18609]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will provide a breakdown of the amount spent by local authorities on (a) foster care companies, (b) psychiatrists, (c) private social workers and (d) other third parties in the children's social care sector in each of the last 12 months.

Vicky Ford:

The department does not collect monthly children's social care spend data from local authorities. The department collects annual local authority children and young people's services spend data (Section 251 LA and school expenditure) that covers a range of spend data across children's and young people's services. The latest data for the 2019-20 financial year is available here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/la-and-school-expenditure/2019-20>.

■ Students: Disability and Special Educational Needs

Marsha De Cordova:

[16213]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help ensure that college students with special educational needs or disabilities but without high needs funding receive the same level of support that they received when at school.

Gillian Keegan:

In 2014, the Children and Families Act introduced significant reforms to the system for special educational needs and disability (SEND). It brought the further education (FE) sector into a single coherent SEND system spanning early years, schools and FE, and placed new duties on FE colleges and other post-16 providers, who must have regard to the SEND Code of Practice. Colleges are required to identify and address the special educational needs of the learners they work with and must make sure that the young person gets the support they need.

The SEND Code of Practice states that colleges should be ambitious for all young people with SEND, whatever their needs and whatever their level of study.

The national funding formula for 16–19 year-olds includes disadvantage funding to attract, retain and support disadvantaged students, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. In the 2020/21 academic year we allocated over £530 million of disadvantage funding within 16-19 funding formula.

Through the grant which we have in place with the Education and Training Foundation (£1.2 million in the 2021-22 financial year) we fund training and support for the college workforce to equip them to offer high quality provision for learners with SEND, throughout their time in college.

We are currently conducting a review of SEND policy, which includes looking at how we can provide the highest quality support across school and colleges, ensuring that children and young people with SEND are enabled to thrive, prepare for adulthood and secure high quality outcomes.

Marsha De Cordova: [\[16214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the forthcoming review into support for children with special educational needs and disabilities, what plans he has to include measures that remove potential barriers to a smooth and supportive transition from school to college for young people with Education Health and Care Plans.

Marsha De Cordova: [\[16215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help ensure that the transfer of information from school to college is as good as the transfer of information from school to school for young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Vicky Ford:

The SEND Review has listened carefully to children and young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) and is alert to the barriers which pupils with SEND can face transitioning from school to college.

The review is considering how to improve the transition process for students, with, and without, education health and care plans, as well as how we can support schools and colleges in effectively managing the transition process.

The SEND Review is exploring with all partners across education, health and care, how data sharing can be improved to support children and young people with SEND.

This includes considering how the transfer of information between school to college can be improved, to strengthen pathways into further education, by being more effective and well timed.

■ Students: Islam**Zarah Sultana:****[18608]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect of interest-bearing student loans on the number of Muslim students entering Higher Education over the last seven years.

Michelle Donelan:

The government published research in May 2019 on higher education and how religious beliefs and the current student finance system influence these decisions.

This research is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-student-finance-current-and-future-students-perspectives>.

The government has also assessed the effect of interest-bearing loans on Muslim students in the impact assessment for the Higher Education and Research Act, which included provisions to enable the introduction of an Alternative Student Finance (ASF) product. The impact assessment was published in December 2017 and is available here:

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukia/2017/182/pdfs/ukia_20170182_en.pdf.

The government is considering the ASF product carefully alongside its other priorities and will provide a further update with the full and final conclusion of the Post-18 Review of Education and Funding. The interim report of the review was published on 21 January 2021, and the review is scheduled to conclude alongside the next multi-year Spending Review. An update on the ASF product will be provided at that time.

■ Students: Mental Health Services**Andrew Rosindell:****[16045]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of lectures based on critical race theory on the mental health of students in universities.

Andrew Rosindell:**[16046]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of UK universities that teach courses based on critical race theory.

Michelle Donelan:

The department does not keep a central record of individual courses offered by higher education providers, or their effect on the mental health of students.

Higher education providers are independent and autonomous institutions and are free to make their own internal decisions, including regarding curricula. In higher education, it is the freedom to think independently, and challenge opinions, which makes our universities truly world-renowned, and it is this freedom that will be protected in the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill, introduced on 12 May.

Higher education providers, and their academic members of staff, are fully entitled to adopt any philosophy they wish in their teaching or research, and to speak out freely about their beliefs without suffering detriment. However, providers should not interfere with academic freedom by imposing, or seeking to impose, a political or ideological viewpoint upon the teaching, research, or other activities of individual academics, either across the whole university or at departmental, faculty, or other level.

Student mental health is a key priority for this government. We continue to work closely with the higher education sector to promote good practice.

The government strongly supports the University Mental Health Charter, which aims to drive up standards in promoting student and staff mental health and wellbeing. The government continues to work closely with Universities UK on embedding the 'Step Change: Mentally Healthy Universities' framework, calling on higher education leaders to adopt mental health as a strategic priority.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Chemicals: Regulation

Dawn Butler:

[\[18502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the report of the Environmental Audit Committee, Toxic Chemicals in Everyday Life, published in July 2019, what steps his Department is taking to tackle the regulation of toxic chemicals used in furniture.

Rebecca Pow:

Flame retardants which were used in soft furnishings that fulfil the persistent organic pollutants (POPs) criteria are banned from use or restricted globally under the UN Stockholm Convention. Other known harmful flame retardants have been identified as Substances of Very High Concern (SVHCs) and are on the candidate list for authorisation. This is the first step for a harmful chemical to be banned subject to stringent controls under the UK REACH authorisation process.

The UK supports global action on harmful chemicals. The Environment Agency is a leader in understanding these chemicals and the UK has recently proposed another flame retardant, medium chain chlorinated paraffins (MCCPs), to the Stockholm Convention for consideration as a POP, which could lead to a ban on its use in the future.

The Government has announced that it will develop a new approach to the Furniture and Furnishing (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 which will focus on safety outcomes and will be underpinned by a set of essential safety requirements, which all upholstered furniture placed on the market must meet.

The current regulations do not specify the use of chemical flame retardants as a means of making furniture fire safe and the Government continues to welcome innovative approaches that deliver safe outcomes for consumers.

■ Domestic Waste: Recycling

Caroline Lucas:

[16060]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what information he holds on the proportion of waste from household (ex NI-192) recorded by local authorities as collected and sent for reuse, recycling, composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion that is successfully reused, recycled, composted or treated by anaerobic digestion.

Rebecca Pow:

Defra publishes an annual national statistics release and datasets relating to the collection and disposal of local authority collected waste. The most recent statistics show that 45.5 per cent of 'waste from households' in England was sent for recycling, reuse, composting or anaerobic digestion in [2019](#).

The (ex-192) performance indicator measure of recycling (including reuse, composting, and anaerobic digestion) relates specifically to the 'household' waste definition. Figures for 2019/20 are available within Table 3a of the published [dataset](#).

'Waste from households' has a slightly different definition to 'household' waste and details of these differences can be found in the Glossary of Terms section of the statistical [notice](#).

'Household' waste collected for recycling, reuse, composting or anaerobic digestion, which was then rejected by sorting facilities or at the gates of a reprocessor was estimated to be around 525 thousand tonnes (5 per cent) of all material collected for recycling, reuse, composting or anaerobic digestion in 2019/20. This rejected material is diverted to the residual waste stream and does not count towards recycling rates. Defra does not publish this figure on a 'waste from households' basis.

The Environment Bill stipulates that all local authorities in England must make arrangements for a core set of materials to be collected for recycling from households. This will help to improve the quality and recycling value of the materials collected and, alongside reforms on labelling, will reduce confusion over the materials that can and cannot be recycled.

■ Nappies: Environment Protection and Recycling

Ruth Jones:

[16219]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of Schedule 6 on Resource efficiency information of the Environment Bill on the (a) environmental impact of single-use nappies and (b) uptake of reusable alternatives.

Rebecca Pow:

At this stage we have not carried out a specific assessment of the potential to use Schedule 6 of the Environment Bill to address the environmental impact of single-use nappies or the uptake of reusable alternatives. The powers being sought through the Environment Bill would enable us to introduce eco-design and consumer information requirements for a range of products, including nappies, to drive the market towards more sustainable goods. However, we have not considered to date whether there are strong grounds for using those powers in relation to nappies. As with any new policy, if a proposal were to be developed, this would be subject to consultation and a full assessment of the costs and benefits.

■ Plastics: Packaging**Feryal Clark:**[\[16241\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will hold discussions with Ministers of the Department for International Trade on the finding that plastic packaging and bags from seven of the top 10 UK supermarkets have been found at multiple sites across south-west Turkey as set out in Greenpeace's report, *Trashed: how the UK is still dumping plastic waste on the rest of the world*, published in May 2021; and if he will make a statement.

Rebecca Pow:

It is illegal to export waste from the UK to be dumped or burned overseas. Under the UK legislation on waste shipments, businesses involved in the export of wastes are required to take all necessary steps to ensure that the waste they ship is managed in an environmentally sound manner throughout its shipment and during its recycling. The Environment Agency (EA), as the competent authority for waste shipments for England, has been proactively engaging with the authorities in Turkey on the issue of illegal plastic waste exports over the past year. The Environment Agency has liaised with Greenpeace, following their recent report, in order to seek information which could assist them with their compliance monitoring and enforcement of waste exports to Turkey.

All waste exports need to be made in accordance with the relevant legislation and the UK regulators have a system of inspections in place to verify compliance under the waste exports and packaging regimes respectively. Over the last 12 months, monitoring by the Environment Agency (EA) has had a particular focus on preventing illegal plastic waste exports. In 2020, the EA prevented the illegal export of 46 shipping containers of plastic waste to Turkey, this year they have already prevented the illegal export of 122 containers of plastic waste to Turkey. The EA also currently has four active investigations into illegal waste exports to Turkey. The Environment Agency (EA) has developed a good relationship with the Turkish Ministry of Environment, who have expressed their thanks for the UK's collaborative approach in preventing illegal exports of waste to Turkey. Turkey has now banned the import of most plastic wastes.

The UK government has pledged to introduce tougher controls on illegal waste exports, and the Environment Bill includes a power to introduce mandatory electronic tracking of waste which will make it harder for criminals to obtain and export waste illegally. We plan to launch a consultation on this in the Autumn.

Within this context, Defra is working with the Department for International Trade on supporting the development of more plastic processing infrastructure within the UK to reduce the need to export these materials to other countries, such as Turkey. The Government is also committed to a bringing forward a ban on plastic exports to non-OECD countries.

■ Public Footpaths and Rights of Way

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[16083\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions (a) he has had with Cabinet colleagues and (b) officials in his Department have had with their counterparts in other Government departments on establishing additional public footpaths and byways in England.

Rebecca Pow:

We are working to complete the England Coast Path and to support our network of National Trails and intend to create a new National Trail across the North of England. We are ensuring that rights of way are recorded and protected, as well as developing schemes that reward environmental benefits which could fund the creation of new paths, such as footpaths and bridleways, which provide access for cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians where appropriate.

Local authorities are also required to keep a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) to plan improvements to their network, which is usually available on the authority's website.

■ Rabbits: Animal Welfare

Elliot Colburn:

[\[16226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, for what reasons did the recently published Action Plan for Animals not include domestic rabbit welfare.

Elliot Colburn:

[\[16227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what consultation his Department undertook with rabbit welfare groups in the development of the Action Plan for Animals.

Elliot Colburn:

[\[16228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many meetings his Department had with rabbit welfare groups in the development of the Action Plan for Animals.

Elliot Colburn:

[\[16229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans his Department has to improve the welfare of domestic rabbits.

Victoria Prentis:

The Government continues to take positive action to protect the welfare of companion animals – including domestic rabbits. The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations, introduced in 2018, require anyone who is in the business of selling rabbits as pets to obtain a valid licence from their local authority. Licence holders must meet strict statutory minimum welfare standards which are enforced by local authorities who have powers to issue, refuse or revoke licences. The 2018 Regulations are supported by statutory guidance which provides specific information about the keeping of rabbits for sale:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/936832/selling-animals-as-pets.pdf

Additional advice is available to help pet owners provide for the welfare needs of their rabbit, including the British Rabbit Council's Codes of Practice:

<https://thebritishrabbitcouncil.org/codes-practice.php>

Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, it is an offence to cause any animal unnecessary suffering or to fail to provide for its welfare. The Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Act 2021 was recently granted Royal Assent. This realises the Government's manifesto commitment to increase the sentences available to our courts for the most serious cases of animal cruelty. It means that from 29 June 2021, anyone who is cruel to an animal (including domestic rabbits) faces being sent to prison for up to five years, or receiving an unlimited fine, or both.

The Action Plan for Animal Welfare is an ambitious plan which sets out an overview of the Government's main priorities on animal welfare and conservation, particularly those which require legislative action and reform. It is not exhaustive of every animal welfare issue which the Government covers. While the Action Plan does not refer explicitly to rabbit welfare, the Government cares about rabbit welfare and my department continues to work closely with organisations such as the Companion Animal Sector Council to monitor developments in welfare standards for all domestic animals including rabbits. My department is also happy to engage with rabbit welfare groups on an ongoing basis about their concerns.

■ Tree Planting

Rachael Maskell:

[\[16157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress he has made towards meeting his tree planting programme target.

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 in support of this, using more than £500 million from the Nature for Climate Fund.

The Plan sets out a range of new incentives which will provide significant support for 2021/22 planting season and beyond. This includes the recently launched £15.9 million England Woodland Creation Offer for landowners, land managers and public bodies to apply for support to create new woodland, using traditional methods of tree establishment as well as natural colonisation, agroforestry, and riparian planting. 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; and support from the £80 million Green Recovery Challenge Fund for a range of charity projects to protect and plant trees. These initiatives contributed to the planting of 13,410 hectares across the UK in 2020/21, of which 2,180 hectares were planted in England.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ **Bhutan: Coronavirus**

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[16044\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department has had discussions with the Government in Bhutan on assisting them with the second round of covid-19 vaccinations in that country.

Nigel Adams:

Officials from the British High Commission in New Delhi regularly engage with the Royal Government of Bhutan on a range of issues, including COVID-19. Almost all adults in Bhutan have received a first dose of their COVID-19 vaccine. The Royal Government of Bhutan is exploring options to procure doses for its second round of vaccinations. The UK is engaging locally with manufacturers and international partners on how best to support Bhutan's vaccination programme. The UK has already committed £548 million to the COVAX facility which will supply vaccines to up to 92 low-middle income countries.

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Sir David Evennett:

[\[16796\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what support his Department has provided for the global distribution of covid-19 vaccines.

Wendy Morton:

The UK has championed since the beginning of the pandemic 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 leveraged through match funding \$1 billion from other donors in 2020. This support to COVAX has been critical to it distributing COVID-19 vaccines to over 130 countries and economies, with its aim to provide up to 1.8 billion doses low- and middle-income countries by early 2022. The UK has also committed to share 100 million vaccine doses within the next year, with the majority to go 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 over 500 million doses of the vaccine have been distributed worldwide at non-profit prices, with two-thirds going to lower- and middle- income countries.

■ Developing Countries: Drugs**Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[18549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether tablets donated by British and international pharmaceutical companies will expire and need to be incinerated rather than distributed to willing recipients to prevent and eliminate disease.

Wendy Morton:

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) is currently working with implementing partners, drug companies, donors and the World Health Organisation to exit the Accelerating the Sustainable Control and Elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases programme as responsibly as possible within financial constraints. We are continuing to distribute medicines in the most urgent cases. Given that these activities are ongoing, it is not possible at this stage to estimate if any of the 24 recipient countries will have medicines that will not be distributed. The full results of the programme will be published by early 2022.

Global health remains a top priority for UK ODA and we will continue to be a major contributor in leading international action to strengthen global health security and help build more resilient health systems. Departmental cross-government allocations of ODA spend for 2021/22 were laid out in a Written Ministerial Statement in Parliament on 21 April and the Foreign Secretary highlighted that FCDO will spend £1,305 million on global health, which means that we will remain among the most generous international donors.

■ Developing Countries: Poverty**Ruth Jones:**[\[16220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effectiveness of the policies agreed at the G7 Summit in June 2021 in tackling global poverty.

James Duddridge:

Outcomes from the G7 Summit and G7 Ministerial meetings reflect the UK's commitment to using our G7 Presidency to tackle global poverty. The G7 has agreed to share at least 870 million vaccine doses over the next year, taking its total commitment to one billion doses since our first UK Presidency meeting. On girls' education and opportunities for women, the G7 agreed two ambitious global targets: 40 million more girls in school, and 20 million more girls reading by age 10 or the end of primary school, in low and lower middle-income countries, by 2026. The G7 committed at least \$2.75 billion funding over the next 5 years for the Global Partnership for Education, and a \$15 billion investment target to improve economic opportunities for women in developing countries. To help vulnerable countries adapt to the impact of climate change, G7 Leaders committed to provide new financing for early action, disaster risk and insurance. The G7 has also agreed a Famine Prevention Compact, helping protect over 34 million people at imminent risk and committing \$7 billion - the largest collective contribution to the humanitarian system this year.

Education: Children**Marion Fellows:**[\[17755\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Government's commitment to education made at the G7 in June 2021, what steps the Government is taking to remove barriers to education for the world's most vulnerable children, particularly those who are also living with disabilities.

Wendy Morton:

Meeting under the UK Presidency, G7 Foreign and Development Ministers endorsed two new, global, SDG 4 milestone targets on girls' education, which we are calling on the world to help deliver. Ministers also endorsed a girls' education declaration, which specifically states the G7 will work in collaboration with developing country partners, multilateral institutions, civil society, girl-led groups, and youth leaders, to remove the obstacles to education that stand in girls' way. This includes addressing the social, environmental, and institutional barriers to education such as reducing violence in and out of schools, promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights and amending restrictive policies or legislation which prevent girls thriving in school.

We know learners with disabilities face severe barriers in accessing education, which have been further exacerbated by the pandemic. The FCDO's "twin track" approach provides both targeted support for learners with disabilities and seeks to improve mainstream education systems to be inclusive. Through the Girls' Education Challenge, we are helping 100,000 girls with disabilities receive an education in countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe.

■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Artificial Intelligence**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[14049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, 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.

James Cleverly:

Artificial Intelligence presents significant opportunities for FCDO to increase the impact of the outcomes it delivers, its operational efficiency and the service we provide to UK citizens abroad.

The Department is undergoing extensive digital modernisation and will be making use of automation technologies, including Artificial Intelligence where appropriate, to support and enhance the products and services that underpin the delivery of Consular, diplomatic and development outcomes and our corporate operation.

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

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[14200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment they have made of the potential (a) threats and (b) opportunities of artificial intelligence in respect of their Department's responsibilities.

James Cleverly:

As outlined in the Integrated Review, the UK is taking steps to secure our status as a Science and Tech Superpower by 2030, including by establishing a leading edge in critical areas such as artificial intelligence (AI). The FCDO is building international partnerships through the global Science and Innovation Network to unlock new breakthroughs in technology, and using UK aid to test how AI and other technologies can address these challenges - such as saving lives through the Hala early warning system that uses AI to identify and predict airstrikes in Syria. The FCDO further continues to work to mitigate the security and ethical risks posed by AI, by working with a range of stakeholders to develop inclusive and ethical approaches to AI, including prioritising individual rights, protecting data privacy, and avoiding harms resulting from automated decision-making.

■ Gaza and West Bank: Coronavirus**Dawn Butler:** [\[18498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support covid-19 vaccination of civilians in the West Bank and Gaza.

James Cleverly:

The British Embassy Tel Aviv and the British Consulate-General Jerusalem are in regular contact with the relevant parties and continue to raise the issue of timely

access to vaccines. The Foreign Secretary most recently raised this during his visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 26 May. The UK is committed to global equitable access to effective vaccines as demonstrated by our £548 million contribution to the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC) - the international initiative to support global equitable access to vaccines. We are pleased that the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) were among the first to benefit from the COVAX scheme with its first delivery on 17 March 2021. Since that initial shipment, we are pleased that several further deliveries have arrived in the OPTs, including most recently on 1 June 2021.

■ India: Christianity and Hinduism

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[16043\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions his Department has had with its Indian counterpart on protecting the religious freedoms of Christians in India.

Nigel Adams:

Human rights form a regular part of our dialogue with India. Most recently, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Minister of State for South Asia, discussed the situation for Christians in India with India's Minister of State for Home Affairs, Kishan Reddy, on 15 March. Our then Acting High Commissioner in New Delhi also discussed UK Parliamentary interest in minorities in India with officials from India's Ministry of External Affairs on 5 January. A senior FCDO official discussed the situation for India's religious minorities with the Indian High Commissioner on 29 December 2020.

The British High Commission in New Delhi regularly meets religious representatives and has run projects promoting minority rights. This year, they supported an interfaith leadership programme for a cohort of emerging Indian faith leaders, including Christians, creating an opportunity to exchange expertise on leading modern, inclusive faith communities, and promoting values of tolerance and multi-culturalism.

■ Nepal: Coronavirus

Matt Rodda:

[\[18562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to provide covid-19 related support to Nepal.

Nigel Adams:

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the British Embassy in Kathmandu has reprioritised over £40 million of its development budget including: the construction of an oxygen plant in a Kathmandu hospital; technical advice to local government on managing the impact of COVID-19; water, sanitation and hygiene facilities to support around 400,000 people; safe spaces for women in isolation centres; cash and voucher assistance for the most vulnerable; and nutrition support for pregnant and lactating women. In response to the second wave of COVID-19 the UK has also

donated 260 ventilators and various pieces of personal protective equipment as well as constructing an oxygen plant in Kathmandu.

With regards to vaccines, the UK is a leading donor to COVAX, having committed £548 million to the scheme. COVAX has delivered 348,000 doses to Nepal so far and another tranche is expected in the coming months. As G7 chair this year the UK has also secured a commitment to donate 1 billion vaccine doses to the developing world by June 2022, including 100 million donated by the UK. The majority of these doses will be donated to COVAX. As shareholders and contributors to both the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, the UK has also pushed hard for multilateral organisations to provide finance to countries for vaccine procurement, including Nepal. The World Bank has now made at least \$75 million available to the Government of Nepal for that purpose; a further \$165 million will soon be proposed to the board of the Asian Development Bank, which the UK will also support.

■ Overseas Aid: Armed Conflict

Chris Law:

[\[13971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what consultation he has conducted on the impact of the reduction in Official Development Assistance spending on individuals living in conflict zones.

James Cleverly:

Following the move to 0.5%, FCDO Ministers consulted with over 80 NGOs, partners and parliamentarians about the changes to ODA. NGOs, partners and parliamentarians fed in their views on development priorities and programmes to officials and Ministers on a regular basis, including through a roundtable for civil society. The FCDO will spend £419 million bilaterally in 21/22 on open societies and conflict resolution including to harness the UK's unique strengths in conflict management and resolution. The cross-government Conflict, Stability and Security Fund will receive £874 million for 2021-22 to focus on the link between stability, resilience and security, and work with governments and civil society on peace initiatives.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Abortion: Drugs

Caroline Lucas:

[\[8575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to make permission for early medical abortion treatment to be received by post following a telemedical consultation a permanent option; and if he will make a statement.

Helen Whately:

The Government committed to undertake a public consultation on whether to make permanent the temporary measure allowing for home use of both pills for early medical abortion up to 10 weeks gestation for all eligible women. The consultation

has now closed and we are carefully considering all of the responses received, and plan to publish our response later this year. The temporary measure will be kept in place until the response is published.

■ **Abortion: Health Services**

Andrea Jenkyns: [\[16903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 23 April 2021 to Question 181350 on abortion: health services, whether follow-up calls regarding complications are also only a matter for individual abortion providers; and whether there is a mechanism to guarantee that such calls are made.

Helen Whately:

Abortion providers will discuss possible complications with the woman during the consultation and women will be provided with written advice and information about possible symptoms, including those which would necessitate urgent review. Women, should they have any concerns, have access to a 24 hour telephone helpline which specialises in post abortion support and care.

Follow up calls regarding complications are a matter for individual abortion providers. There is no mechanism to guarantee that proactive follow up calls are made to all patients.

■ **Brain: Tumours**

Dr Lisa Cameron: [\[12169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps are being taken to ensure that brain tumour patients have equality of access to 5-ALA across all health boards.

Jo Churchill:

In May 2019, the Government announced that the fluorescent dye 5-AminoLevulinic Acid (5-ALA) was being used in all 27 neurological units in the National Health Service in England, in accordance with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guidelines. Each of England's neurosurgical units is expected to have an average of around 55 patients requiring 5-ALA per year.

■ **Bridlington and District Hospital**

Sir Greg Knight: [\[17694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans his Department has for developing and improving the services available at Bridlington Hospital.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 22 June 2021]: There are plans to develop the stroke inpatient rehabilitation service within Bridlington Hospital later this year serving patients from the Bridlington and Scarborough requiring continuing care following their discharge from the hyper acute stroke units in York and Hull. Virtual outpatient and multi-

disciplinary consultations in some areas of specialist care are also being progressed to limit the amount of unnecessary travel for patients and clinicians.

■ Care Homes

Rachael Maskell: [\[17789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will enable residents of care homes to have overnight stays away from the care home.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 22 June 2021]: From 21 June, care home residents may leave their care home to undertake a broader range of activities without the need to self-isolate on their return to the care home, including visiting loved ones indoors or staying overnight out of the care home. Visits are subject to individual risk assessment by care providers.

■ Care Homes: Coronavirus

Justin Madders: [\[16138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish all advice issued in 2020 to residential care homes on the transfer of covid-19 positive residents into acute settings.

Helen Whately:

Advice to residential care homes on admissions, hospital discharge, designated settings and the management of staff and residents exposed to COVID-19 is published on GOV.UK. The key guidance documents are available at the following links:

‘Coronavirus (COVID-19): admission and care of people in care homes’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-admission-and-care-of-people-in-care-homes>

‘Discharge into care homes: designated settings’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-settings-for-people-discharged-to-a-care-home/discharge-into-care-homes-designated-settings>

‘COVID-19: management of staff and exposed patients and residents in health and social care settings: Guidance on the management of staff, patients and residents who have been exposed to COVID-19’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-settings-for-people-discharged-to-a-care-home/discharge-into-care-homes-designated-settings>

Whilst the guidance has been updated periodically, a record of changes is published alongside the documents.

■ Care Homes: Sick Pay

Charlotte Nichols:

[10688]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential correlation between statutory sick pay for long-term care facility staff and rates of covid-19 transmission and infection in care home residents; and if he will make a statement.

Helen Whately:

The Vivaldi study found that payment of statutory sick pay, compared to no payment, was associated with significant reduction of infection among staff and residents in care homes. The Infection Control Fund, first introduced in May 2020, has provided £1.35 billion to support adult social care providers take infection prevention and control measures such as helping maintain the normal wages of staff who need to self-isolate during the pandemic.

The reports for the Vivaldi study are available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vivaldi-study-results>

■ Care Homes: Visits

Rachael Maskell:

[17787]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will allow family member to take their relatives, resident in care homes, out for day trips.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 22 June 2021]: From 21 June 2021, care home residents are now able to take part in more activities without the need to self-isolate, such as visiting loved ones indoors or staying overnight out of the care home. Visits are subject to individual risk assessment by care homes.

Rachael Maskell:

[17788]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will remove covid-19 restrictions on visiting arrangements to care homes.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 22 June 2021]: Care home residents can nominate up to five visitors, including an 'essential care giver', for regular visits into the home. From 21 June, subject to individual risk assessment, care home residents will be able to take part in more activities out of the care home without the need to self-isolate. Residents should still self-isolate following overnight stays in hospital or where an individual risk assessment determines a visit out of the care home is high risk.

■ Carers

Theresa Villiers:

[7759]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to take part in events to mark Carers' Week from 7 to 13 June.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 7 June 2021]: We recognise the significance of the week and will be participating in several events.

Carers' Week is an important week, helping to raise awareness of the vital role unpaid carers play in supporting loved ones, relatives and friends.

■ Coronavirus Act 2020 (Early Expiry) Regulations 2021 (Draft)**Matthew Pennycook:**[\[17796\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the draft Coronavirus Act 2020 (Early Expiry) Regulations 2021 will come into effect.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 22 June 2021]: The draft Coronavirus Act 2020 (Early Expiry) Regulations 2021 were laid on 21 April 2021 and will come into force once it has received Parliamentary approval.

■ Coronavirus: Children**Rachael Maskell:**[\[14008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the recent rise in covid-19 infection among secondary school children; and what steps he plans to take in response to that rise.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 15 June 2021]: Whilst case rates in children and young people have increased relative to older adult populations, reflecting the protection afforded by vaccination, the risk to children from COVID-19 remains low. Schools across the country continue to have robust protective measures in place, including regular weekly testing to break chains of transmission and keeping pupils in smaller group bubbles. Public Health England surveillance shows that COVID-19 outbreaks linked to education settings have remained low and have broadly reflected cases in the wider community.

We are taking additional measures in areas where there is a high prevalence of the Delta variant, including increasing the availability of testing for staff, pupils and families and working with Directors of Public Health to reduce local transmission.

■ Coronavirus: Disease Control**Ben Bradley:**[\[16206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much funding has been awarded to the University of St Andrews for research into whether ultraviolet-C light is effective against covid-19; what the terms of reference for that research are; and what estimate he has made of when the findings will be reported to Government and published.

Jo Churchill:

A total of £136,000 has been awarded to the University of St Andrews under the provisions of NHS Act 2006 Para 13 Schedule.

The terms of reference are as follows:

- The trials and assessment will be carried out by the University of St. Andrew;
- The Funding Period started on 1 March 2021 and ends on 28 February 2022 unless terminated earlier in accordance with this Grant Funding Agreement; and
- The Grant Recipient shall provide the Authority with a quarterly report on the progress of the trials on evaluating the efficacy of viricidal Far-UVC light technology and its ability to inactivate virus in droplets, aerosols and on surfaces in simulated public locations.

Initial results are expected in Quarter 4 2021.

■ Coronavirus: Screening**Chi Onwurah:****[19581]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the announcement by the US Food and Drug Administration in respect of the performance of Innova covid-19 tests, what plans he has for the authorisation of alternative covid-19 rapid lateral flow tests including those being produced in the UK; and if he will provide an update on an extension of the exceptional use authorisation from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency in respect of those tests in the context of continuing covid-19 restrictions.

Jo Churchill:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Newton Abbot (Anne Marie Morris MP) on 21 June to Question [16120](#).

■ Dental Services: Plymouth**Luke Pollard:****[14213]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of children and young people under 18 waiting for an orthodontist appointment in Plymouth.

Jo Churchill:

The information requested is not collected centrally.

■ Disability: Children**Simon Jupp:****[6531]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to ensure that every disabled child with an Education, Health and Care plan can access therapies, health appointments and other services when required.

Helen Whately:

We are working with the Department for Education and NHS England and NHS Improvement to improve the provision of health service therapies to disabled children. NHS England and NHS Improvement's guidance makes clear that essential community services, including therapeutic support, must be prioritised for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities aged up to 25 years old and who have an Education Health and Care Plan in place or who are going through an assessment.

■ Fertility: LGBT People**Daisy Cooper:**[\[18599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that LBTQ women have equitable access to fertility care.

Helen Whately:

In England, decisions about local fertility services are determined by clinical commissioning groups, taking account of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's (NICE) fertility guidelines. These guidelines were updated in 2013 to include provision for same sex female couples, who have demonstrated their clinical infertility. The criteria in the guidelines were developed as a way of achieving equivalence between opposite-sex and same-sex couples in establishing clinical infertility and accessing National Health Service fertility treatment services.

NICE are currently discussing their plans to review the current guidelines.

■ Gender Recognition: Health Services**Rachael Maskell:**[\[17771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many months on average did it take between (a) GPs referring people to gender dysphoria services and (b) treatment being started in each year since 2010 in (i) England, (ii) each NHS England area, (iii) Yorkshire and (iv) York.

Jo Churchill:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 20 May 2021 to Question [786](#).

Rachael Maskell:[\[17772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much funding was allocated to gender dysphoria services in (a) England, (b) each NHS England area, (c) Yorkshire and (d) York in each year since 2010.

Jo Churchill:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 21 May to Question [787](#).

■ Health Services and Social Services: Career Development and Pay

Barbara Keeley: [\[7132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to create parity of esteem between health and social care with regard to (a) pay and (b) career development opportunities.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 7 June 2021]: The social care workforce should be valued just as we value the National Health Service workforce.

We support the training, development and progression of the adult social care workforce.

We are committed to the sustainable improvement of the adult social care system and will bring forward proposals for reform later in 2021, including for the social care workforce.

■ Health Services: Autism and Learning Disability

Zarah Sultana: [\[17858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the Government plans to publish its cross-government action plan to transform care and provide community support for people with a learning disability and/or autism.

Helen Whately:

We remain committed to publishing a clear action plan for implementing the 'Building the right support' national plan as soon as possible.

■ Ivermectin

Lee Rowley: [\[17824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the planned timetable is for the conclusion of the trials of ivermectin as a potential treatment for covid-19.

Jo Churchill:

The Department has been closely monitoring the evidence on the case for ivermectin as a treatment for COVID-19. A recent collection of small studies show some positive indications that ivermectin may act as a treatment for COVID-19. However, further high quality, larger-scale studies are still needed to confirm the safety and efficacy of this treatment. We will continue to closely monitor the data from further emerging clinical trials worldwide to expand our evidence-base on the efficacy of ivermectin in treating COVID-19.

Members: Correspondence**Rosie Cooper:** [\[14147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to respond to the letter dated 12 February 2021 from the hon. Member for West Lancashire, regarding the CQC report of a Health Care Provider in the North West, ref ZA55567.

Edward Argar:

We replied to the hon. Member on 21 June 2021.

Neuromuscular Disorders: Medical Treatments**Sir Mike Penning:** [\[2920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answers of 13 April 2021 to Questions 175739, 175740 and 175741 on Neuromuscular Disorders: Medical Treatments, what the planned timetable is for the (a) completion of the process to determine the location of the second provider and (b) successful commissioner to be able to implement the acceptance of NHS patients to access that second provider; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Mike Penning: [\[2921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answers of 13 April 2021 to Questions 175739, 175740 and 175741 on Neuromuscular Disorders: Medical Treatments, what assessment has he made of the likelihood of a backlog of NHS patients building up during the process to determine the location of the second provider and its successful implementation; what steps he is taking to tackle that patient backlog; and if he will make a statement.

Edward Argar:

[Holding answer 24 May 2021]: NHS England and NHS Improvement aim to complete the process to determine the location of a second provider to deliver transcranial magnetic resonance guided focused ultrasound services before the end of 2021/22. Until the location has been agreed, patients will continue to access assessment and treatment at the established centre in London.

NHS England and NHS Improvement commissioned this service in April 2021, therefore the number of patients who will be eligible for this treatment is uncertain. NHS England and NHS Improvement anticipate a level of patient backlog, as a result of patients who are suitable for treatment waiting for the service to be established. Capacity for provision of service in the first year has therefore taken this into account. The actual demand will be closely monitored in the first few years to better inform future commissioning.

■ Pregnancy: Epilepsy

Marsha De Cordova: [\[16945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what measures will be included in the forthcoming Women's Health Strategy to increase the safety of pregnant women with epilepsy.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

The exact topics to be addressed by the Women's Health Strategy have not yet been decided. The call for evidence will inform the priorities, content and actions in the new Strategy.

■ Respite Care

Barbara Keeley: [\[7135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what resources he has made available to local authorities to enable the provision of respite breaks for carers.

Barbara Keeley: [\[7136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will provide additional financial support to carers to access respite breaks.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 7 June 2021]: The Government recognises that access to breaks and respite provides important support for people with care needs and their carers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have provided approximately £1.8 billion in specific funding for adult social care. This includes the £1.35 billion Infection Control Fund, which has been used towards supporting day centres to re-open safely.

We are also continuing to work with local authorities, in collaboration with Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to ensure, where possible, the safe resumption of these services.

In addition we have provided over £2 billion in 2021 to the Better Care Fund which local authorities can access to fund social care services in their areas including respite services.

Dr Rupa Huq: [\[7890\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of increasing funding for unpaid carers' breaks.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 7 June 2021]: The Government recognises that access to breaks and respite provides important support for people with care needs and their carers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have provided approximately £1.8 billion in specific funding for adult social care. This includes £1.35 billion Infection Control Fund, which has been used towards supporting day centres to re-open safely.

We are also continuing to work with local authorities, in collaboration with Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to ensure, where possible, the safe resumption of these services.

In addition, have provided over £2 billion in 2021 to the Better Care Fund which local authorities can access to fund social care services in their areas, including respite services.

■ School Milk

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[16004]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to promote the Nursery Milk Scheme to eligible recipients to increase uptake of that scheme.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 21 June 2021]: The Nursery Milk Scheme is operated by the Nursery Milk Reimbursement Unit on behalf of the Department. The scheme is promoted through the Nursery Milk website at the following link:

<https://www.nurserymilk.co.uk/>

■ Social Services: Fees and Charges

Barbara Keeley:

[7133]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an assessment of the effect of the level of charges for social care on levels of deprivation among (a) working age adults using social care and (b) adults over 65 using social care.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 7 June 2021]: Under the Care Act 2014, charging for care is based on a number of principles including that people should not be charged more than it is reasonably practicable for them to pay. In assessing what someone can afford to pay for care, a local authority must ensure that in addition to the minimum guaranteed income or personal expenses allowance, people retain enough of their income so they have sufficient funds to meet those needs not being met by the local authority.

The purpose of these means tests is to avoid social deprivation. The next review of the allowance – the point at which an assessment would be made – is due in January 2022.

■ Social Services: Reform

Rachael Maskell:

[13139]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to consult with stakeholders on the contents of the White Paper on social care reform.

Helen Whately:

We are working closely with local and national partners from across the sector, including those with lived experience of care, to ensure that our approach to reform is informed by diverse perspectives.

■ **Tobacco: Regulation****Mr David Jones:**[\[17698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to regulate non-nicotine products intended for vaping which are not currently covered by the provisions of the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 22 June 2021]: Non-nicotine vaping products are regulated under the General Product Safety Regulations (GPSR) 2005. The GPSR requires all products to be safe in their normal, or reasonably foreseeable, usage. The Department is also undertaking a post implementation review of the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 and we will publish a response later this year.

■ **Travel: Coronavirus****Mr David Davis:**[\[17683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many covid-19 testing providers his Department has removed from the Government list of providers for tests required for travel in response to customer feedback to NHS Test and Trace.

Jo Churchill:

To date, seven providers have been removed from the GOV.UK list in response to customer feedback to NHS Test and Trace.

HOME OFFICE■ **Alcoholic Drinks: Minimum Prices****Zarah Sultana:**[\[17863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will introduce a minimum unit price for alcohol in England.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government has no plans to introduce minimum unit pricing at this time.

■ **Antisocial Behaviour: Youth Services****Rachael Maskell:**[\[16151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she is having with Cabinet colleagues on establishing youth services to help de-escalate levels of anti-social behaviour in communities.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[16152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what strategies police are deploying to engage young people who are displaying antisocial behaviour and support them to change their behaviour.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government is committed to tackling and preventing anti-social behaviour (ASB). The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 provides flexible powers to authorities in local areas to deal with anti-social behaviour.

The powers are deliberately local and it is for Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners, as operational leaders and elected local representatives, to decide how best to respond to local crime and anti-social behaviour priorities.

The legislation contains safeguards to protect children and young people. In addition, Home Office [guidance](#) supports local agencies to work together and take a proportionate approach to anti-social behaviour that takes account of the needs of the victim, the perpetrator and wider community. This includes good practice on supporting young people to prevent anti-social behaviour escalating.

■ Asylum

Jim Shannon:

[\[16103\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that asylum applications are considered in a timely manner.

Kevin Foster:

We have already made significant progress in prioritising cases with acute vulnerability and those in receipt of the greatest level of support, including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. Additionally, we are prioritising older cases and cases where an individual has already received a decision, but a reconsideration is required.

The Home Office is pursuing a programme of transformation and business improvement initiatives which will speed up decision making, reduce the time people spend in the system and reduce the numbers who are awaiting an interview or decision.

This includes an uplift in decision making capacity and providing improved training and career progression opportunities to aid retention of staff. We are continuing to develop existing and new technology to help build on recent improvements such as digital interviewing and move away from a paper-based system.

There are three key areas of focus in the short to medium term to reduce the number of outstanding asylum cases by improving efficiency and productivity, reducing the outstanding case load and building high performing teams.

■ Asylum: Housing**Jim Shannon:**[\[16104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to work with local authorities to help ensure the adequacy of the supply of suitable asylum accommodation.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office has been working with asylum accommodation providers, Local Authorities and Strategic Migration Partnerships to increase the amount of accommodation that is available for asylum seekers so that we can eliminate the need for the use of contingency accommodation.

We are grateful to those local authorities who participate in the dispersal scheme and will continue to work in partnership with them to procure suitable accommodation.

Sadly, many local authorities do not currently participate in the dispersal scheme, making it harder to procure sufficient dispersal accommodation. I would encourage them to step up and play their part in the UK-wide effort to provide accommodation to those seeking asylum who would otherwise be destitute.

■ Credit: Fraud**Stella Creasy:**[\[18515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many reports of fraud to Action Fraud have involved companies operating buy now pay later schemes, in each month since 2018.

Kevin Foster:

The Home Office does not hold this data centrally.

■ Entry Clearances: Overseas Students**Daniel Zeichner:**[\[16133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of ending the visa concession allowing international students to undertake distance or blended learning on recruitment for 2021-22.

Kevin Foster:

Throughout the pandemic, the Government have introduced several concessions to support international students and their sponsors.

These concessions are kept under regular review and we are engaging with the education sector as to the ongoing impact of the global pandemic on their operations.

■ Firearms: West Yorkshire**Imran Ahmad Khan:**[\[16264\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people are in possession of a firearms licence registered in (a) Wakefield and (b) West Yorkshire.

Kit Malthouse:

All persons acquiring, or in possession of, a firearm or shotgun must hold a certificate issued by the chief officer of the police force area in which they reside unless they are otherwise exempt.

The Home Office publishes annual figures for each police force in England and Wales on the number of firearm and/or shotgun certificate holders. The latest figures on the number of firearms certificate holders is available from table 13 of the '[Firearm and Shotgun Certificates in England and Wales Statistics - Financial Year 2019/20](#)' publication.

Data for year ending March 2021 will be made available on 15 July 2021.

■ Fraud**Dr Kieran Mullan:****[17013]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to tackle fraud and economic crime.

Kevin Foster:

The recently published Economic Crime Plan Statement of Progress sets out a Forward Delivery Plan with commitments on tackling fraud and economic crime for 2021-22. This includes the development of a Fraud Action Plan, the relaunching of the Joint Fraud Taskforce and the piloting of dedicated fraud investigation teams.

As part of the Police Uplift Programme to recruit an additional 20,000 officers by 2023, we have prioritised more investigators in the City of London Police to fulfil their role as a world class fraud specialist force. We have also channelled additional officer resource into the Regional Organised Crime Unit network to work on a host of serious and organised crime threats including fraud.

We have also been working closely alongside the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) who launched their Suspicious Email Reporting Service last year. This has already led to extremely positive results. It has already seen high levels of success and, as of the end of February, the total number of reports received stand at more than 5,000,000 with the removal of more than 36,000 scams and 71,000 URLs.

We are encouraging the public to forward suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk and to forward suspicious text messages to 7726 (which is free of charge). Any reports of fraud, including coronavirus related, should be made to Action Fraud. This information is being used by law enforcement partners, alongside crime reports to identify, disrupt and stop fraudsters.

■ Hassockfield Immigration Removal Centre**Sir Alan Campbell:****[16014]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what consultation her Department has undertaken with the local community on plans to open a new immigration detention centre for women in County Durham.

Chris Philp:

The Home Office has acquired the former Hassockfield Secure Training Centre in County Durham and will open it as an immigration removal centre for women by the autumn.

Discussions with Durham County Council have taken place and will continue throughout the development of plans for the site. Engagements with local councillors, other local stakeholders and interested non-governmental organisations will take place over the coming weeks.

■ Immigration Controls: EU Nationals**Stephen Morgan:**[\[16203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure EU nationals are not unnecessarily delayed or detained by the UK Border Force when travelling to the UK as a result of changes to the immigration system following the UK's departure from the EU.

Kevin Foster:

The risks posed by the global pandemic remain significant, hence there are restrictions for inbound passengers, such as 10-day managed quarantine, self-isolation at home, and stringent testing will apply to people differently dependent on the country destination list. EU nationals are not exempt from these requirements and they operate in addition to the requirements of the Immigration Rules.

We are maintaining 100% Border Health Measures checks, carried out to keep the public safe, while maintaining an efficient border. However, with additional checks to keep the country safe, some delays are to be expected. EU nationals (or any visitors) coming to the UK, without a visa, would not realistically be able to undertake any of the activities listed as a "short trip" which would normally be permitted under the visitor route, while also complying with the requirement for a 10-day self-isolation requirement.

Those who are considering moving here for work or study should check the requirements for entry. We have worked incredibly closely with EU partners to make sure people are aware of these new requirements, including a multi-million-pound awareness campaign across the EU.

EU nationals coming to work, or study must prove they meet our entry requirements. We urge people to check the requirements before travelling, as they may be refused permission to enter at the border.

All Border Force Officers have a duty to act professionally. Border Force staff receive a comprehensive package of training prior to operational deployment. Comprehensive guidance and training plans have been developed and adapted to upskill BF frontline officers in new policy, process, and system changes.

■ Immigration Controls: Railways

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[16201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if the Government will make an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward the UK 2025 Border Strategy to ensure a frictionless border for international train travel in and out of the UK.

Kevin Foster:

In order to achieve the transformation outcomes set out in the 2025 UK Border Strategy; to use upstream compliance to move processes away from the actual frontier where appropriate both for passengers and traders, there are a number of complex and dependent activities which need to be delivered.

All travellers (except British and Irish) coming to the UK will need to hold an electronic permission to travel ahead of departure and carriers will need to integrate with government systems to provide data and recognise electronic permissions to travel. The programme plans to engage with and onboard carriers, provide all customers with electronic permissions as well as a robust testing schedule of the enabling technology.

Most international train journeys into the UK are already through juxtaposed controls so a passenger has crossed the border before they board a train. Passengers can also use e-gates in juxtaposed ports so they do not need to be seen an officer which facilitates a quicker customer journey.

The published timelines have taken into account our ability to deliver this work as timely as possible with carriers such as Eurostar in order to realise the additional benefits to Traveller, Carrier and the UK Border as described in the 2025 strategy.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals

Rachael Maskell:

[\[16150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether there will be an opportunity for people to apply for EU Settled Status after the end of June 2021.

Kevin Foster:

The EU Settlement Scheme will remain open to applications after 30 June 2021, including:

- where the applicant has reasonable grounds for missing the deadline applicable to them;
- where a person granted pre-settled status is applying for settled status;
- where the applicant is a relevant family member joining an EEA or Swiss citizen resident in the UK by the end of the transition period;
- where the applicant is a relevant family member of a qualifying British citizen and has returned with them to the UK by 29 March 2022 after living together in the EEA or Switzerland since before the end of the transition period.

Stephen Morgan:

[\[16204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the availability of digital and physical certificates of covid-19 vaccination status, if she will review the decision not to provide EU citizens with physical proof of Settled Status.

Kevin Foster:

We are developing a border and immigration system which is “digital by default”, which over time means we will increasingly replace physical and paper-based products and services with accessible, easy to use online and digital services.

Individuals continue to receive written notice of their immigration status by email or letter, which they can keep for their personal records if they wish and can use when contacting the Home Office. Should users find themselves unable to access their digital status information online, we have a call centre which can assist them to use the service.

Ruth Jones:

[\[16218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much revenue has been received by the Exchequer through the EU Settlement Scheme since 1 January 2017.

Kevin Foster:

Since 30th March 2019, there has been no application fee under the EU Settlement Scheme. The application fees paid by applicants during the prior test phases of the scheme were refunded.

Anneliese Dodds:

[\[18570\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether people who (a) had a freedom of movement right to reside on 31 December 2020 or (b) were defined as a relevant family member of a person who had a freedom of movement right to reside on 31 December 2020 and (c) make an application to the EU Settlement Scheme on or before 30 June 2021 will still have the right to reside with protected rights while their application is being decided after 30 June 2021.

Anneliese Dodds:

[\[18571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of not providing official confirmation of (a) protected rights and (b) a pending application to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) on the rights of EU nationals and relevant family members while they wait for a decision on that application to the EUSS.

Kevin Foster:

Under the Citizens' Rights (Application Deadline and Temporary Protection) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020, those who apply before the deadline, but whose application is not decided until after it, will have their existing EU law rights protected pending the outcome of their application, including any appeal.

Those who have submitted a valid EUSS application by 30 June 2021 will be issued with a certificate of application. Pending the outcome of the application, they will be

able to rely on their certificate of application as proof of eligibility to access their right to work or rent when this is verified by the Home Office employer and landlord checking services.

The Department for Work and Pensions and HM Revenue & Customs will also be able to determine an individual's status with the Home Office using existing services.

■ Knives: Crime

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[16037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential correlation between levels of knife crime in London and the easing of covid-19 restrictions in May 2021.

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[16038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to help tackle the increase in knife crime in London since mid-May 2021.

Kit Malthouse:

This government is committed to tackling the scourge of knife crime.

As covid-19 restrictions ease across the country, we are aware that there may be a rise in serious violence. We are closely monitoring the latest data and working with local partners and the police to ensure we are able to respond quickly to any changes in the situation. However, the very latest data from the Metropolitan Police Dashboard shows that the number of knife crime and gun crime incidents in April 2021 remained below the 2-year average.

We are taking a number of steps to tackle knife crime in London, including:

- Investing £21m in the London Violence Reduction Unit, which brings together key partners to tackle the root causes of violence;
- Investing in a targeted law enforcement response, including through £42m for the Met police to operate hotspot policing;
- Investing in early intervention through our £200m 10 year Youth Endowment Fund, which has provided 28 grants to date to the London area.

Alongside this, our Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill will place a duty on public sector bodies to take a joined up approach to addressing serious violence as well as introduce Serious Violence Reduction Orders, which give the police the authority to stop and search known weapons carriers. We will also be piloting Knife Crime Prevention Orders (KCPO) which will help prevent further knife offending and divert those at risk away from being involved in knife crime. The KCPO Pilot will commence in July 2021 across the whole of the Metropolitan Area.

Hilary Benn: [\[18469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been (a) arrested for possession of a machete and (b) injured or killed by a machete in England in each of the last five years.

Kit Malthouse:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ Knives: Sales

Hilary Benn: [\[18468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason it is legal to sell machetes; and if she will make a statement.

Kit Malthouse:

Keeping people safe is the Government's top priority, including from violent crime involving the misuse of knives and other offensive weapons.

Under provisions in the Criminal Justice Act 1988 it is unlawful to sell a machete to a person under the age of 18 and it is also an offence to have a machete in a public place without lawful authority or good reason.

Under the provisions of the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 we are introducing further measures to address crime involving bladed items including stopping bladed items being sent to residential addresses after they are bought online, unless the seller has arrangements in place with the delivery company to ensure that the product would not be delivered into the hands of a person under 18.

The majority of machete owners use them for legitimate reasons such as gardening, camping or agricultural use. Where a machete is misused as a weapon, there are a range of offences that the offender may be charged with, such as causing grievous bodily harm. These can result in lengthy sentences, including life imprisonment in instances of murder.

We continue to keep the legislation on bladed articles and offensive weapons under review.

■ Migrants: Finance

Dame Angela Eagle: [\[18470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an estimate of the cost to the public purse of removing the No Recourse to Public Funds condition from all people currently subject to that condition.

Dame Angela Eagle: [\[18471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she has made of the cost to the public purse of abolishing the No Recourse to Public Funds condition.

Chris Philp:

The principle of No Recourse Public Funds (NRPF) was established as far back as 1971 and is a condition which successive governments have applied to those in the UK with temporary immigration status. Migrants here without lawful status are also subject to NRPF.

NRPF restrictions are an important part of immigration policy designed to assure the public that controlled immigration brings real benefits to the UK, and does not place excessive demands upon the UK's finite resources. We have no plans to lift or abolish the NRPF condition and have made no estimates of the cost of doing so.

■ Retail Trade: Abuse and Violence**Zarah Sultana:****[17860]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to help protect retail workers from abuse, threats and violence during the covid-19 outbreak.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government conducted a call for evidence on violence and abuse toward shop staff to understand the extent of the issue and how we can work with retailers and police to improve the response to these crimes. The Government's formal response was published 7 July 2020 and is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/violence-and-abuse-toward-shop-staff-call-for-evidence>

To address the actions raised in the call for evidence the Home Office has worked closely with retailers and trade organisations through the National Retail Crime Steering Group. We have developed resources to assist retailers to report crimes when they occur, resources for shop staff who are victims of violence and abuse, and the #Shopkind communications campaign. The downloadable resources are free to use and are available here: <https://brc.org.uk/nrcsg-against-shop-worker-abuse-and-violence/>

■ Retail Trade: Harassment**Jim Shannon:****[16846]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle (a) verbal and (b) physical abuse faced by retail workers during the covid-19 outbreak.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government conducted a call for evidence on violence and abuse toward shop staff to understand the extent of the issue and how we can work with retailers and police to improve the response to these crimes. The Government's formal response was published 7 July 2020 and is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/violence-and-abuse-toward-shop-staff-call-for-evidence>

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■ **Safer Streets Fund: Newcastle upon Tyne East**

Mr Nicholas Brown:

[\[18472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Minister for Crime and Policing's letter of 3 June 2021 on the Safer Streets Fund, where the 10 re-deployable CCTV cameras, 137 secure doors and 350 crime prevention packs will be distributed in Newcastle upon Tyne East constituency.

Kit Malthouse:

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

Newcastle City Council was successful in receiving £431,967 of funding to target the area of Byker located in the east of Newcastle, an area disproportionately affected by neighbourhood crimes. Proposed interventions will be delivered over the 2021/22 financial year.

■ **Visas: Large Goods Vehicle Drivers**

Sir Greg Knight:

[\[18478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of a Seasonal Visa Scheme for qualified HGV drivers, similar to the scheme available to farm workers, to help tackle the UK lorry driver shortage; and if she will make a statement.

Kevin Foster:

I refer my Right Honourable friend to the answer given to the Honourable member for Kingston Upon Hull West and Hessle, UIN 13206, which was answered on 18 June.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ **Building Safety Fund**

Mr Nicholas Brown:

[\[18475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the email from the Building Safety Fund' of 14 June 2021, if he will provide details of the technical assessment stage of the Building Safety Fund's application process.

Mr Nicholas Brown:

[18476]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent assessment he has made of the planned timescale of an application to the Building Safety Fund from the technical assessment stage to a decision being made.

Christopher Pincher:

Detailed information on the different stages of the Building Safety Fund application process and estimated timelines, can be found in the Building Safety Fund application guidance and application process guidance available at:

www.gov.uk/guidance/remediation-of-non-acm-buildings.

■ Business Premises: Coronavirus

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:

[16188]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if his Department will bring forward plans to extend the forfeiture moratorium for commercial rents debt.

Eddie Hughes:

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury [announced on 16 June](#) that the Government will introduce legislation to support the orderly resolution of rental payments accrued by commercial tenants during the pandemic. New legislation will ringfence rent debt accrued from March 2020 for tenants who have been impacted by Covid-19 business closures until restrictions are removed for their sector, and introduce a system of binding arbitration.

We expect terms to be agreed between commercial landlords and tenants affected by closures to defer or waive entirely a proportion of those rent arrears. But where agreement cannot be reached, both the landlord and tenant will need to undertake binding arbitration.

It is the Government's expectation that landlords should share the financial burden with tenants where they are able to do so and give tenants breathing space to agree new terms, but also that tenants who can pay, should pay. This will also mean a return to normal contractual arrangements for those tenants able to pay rent debts in full and not affected by closures.

Until this legislation is in place, the existing moratorium on evictions will be extended to 25 March 2022. Statutory demands and winding up petitions will also remain restricted for a further three months to protect companies from creditor enforcement action where their debts relate to the pandemic. We will bring forward legislation during this parliamentary session.

■ Camping Sites

Robert Lorgan:

[17006]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he plans to extend the 56-day-rule for temporary campsites into 2022.

Christopher Pincher:

We are considering options for the future of this time-limited permitted development right and will be making further announcements.

■ Environmental Impact Assessment: Planning Permission**Ruth Cadbury:**[\[16872\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when his Department plans to begin the consultation on the use of Environmental Impact Assessments within the planning system.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government remains fully committed to the reform of environmental assessment as a key aspect of the upcoming changes to the planning system which it is taking forward following the Planning for the Future White paper, and the National Infrastructure Strategy.

The 'Planning for the Future' White Paper received a very high level of engagement and we are now in the process of analysing the feedback received. We are taking forward the work to develop a new environment assessment framework as part of that process. Further updates will be provided shortly.

The reformed approach to environmental assessment will be more accessible, easier to understand, simpler to execute and with fewer unnecessary delays. At the same time, the Government has been clear that this reformed system will maximise environmental benefits, recognising the importance of our domestic and international obligations for environmental protection.

■ Future High Streets Fund**Ms Karen Buck:**[\[18459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will publish the amounts allocated under the Future High Streets Fund by (a) region and (b) nation of the UK to date.

Luke Hall:

In total, 72 places across England will share over £830 million from the Future High Streets Fund. Final funding awards for all places can be found on www.gov.uk/government/collections/future-high-streets-fund.

■ Getting Building Fund**Ms Karen Buck:**[\[18461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will publish the amounts allocated to date under the Getting Building Fund by (a) region and (b) nation of the UK to date.

Luke Hall:

In 2020 the £900 million Getting Building Fund was launched in England to deliver jobs, skills and infrastructure. This investment is being targeted in areas in England facing the biggest economic challenges as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. All £900 million have been allocated to support the delivery of shovel-ready infrastructure projects agreed with Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Details of the allocated amounts by MCAs and LEP can be found on the Government website (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-building-fund>).

■ Housing: Carbon Emissions**Feryal Clark:****[16249]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he has taken to decarbonise housing.

Christopher Pincher:

From 2025, the Future Homes Standard will ensure that new homes produce at least 75 per cent lower CO₂ emissions compared to those built to current standards. This represents a considerable improvement in energy efficiency standards for new homes. These homes will be future-proofed with low carbon heating and high levels of energy efficiency. No further energy efficiency retrofit work will be necessary to enable them to become zero-carbon over time as the electricity grid continues to decarbonise. Our work on a full technical specification for the Future Homes Standard has been accelerated and we will consult on this in 2023. We also intend to introduce the necessary legislation in 2024, ahead of implementation in 2025.

Decarbonising existing housing stock is also vital to achieving net zero. The Government set out its ambition in the Energy White Paper that all homes should reach Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band C by 2035, where practical, cost-effective and affordable. Alongside this, the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution set a target of installing 600,000 heat pumps every year by 2028. The Heat and Buildings Strategy will set out how we intend to meet our commitments and set us on a path to decarbonising homes and buildings by 2050, while continuing to deliver greater numbers of safe and affordable new homes.

The Government has committed to consult on measures to improve the energy performance of owner-occupied homes, and we recently ran a consultation on how mortgage lenders can support homeowners to improve the energy performance of their homes. We are also considering further options and will be publishing a call for evidence to seek views on these.

For the private rental sector, homes are currently required to have an energy efficiency rating EPC E or above unless a valid exemption applies. The regulations applied to new tenancies only from April 2018, and then to all tenancies in scope from 1 April 2020. BEIS recently consulted on raising this minimum standard to EPC C for

new tenancies from 2025 and all tenancies from 2028. These responses are being analysed and a response will follow.

Finally, we are currently reviewing the Decent Homes Standard, and we will ensure the review considers how the standard can work to support better energy efficiency and the decarbonisation of social homes.

■ **Lands Tribunal: Leasehold**

Tom Tugendhat:

[\[16142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the Government plans to bring forward legislative proposals to give home owners the ability to apply to the Lands Chamber for the modification or discharge of positive covenants affecting their homes.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government is reviewing large parts of property law affecting homeowners as part of its leasehold and commonhold reform agenda. As part of this we are working with the Law Commission to understand the implications of their 2011 report on easements, covenants and profits à prendre, "Making Land Work." The Making Land Work recommendations would provide a route for challenging future positive land obligations created under the new regime.

For owners of freehold properties who pay estate rentcharges, we will also introduce a right to challenge the reasonableness of those charges in the same way that leaseholders can challenge service charges, and remove the statutory right for owners of rentcharges to take possession or grant a lease of the property in the event of non-payment by the homeowner.

Our reform programme has recently moved forward significantly with the introduction of the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Bill on 12 May 2021, which we have said will be the first part of major two-part legislation in this Parliament.

■ **Members: Correspondence**

Mr Nicholas Brown:

[\[18474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when he plans to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne East of 20 April 2021 on unsafe cladding at St Ann's Quay in Newcastle upon Tyne East constituency.

Christopher Pincher:

A reply to the Rt Hon Member was issued on 21 June.

■ Pedestrian Crossings: Schools**Damien Moore:** [\[16211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what (a) criteria and (b) minimum requirements his Department has provided to local authorities on the appointment of school crossing patrol wardens.

Luke Hall:

MHCLG does not issue guidance to local authorities on the appointment of school crossing patrol wardens.

■ Planning Permission: Carbon Emissions**Dawn Butler:** [\[18497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Answer of 9 March 2021 to Question 163164, what steps his Department plans to take to prevent applications being granted for coal mines which would affect goals of achieving net zero carbon by 2050.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government is committed to clean growth and we are taking action to reduce our reliance on coal. We have set out our aim to end electricity generation from unabated coal by 2025 and we are also taking action to reduce coal use in industry and heating.

In terms of planning policy, the National Planning Policy Framework is already clear that planning permission should not be granted for the extraction of coal unless the proposal is environmentally acceptable or the national, local or community benefits outweigh its likely effects. The National Planning Policy Framework is capable of being a material consideration in the determination of all applications for coal extraction in England. Given the Secretary of State's role in the planning system, it would not be appropriate to comment on the merits or relevant considerations of current or future applications for coal extraction.

■ Planning: Greenhouse Gas Emissions**Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[16086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department has published to help ensure that planning authorities take into account the Government's commitment to achieve the Climate Change Committee's goal to reduce emissions by 78 per cent by 2035.

Christopher Pincher:

In 2019, the United Kingdom was the first G7 country to put into law our ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Following the Climate Change Committee's recommendation, the Sixth Carbon Budget targets an ambitious and world-leading 78 per cent reduction in emissions between 1990 to 2035.

The National Planning Policy Framework clearly sets out how planning authorities should support the transition to a changing climate and how to avoid vulnerability of new development to the effects of climate change. Additionally, the Climate Change Planning Practice Guidance sets out further advice on how local planning authorities can integrate adaptation and mitigation policies into their decision-making.

The *Planning for the Future* White Paper outlines how the Government will work to improve the planning system to help us meet our net zero targets and bolster environmental standards, and we will reflect very carefully on the views received in considering how best to take its vision forward. The consultation generated enormous interest and we are currently reviewing and analysing these responses and we will set out the proposed way forward.

Local leadership is important, and we are committed to working closely with local authorities across the United Kingdom, particularly when it comes to reducing our emissions. They are uniquely well positioned to harness local actors to align local needs with national interests, drive clean local growth, and influence behaviour.

■ Towns Fund

Ms Karen Buck:

[18460]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will publish the amounts allocated under the Towns Fund by (a) region and (b) nation of the UK to date.

Luke Hall:

So far over £2 billion has been announced over 86 Town Deals as part of the Government's flagship Towns Fund, delivering on our commitment to Levelling Up communities who have long felt left behind.

Final funding awards for these towns can be found on gov.uk here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/towns-fund>

The Towns Fund is England only. The £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund is a UK-wide fund.

Further Town Deals are set to be announced in due course. In addition, the initial bids of the £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund and £220 million Community Renewal Fund are now being assessed, meaning even more funding is on the way to help communities build back better from the effects of the pandemic.

■ UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Business Wales

Stephen Kinnock:

[18531]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will take steps with the Welsh Government to ensure that the Shared Prosperity Fund allocates adequate funding to resource Business Wales to at least current levels from 1 April 2022 onwards.

Luke Hall:

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund will help to level up and create opportunity across the UK in places most in need, such as ex-industrial areas, deprived towns and rural and coastal communities, and for people who face labour market barriers. We are working to ensure that there is a seamless transition from current EU structural funds to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The November 2020 Spending Review set out the main strategic elements of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in the Heads of Terms. We will ramp up funding so that total domestic UK-wide funding will at least match EU receipts reaching around £1.5 billion a year. In addition, the UK Government is providing additional funding in 2021/22 through the UK Community Renewal Fund to help local areas prepare for the launch of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ Trade Agreements: Dispute Resolution**

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[13853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many deals the UK is a signatory to that contain Investor-State Dispute Settlement provisions.

Greg Hands:

The United Kingdom has investment agreements containing Investor-State Dispute Settlement provisions with over 90 trading partners. This includes the vast majority of the UK's bilateral investment treaties and the Energy Charter Treaty.

There has never been a successful claim brought against the United Kingdom nor has the threat of potential claims affected the Government's legislative programme.

JUSTICE**■ Cemeteries: Greater London**

Sir John Hayes: [\[16006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the timeframe is for the Law Commission review into a modern framework for disposing of the dead to begin.

Sir John Hayes: [\[16007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether the Government plans to extend the reuse of grave sites to outside of the Greater London Authority area.

Sir John Hayes: [\[16008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many grave sites are reused in London each year.

Alex Chalk:

The start date and detail of the Law Commission's project will be agreed between the Law Commission and this Department and will be announced in due course.

The reuse of burial space is a sensitive issue and any changes need careful consideration. The Government welcomes information from burial providers about the circumstances in their area.

Information on the reuse of graves in London is not collated centrally.

■ Dogs: Theft**Jim Shannon:**[\[16112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when he plans to bring forward proposals to strengthen sentencing for people who steal dogs from residential property.

Chris Philp:

The government fully understands the deep distress caused by the theft of a much-loved pet and the importance of dealing with such crimes. All reported crimes should be taken seriously, investigated and, where appropriate, taken through the courts and met with tough sentences. Theft has a maximum penalty of 7 years' imprisonment and burglary has a maximum penalty of 14 years, and so the courts can already deal with these cases effectively.

Earlier this year the Lord Chancellor, Home Secretary and Environment Secretary met to discuss a cross-government approach to address pet theft, and set up a cross-Government taskforce to investigate and tackle this issue.

This taskforce will gather evidence to understand the factors that may be contributing to any rise in pet thefts and to recommend any necessary measures to tackle the problem. It will consider the issue from end to end, including causes, prevention, reporting, and enforcement, examining every option available to protect families from this hurtful crime and make sure perpetrators feel the full force of the law. The taskforce is due to report its recommendations in the summer.

■ Pets: Theft**Ruth Edwards:**[\[16240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of sentencing for pet theft at deterring that crime.

Chris Philp:

The government fully understands the deep distress caused by the theft of a much-loved pet and the importance of dealing with such crimes. All reported crimes should be taken seriously, investigated and, where appropriate, taken through the courts and met with tough sentences. The theft of a pet is a criminal offence under the Theft Act 1968 and the maximum penalty is seven years' imprisonment. Deterrence is one of the purposes of sentencing but there are other important aims, including public

protection and a strong punitive element, to help make our streets and communities safer and to give victims confidence that justice has been served.

Earlier this year the Lord Chancellor, Home Secretary and Environment Secretary met to discuss a cross-government approach to address pet theft, and set up a cross-Government taskforce to investigate and tackle this issue.

This taskforce will gather evidence to understand the factors that may be contributing to any rise in pet thefts and to recommend any necessary measures to tackle the problem. It will consider the issue from end to end, including causes, prevention, reporting, and enforcement, examining every option available to protect families from this hurtful crime and make sure perpetrators feel the full force of the law. The taskforce is due to report its recommendations in the summer.

■ Prisons: Pregnancy

Mr David Lammy:

[15997]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 20 October 2020 to Question 101946 on Prisoners: Babies, how many pregnant women have entered the prison estate since the death of a baby in HMP Bronzefield in October 2019.

Alex Chalk:

We do not currently publish pregnancy data routinely.

As part of our fundamental review of policy relating to mothers and expectant mothers in prison, we have committed to providing national pregnancy data in future.

Further information on the review, including our findings and resulting reforms regarding data collection, can be found in our summary report published in July 2020:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/905559/summary-report-of-review-of-policy-on-mbu.pdf.

The tragic death of a baby at Bronzefield in September 2019 is subject to a number of ongoing investigations, including by the Prison and Probation Ombudsman. We will reflect any learning from the investigations in our new policy, which will be published shortly.

■ Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre

Anna McMorrin:

[17809]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, where the 33 children removed from Rainsbrook secure training centre on 16 June 2021 have been placed.

Alex Chalk:

Following ongoing concerns relating to staffing, safety and on-site operational grip, we have taken the decision to transfer all children at Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre (STC) to alternative secure accommodation as soon as possible. We have taken this action to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children at Rainsbrook STC, which remains our priority.

Work is underway to transfer all children in the coming weeks. All placement decisions will be based on the individual needs and requirements of the children. YCS staff have spoken to all children at Rainsbrook STC, to ensure that they and their families are aware of the current situation, and will work closely with the relevant Youth Offending Teams to ensure that children are appropriately placed into suitable accommodation in a smooth and organised manner.

■ Rape: Convictions

Dame Diana Johnson:

[\[18506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to his Department's policy paper, End-to-End Rape Review Report on Findings and Actions, published on 18 June 2021, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the change in the level of Government funding to the (a) police and (b) Crown Prosecution Service on the conviction rates of rape cases since 2010.

Kit Malthouse:

The Government has recognised that the decline in the number of rape and serious sexual offences being prosecuted in England and Wales is a cause for significant concern.

The review revealed wide-ranging reasons behind the fall in cases reaching court, including delays in the investigation process, a lack of specialist and consistent support for victims, and an increase in invasive requests for their personal data. The Action Plan seeks to directly address these issues and increase the number of cases getting to court, without compromising defendants' right to a fair trial.

We continue to provide significant investment to support victims, fight crime and bring more perpetrators to justice. The Government has committed over £170m to be invested into victim services, including £27m to recruit more Independent Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse advisors, an additional £85m to the Crown Prosecution Service and £3.2m on Operation Soteria. We have also allocated over a quarter of a billion pounds on recovery last financial year.

■ Terrorism: Life Imprisonment

Jim Shannon:

[\[16110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether it is the Government's policy to seek life prison sentences for extremists who are convicted of planning terrorist attacks.

Chris Philp:

National security is this Government's first priority and we have acted decisively to strengthen the country's response to terrorism and ensure that we have some of the strongest measures in the world to tackle the threat.

The Counter Terrorism and Sentencing Act 2021 marked a major overhaul of terrorist sentencing, including measures to strengthen the sentencing options available, improve monitoring in the community, and remove early release for the most serious offenders. Central to these measures was the introduction of a new 'Serious

Terrorism Sentence' for dangerous offenders with a 14-year minimum prison term and up to 25 years on licence.

This Act built upon the emergency legislation passed in February 2020, the Terrorist Offenders (Restriction of Early Release) (TORER) Act which retrospectively ended automatic early release for terrorists serving standard determinate sentences, and we are going further by introducing new measures to strengthen the management of terrorist offenders in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

However, sentencing decisions are a matter for the independent judiciary and this Government has no wish to interfere with that principle. Since its introduction under Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006, preparing an act of terrorism has carried a maximum penalty of a life sentence, so is available for the Courts to impose, depending on the circumstances of the case.

SCOTLAND

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Alun Cairns:

[\[901459\]](#)

What assessment he has made of the effectiveness of economic support for Scottish businesses during the covid-19 outbreak.

Mr Alister Jack:

The UK Government is providing continued UK-wide support and security to manage the ongoing impacts of Covid-19.

One in three jobs in Scotland has been supported by the UK Government's unprecedented employment support package.

Scottish businesses have benefited from more than £3.4 billion of loans and support driven by UK Government schemes.

We have also provided a much needed boost to Scottish tourism and hospitality with our UK-wide VAT reduction.

Dr Philippa Whitford:

[\[901460\]](#)

What assessment his Department has made of the effect of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement on Scottish (a) importers and (b) exporters.

David Duguid:

We have agreed a deal with the EU which delivers for Scotland and the rest of the UK.

Our deal provides Scottish businesses with exceptional access to the EU's market - It is the first time the EU has ever agreed a zero tariffs, zero quota deal.

This provides the right conditions for the Scottish economy to recover from the Covid pandemic and flourish in the future.

TRANSPORT**■ Aviation: Coronavirus****Sam Tarry:**[\[16253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he has taken to support the aviation industry and its personnel during the covid-19 pandemic.

Robert Courts:

The Government has provided significant support to the aviation sector. We estimate that by the end of September 2021, the air transport sector will have benefited from around £7bn of Government support since the beginning of the pandemic. This includes support through loan guarantees, the Bank of England's Covid Corporate Financing Facility and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

To support aviation personnel, the Department launched the Aviation Skills Retention Platform, allowing aviation sector workers who are out of work to register their skills and pursue job and upskilling opportunities. Through the platform, we are funding training places to retain and develop skills within the sector. Moreover, we are working across government to maximise use of existing support measures to assist aviation workers at risk of redundancy to stay in employment or move between sectors.

■ Aviation: EU Countries**Sam Tarry:**[\[16254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the European Union Aviation Safety Agency System on young trainees in the aviation industry who want to (a) undertake training and (b) obtain relevant qualifications in Europe; and whether the Government has come to a reciprocal agreement on recognition of (i) flight crew licenses and (ii) medical certificates with the EU.

Robert Courts:

The CAA have published information about the impact of leaving EASA on training organisations and trainees on their EU Exit Microsite. Trainees undertaking or considering commencing a course of training are recommended to contact their training organisation to understand what approvals the organisation holds and intends to seek. UK Approved Training Organisations may need to decide whether they wish to retain a national approval and also seek an European Aviation Safety Agency approval, in order to allow students to train for an EU licence and obtain an EU licence.

In terms of reciprocal agreements with the EU, following EU Exit, the UK and EU agreed a high-level Aviation Safety Agreement, with an annex on Airworthiness.

■ Aviation: Training**Sam Tarry:**[\[16255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps the Government is taking to support (a) aspiring pilots and (b) newly-qualified people entering the aviation industry with the cost of flight training.

Robert Courts:

The Government recognises the cost of pilot training as a particular barrier to young people pursuing a career within aviation, and a barrier for diversity and social mobility. My Department is actively engaging with industry stakeholders and other partners to develop options for increasing the accessibility of pilot training.

The Department launched the 'Reach for the Sky' programme in 2019 to improve future inclusion and career opportunities within the aviation sector. The programme aims to attract under-represented groups, and particularly young people, including aspiring pilots, to careers in aviation by addressing financial and wider social barriers and creating new opportunities in the sector.

■ Bus Service Operators Grant**Ms Karen Buck:**[\[18463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the amounts paid out under the Bus Service Operators Grant by (a) region and (b) nation of the UK to date.

Rachel Maclean:

Up until 31 December 2013 Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) was paid directly to bus operators and was not split between commercially run or subsidised bus services. We are therefore unable to provide figures for this period. From 1 January 2014 local authorities have received funding equivalent to the level of BSOG which would otherwise have been paid to operators for running subsidised services in 2014. The current dataset provides details of amounts paid up to and including the period to 31/03/21. Details of the amounts paid to local authorities each year can be found on the "Payments to Local Authorities" tab of the relevant spreadsheets published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/bus-services-grants-and-funding#bsog-spend>

■ Bus Services and Railways: Timetables**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[16089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to improve integration between bus and train timetables at transport interchanges and connections.

Rachel Maclean:

The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail and the National Bus Strategy set out that bus and rail services should be better integrated with each other. Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs), which we expect local transport authorities to produce by the end of October, will need to set out ambitious visions for travel by bus, meeting the goals

and expectations in the National Bus Strategy. BSIPs will influence the share of the £3bn transformation funding that each authority receives, and we will expect to see proposals for modal integration as part of each plan, including how bus and rail operators can increasingly align their services, timetables and network planning.

■ Bus Services: Finance

Sam Tarry:

[\[16256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the funding required to sustain bus networks at pre-covid-19 outbreak levels from September 2021 to April 2022 with passenger numbers at (a) 60 per cent, (b) 70 per cent, (c) 80 per cent and (d) 90 per cent of the corresponding period in 2018-19.

Rachel Maclean:

The Government is working with operators and local authorities to ensure that the transition away from emergency Coronavirus Bus Service Support Grant (CBSSG) funding is timed appropriately. To date, over £1bn in funding has been committed to this scheme. As part of this process, the Department has modelled a range of patronage scenarios, considering various factors that influence demand and which would affect the funding required.

■ Bus Services: Standards

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[16073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to (a) improve bus services and (b) help ensure that off-peak services are not empty in England.

Rachel Maclean:

On 15 March, we launched England's long-term National Bus Strategy, setting out a bold vision for bus services across the country, and backed by £3 billion of transformational funding over the current Parliament. The Strategy's central aim is to get more people travelling by bus by making services more frequent, more reliable, easier to understand and use, better co-ordinated and cheaper.

Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs), which we expect Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) to produce by the end of October, will need to set out ambitious visions for travel by bus, meeting the goals and expectations in the strategy. BSIPs will influence the share of the £3 billion funding that each authority receives, and LTAs are expected to set out how they will grow bus use, as part of these plans.

Sam Tarry:

[\[16257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of levels of service on bus networks between September 2021 and April 2022 compared to pre-covid-19 outbreak levels.

Rachel Maclean:

To date, the Government has committed over £1 billion in emergency funding to the bus sector through the COVID-19 Bus Services Support Grant (CBSSG) scheme to help operators and local authorities safely facilitate essential journeys. CBSSG enables Operators to run up to 100% of their pre-Covid scheduled commercial mileage for a typical week excluding public holidays for the period of the scheme.

CBSSG funding has no pre-agreed end date and will continue until it is no longer needed. The Government is working with operators and local authorities to ensure that the transition away from emergency CBSSG funding is timed appropriately. Operators and Local Authorities should continue to work together to agree appropriate service levels in their area.

■ Cycling and Walking: Barnet**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[16074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to improve the local environment for cycling and walking in the London Borough of Barnet.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

In June, the Government announced a further £1.08bn funding and financing package for Transport for London (TfL). This includes at least £100 million to continue the delivery of healthy streets and active travel programmes in Greater London. Decisions on the allocation of this funding across Greater London are for the Mayor of London.

■ Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency**Damien Moore:**[\[16209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the current time taken by the DVLA to process applications; and what steps his Department is taking to reduce that time.

Rachel Maclean:

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)'s online services have been available and unaffected throughout the pandemic and are the quickest and easiest way to renew a registration certificate or a driving licence. Motorists are strongly advised to use these channels where possible. However, many people still choose or have to apply using a paper application. The DVLA receives around 60,000 items of mail every day which must be dealt with in person.

The number of applications awaiting processing fluctuates on a daily basis as registration certificates and driving licences are issued and new applications received. The DVLA is currently processing paper applications for registration certificates and driving licences within around six weeks of receipt. However, drivers with a medical condition may experience further delays because the DVLA is often reliant on receiving information or test results from medical professionals before a licence can be issued, to ensure drivers can meet the required medical standards.

The DVLA has had a reduced number of operational staff on site to allow for social distancing, in line with Welsh Government requirements. The DVLA has leased an additional building to accommodate more operational staff and has extended the opening hours of its contact centre. During the pandemic to help streamline processes and improve work flow the DVLA has accelerated the development of additional online services to reduce paper applications and supported their take up through a publicity campaign. Further digital service enhancements are underway.

■ **Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Correspondence**

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

[\[16021\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve response times from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency to correspondence from hon. Members.

Rachel Maclean:

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) aims to answer 95 per cent of hon. Members correspondence within eight working days. Given the impact of the pandemic and industrial action taking place at DVLA 90% correspondence is being answered within ten working days. The DVLA also offers hon. Members a dedicated phone line for their use. Relevant information is taken during the call and hon. Members receive a call back from a specialist team within three working days.

Additional resource is being utilised in the relevant teams and every effort is being made to direct resource to the most critical work to ensure that customers in the greatest need are dealt with as a priority.

■ **Electric Scooters**

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[16081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what is the timeframe for the running the e-scooter trials.

Rachel Maclean:

There are currently 32 trials underway which will run across the year, with final trial schemes due to conclude by 31 March 2022. This is an extension to the original deadline of 30 November 2021. It takes into account the slower start to trials as a result of the pandemic and will allow us more time to gather evidence as lockdown eases. The Department has in place a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation programme for the trials. A final report will be published in spring 2022.

■ **Electric Vehicles: Charging Points**

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[16076\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to install additional charging points to help increase the uptake of electric vehicles.

Rachel Maclean:

We are working hard with industry to grow a UK-wide, reliable and easy to use electric vehicle recharging network infrastructure to make recharging an electric vehicle as easy as refuelling a petrol and diesel car and to give more drivers the confidence to make the switch to plug-in zero emission vehicles. We are investing £1.3 billion in accelerating the roll out of charging infrastructure over the next four years. This will target support on rapid chargepoints on motorways and major roads, and installing more on-street chargepoints near homes and workplaces to make charging as easy as refuelling a petrol or diesel car. Our grant schemes and the £400m Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund will see thousands more electric vehicle charge-points installed across the UK.

Motor Vehicles: Alternative Fuels**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[16077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of increasing the use of E10 fuel in vehicles.

Rachel Maclean:

On 25th February, we published the Government response to the consultation paper "Introducing E10 petrol". The Government response was accompanied by a full impact assessment and confirmed our intention to introduce E10 petrol in September. In advance of the introduction, we launched a public information campaign on 7th June. The campaign will make drivers aware of the changes we are making and how E10 will play a part in helping reduce carbon emissions.

Motor Vehicles: Biofuels**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[16078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to promote the use of E10 fuel in vehicles.

Rachel Maclean:

On 25th February, we published the Government response to the consultation paper "Introducing E10 petrol". The Government response was accompanied by a full impact assessment and confirmed our intention to introduce E10 petrol in September. In advance of the introduction, we launched a public information campaign on 7th June. The campaign will make drivers aware of the changes we are making and how E10 will play a part in helping reduce carbon emissions.

Parking: Pedestrian Areas**Ian Mearns:**[\[18514\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department plans to publish the results of the Managing Pavement Parking consultation, which closed on 22 November 2020.

Rachel Maclean:

The Department received over 15,000 responses to the consultation. We are carefully considering the consultation findings and will be publishing a response when we have completed this work, which is a priority.

■ Railway Signals: Surbiton**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[16199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether there are plans for an investigation to be undertaken into the multiple signal failure in the Surbiton area on Friday 11 June 2021.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Following the disruption to train services at Surbiton on 11 June, Network Rail has undertaken a review to understand the cause of the signal failure and limit the impacts of a similar future event. South Western Railway are reviewing their communications plan to ensure that passengers are kept well informed in the event of any future disruption. The Department has asked to be kept fully informed about the implementation of these reviews.

■ Railway Stations: Disability**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[16080\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve access at railway stations for disabled people.

Dr Matthew Offord:[\[16084\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Access for All Programme, what is the timeframe for the commencement of work to install step-free access at Mill Hill Broadway railway station.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

In addition to the measures set out in the recent rail reform White Paper, I will be bidding for further rounds of funding for Access for All schemes in the forthcoming Spending Review.

Mill Hill Broadway is currently in development with work due to complete by 2024 at the latest.

■ Railway Stations: Visual Impairment**Damien Moore:**[\[16208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans his Department has to install warning tactile services on train platforms to improve the safety of blind and partially sighted people.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

I have asked Network Rail to develop a programme to aim to install platform edge tactile strips on every platform in Great Britain.

I will make a further announcement in due course.

■ Railways

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[16072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what is the timeframe is for the introduction of the policies set out in the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, published by his Department on 20 May 2021.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Government is committed to delivering passenger benefits as quickly as possible, including the introduction of new flexible season tickets, auditing accessibility of stations, a 30-year strategy for the rail industry, and replacing franchising.

This is the biggest change to the railways in three decades and transformation on this scale will not happen overnight. Government is setting up a Rail Transformation Programme within the Department for Transport and working with the rail sector to ensure a common understanding of our vision for the railway, working collectively with the sector to design how this major project will be delivered. The Government will make further announcements on next steps in relation to implementation in due course.

■ Railways: Disability

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[16198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 13 May 2021 to Question 1177 on Railways: Disability, what steps the Government is taking to advertise and raise public awareness of his Department's inclusive transport campaign entitled It's everyone's journey.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The 'it's everyone's journey' campaign first ran in February/March 2020 promoted through partner channels alongside radio, out of home and online media spend. Despite finishing early due to COVID-19 restrictions, the campaign saw nearly 4 in 10 public transport users take action as a result.

As lockdown restrictions ease the campaign has worked with partner organisations to develop a toolkit of materials to support disabled people with the return to public transport. The toolkit, available from 25 May, includes print and digital assets plus tannoy announcements and key messages for wider communications. Coinciding with Step 3 of the roadmap, the toolkit has been promoted through social channels and via a network of social influencers and key stakeholder groups. Partner response and engagement with the free materials has been positive with many operators and disability organisations sharing the assets both on and offline.

There are future plans to repeat the campaign with supporting media spend, subject to central budget approvals.

■ Railways: North Yorkshire

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[16196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many miles of rail are planned to be electrified between York and Church Fenton; and how many miles of those rails will be newly electrified lines.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Transpennine Route Upgrade will install 28 single track kilometres, or just over 17 miles, of new overhead line electrification between York and Church Fenton.

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[16197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the cost to the public purse has been of the electrification project between Church Fenton and York.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The £317m funding announced on 26th May 2021 will not only deliver electrification and upgrades including track enhancements and improvements to signalling on one of the busiest stretches of track in the North. It also enables further design and development work for the broader programme, which will build a more reliable railway, with more capacity and better connectivity.

■ Railways: Season Tickets

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[16071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress his Department has made on introducing flexible rail season tickets.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

As announced on 20 May alongside the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, the Government is introducing new flexible season tickets across England this year, with the new tickets going on-sale on 21 June, and becoming available for use on 28 June. Tickets will go on sale a week in advance to provide passengers enough time to consider the best option for them before planning travel. A new season ticket calculator will be available for passengers to check the best value option for their travel plan.

■ Restoring Your Railway Fund

Ms Karen Buck: [\[18462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the amounts paid out under the Restoring Your Railway Fund by (a) region and (b) nation of the UK to date.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

We invited and received bids to the Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund from across England and Wales. The Ideas Fund provides 75% of costs, up to £50,000, to help fund transport and economic studies and create a business case. Details,

including regions, of the 25 Ideas Fund schemes awarded funding to date are on GOV.UK.

■ Roads: Hendon

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[16075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve the condition of roads in Hendon constituency.

Rachel Maclean:

Transport in London, including roads maintenance, is devolved. The responsibility is shared between TfL, Highways England and London boroughs.

TfL are responsible for managing the Transport for London Road Network and Highways England are responsible for the national motorway network. London boroughs are responsible for the remaining roads within their boundaries not managed by either TfL or Highways England.

■ Roads: Safety

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[16082\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what research his Department has undertaken on the impact of surface water on road safety during wet conditions.

Rachel Maclean:

The Government has not commissioned research on the impact of surface water on road safety. However, guidance in the Highway Code, Wet Weather (Rule 227), is based on evidence on wet weather and typical stopping distances.

The Highway Code, Wet Weather (Rule 227):

In wet weather, stopping distances will be at least double those required for stopping on dry roads (see 'Typical stopping distances'). This is because your tyres have less grip on the road. In wet weather:

- you should keep well back from the vehicle in front. This will increase your ability to see and plan ahead
- if the steering becomes unresponsive, it probably means that water is preventing the tyres from gripping the road. Ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually
- the rain and spray from vehicles may make it difficult to see and be seen
- be aware of the dangers of spilt diesel that will make the surface very slippery (see Annex 6: Vehicle maintenance, safety and security)
- take extra care around pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders.

■ Traffic Lights

Dr Matthew Offord:

[\[16085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if will assess the potential merits of updating the Highway Code to allow vehicles to turn left on red traffic signals.

Rachel Maclean:

The Department has no plans to review legislation to allow this. There are serious safety issues raised by the practice as it would compromise the safe use of dedicated pedestrian facilities. Any reduction in vehicle delays would be minimal as most traffic signals in the UK are already designed to be traffic responsive, unlike those fixed-time signals used in other countries.

■ Travel: Coronavirus

Ruth Cadbury:

[\[16135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with officials of the Department for Health and Social Care on decreasing the costs of covid-19 PCR tests for people entering the UK.

Robert Courts:

Officials at the Department for Transport continue to work closely with colleagues at the Department of Health and Social Care to discuss how we can further reduce testing costs, while ensuring international travel is as safe as possible.

The price of tests has reduced significantly over recent weeks, bringing the UK in line with other countries, and several providers are offering Day 2 tests for green arrivals for under £50. The government is working with the travel industry and private testing providers to further reduce the cost of Covid-19 tests.

Daisy Cooper:

[\[16222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 22 April 2021 to Question 181446 on Screening: Coronavirus, what recent steps he has taken to reduce the cost of covid-19 tests required for international travel; and if he will make a statement.

Robert Courts:

The government recognises that the cost of testing for international travel can be high. However, the price of tests has reduced significantly over recent weeks, bringing the UK in line with other countries. Several providers are offering Day 2 tests for green arrivals for under £50.

The government will continue to work with the travel industry and private testing providers to see how we can further reduce testing costs, while ensuring travel is as safe as possible.

Jane Hunt:

[\[16263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his Department's guidance entitled Red, amber and green list rules for entering England, updated on 8 June 2021,

(a) what constitutes as mixing in relation to transit stops and (b) whether a passenger who follows social distancing rules at all times while making a transit stop would be considered to have mixed.

Robert Courts:

Only passengers who are kept separated from other travellers at transit stops, for example on an aircraft, in a train carriage, or in a separate area of a terminal, are considered not to have transited through that country.

The Government expects all operators to manage the risks of COVID-19 transmission. The guidance is clear that social distancing of with risk mitigations should be observed where possible. Where social distancing is not possible, operators are advised to carry out a risk assessment and implement appropriate risk controls. For example, wearing a face covering can play a role in helping us to protect each other.

TREASURY

■ Businesses: Coronavirus

Damien Moore:

[\[16210\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether further financial support will be provided to businesses in response to the postponement of step four of the easing of lockdown restrictions to 19 July 2021.

Kemi Badenoch:

Throughout the pandemic, the Government has sought to protect people's jobs and livelihoods while also supporting businesses and public services across the UK.

The Government put in place an economic package of support totalling £352 billion through the furlough and self-employed income support schemes, support for businesses through grants and loans, business rates and VAT relief.

At Budget the Government deliberately went long and erred on the side of generosity – specifically to accommodate any short delay to the roadmap. Most of the Government's Covid support schemes do not end until September or after, in order to provide continuity and certainty for businesses and families.

The Recovery Loan Scheme (RLS) announced at Budget 2021 ensures lenders continue to have the confidence to lend, ensuring viable businesses, including small businesses, continue to have access to Government-backed finance needed throughout 2021. The scheme launched on 6 April 2021, following the closure of the emergency schemes to new loan applications on 31 March 2021, and will run until 31 December 2021. The scheme operates UK-wide, providing an 80% guarantee to lenders for term loans, overdrafts, and invoice and asset finance.

At Budget, it was also announced that local authorities in England will receive a top-up worth a total of £425m to the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) fund. This, combined with the £1.6 billion previously allocated, means local authorities will have

received over £2bn of discretionary grant funding to support businesses which are not eligible for Restart Grants but which are nonetheless experiencing a severe impact on their business due to public health restrictions. Nearly half of the £2bn is still with local authorities and yet to be allocated.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) was introduced to help employers whose operations have been severely affected by coronavirus to retain their employees and protect the UK economy. All businesses across the UK can access the scheme, with employees receiving 80% of their usual salary for hours not worked, up to a maximum of £2,500 per month. At Budget the government extended the CJRS until the end of September 2021, to support businesses and employees through the next stage of the pandemic. The economy now is in a stronger position than it was last autumn, when businesses also contributed up to 20 per cent of wage costs.

In line with the extension to the CJRS, the government announced at Budget 2021 that the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) will continue until September, with a fourth and a final fifth grant. This provides certainty to business as the economy reopens and means the SEISS will continue to be one of the most generous schemes for the self-employed in the world.

As restrictions have been lifted, it is right that we ask employers to contribute more to strike the balance between supporting the economy as it opens up, continuing to provide support and protect incomes, and ensuring incentives are in place to get people back to work.

■ Credit: Companies

Stella Creasy:

[18516]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions his Department has had with the Competition and Markets Authority on the regulation of buy now pay later companies.

John Glen:

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: [HMT ministers' meetings, hospitality, gifts and overseas travel - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel)

■ Economic Situation: Coronavirus

Dr Kieran Mullan:

[17009]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with his G7 counterparts on prioritising environmental issues in the global economic recovery from the covid-19 pandemic.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Chancellor met his G7 Finance Minister counterparts for the first in-person Finance Track meeting in two years on 4-5 June 2021. Climate and environmental issues have been at the heart of the Chancellor's discussions with his G7 counterparts, paving the way to a truly green global economic recovery.

As a result result, G7 Finance Ministers have committed to a multi-year effort to meet our net zero commitments and environmental objectives in a way that is positive for jobs, growth, competitiveness and fairness; and to properly embed climate change and biodiversity loss considerations into economic and financial decision-making.

As part of this joint effort, the Chancellor secured G7 commitment to move towards mandatory climate disclosures just six months after the UK was the first country to commit to do so. This will help to ensure the global financial system plays its part in the transition to net zero.

■ Landfill Tax**Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[16088\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an estimate of the amount of landfill tax paid in each of the last ten years by the (a) London Borough of Barnet and (b) North London Waste Authority.

Jesse Norman:

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) do not hold this information. Landfill Tax is chargeable on material deposited at permitted landfill sites in England and Northern Ireland. The operator of a permitted landfill site is liable to pay the Landfill Tax directly to HMRC.

London Borough of Barnet and North London Waste Authority do not operate landfill sites so do not pay Landfill Tax to HMRC. The majority of local authorities outsource their waste disposal services, and the service fees in those contracts will reflect the landfill operators' likely Landfill Tax liability.

■ PAYE**Stephen Timms:**[\[18458\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what proportion of PAYE Real Time Information records received by HMRC cannot be matched to a taxpayer.

Jesse Norman:

99.25% of the Individual Payment Submissions held by HMRC are attached to an employment with a valid National Insurance number.

■ Research: Finance**Emma Hardy:** [\[17821\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which (a) institution, (b) Government department and (c) funding body will allocate the £22 billion for research and development announced in the Queen's Speech 2021.

Kemi Badenoch:

Many government departments and agencies fund and undertake Research & Development. Departmental allocations are determined at Spending Reviews.

■ Tax Avoidance: Bankruptcy**Henry Smith:** [\[16066\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his most recent estimate is of the number of people subject to Loan Charge repayments who have been made bankrupt.

Jesse Norman:

No estimate can be provided for the number of people who have fallen into debt, or who have been declared bankrupt, and are subject to the loan charge.

Where debts arise, HMRC are not always the only creditor. Some individuals may fall into debt or are declared bankrupt as a result of a non-HMRC debt and some individuals may choose to enter insolvency themselves based on their overall financial position.

HMRC only ever consider insolvency as a last resort and they encourage taxpayers to get in contact to agree the best way to settle their tax debts. Anyone who is worried about being able to pay what they owe is encouraged to get in touch with HMRC as soon as possible on 0300 322 9494. Where a taxpayer is unable to pay their debt in full HMRC will work with them to agree an instalment arrangement based on their individual financial circumstances, and there is no maximum length.

■ UK Infrastructure Bank**Mr Gregory Campbell:** [\[18479\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his announcement on 18 June on the UK Infrastructure Bank, what plans he has to ensure that projects across all of the UK, including Northern Ireland will benefit from the bank.

Kemi Badenoch:

The UK Infrastructure Bank is now operating in interim form and it is able to support projects across the entire UK, including Northern Ireland.

Currently the UKIB offers private sector financing. Once fully operational, the UKIB will invest in private and public sector projects that reflect the Bank's two core objectives to tackle climate change and support regional and local economic growth.

As it builds its presence, the UKIB will actively pursue relationships with each of the devolved administrations as well as project sponsors, institutions and local leaders across the whole of the UK.

WALES

■ WAG First Minister

Ruth Jones: [\[16954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, when he last had discussions with the First Minister of Wales.

Simon Hart:

I attend weekly meetings chaired by my Rt Hon Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster with all three First Ministers and the deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland to discuss the UK-wide response to Covid-19. This is just one example of the vast number of meetings that take place between UK Government Ministers and officials and their counterparts in the Welsh Government.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Pension Credit: Enfield North

Feryal Clark: [\[17879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of people in Enfield North were eligible for pension credit for each of the last 10 years.

Feryal Clark: [\[17880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of people in Enfield North were in receipt of pension credit in each of the last 10 years.

Guy Opperman:

For the information requested is not available.

The DWP publishes annual take-up statistics for income-related benefits, including Pension Credit, at Great Britain level. The latest data was published in October 2020 and provides take-up estimates up to financial year 2018/19.

The Estimates of take up of income related benefits over the last 10 years, including the latest estimates for 2018/19 can be found in the following publications:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up--2>

Information on the number of people in receipt of Pension Credit by Parliamentary Constituency can be found at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

Population estimates for the UK by age and Parliamentary Constituency are published by the Office for National Statistics and can be found here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/parliamentaryconstituencymidyearpopulationestimates>

■ Personal Independence Payment

John Penrose:

[16275]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 11 June 2021 to Question 10306 and with reference to the response to part A of that Question, if she will publish the statistical information requested in response to a Parliamentary Question or via a Ministerial Statement; with reference to the response to part B of Question 10306, what costs are involved in publishing the statistical information held by her Department and not yet in the public domain as referenced in response to part A; and if she will respond to part D of Question 10306.

Justin Tomlinson:

The number of claimants whose award has ended and were waiting for their new claim to be processed is not in the public domain.

New statistical information cannot be released via a Ministerial Statement. Under [the Code of Practice for Statistics](#), statistics must be published so that they are equally available to all, not given to some people before others.

The statistics cannot be provided in response to a parliamentary question because the information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost. For PQs, there is a requirement to produce information to the same quality standard as Official Statistics. To assess the completeness of recording and quality assure the figures requested to this standard would take in excess of the time permitted to respond to a PQ and therefore incurs disproportionate cost.

In response to part (d) of question 10306, we always aim to make an award decision as quickly as possible and are treating as a priority advance claims, where a person's previous fixed term award has ended. We are working with Assessment Providers to arrange assessment appointments as soon as possible. Where a person is found to still be eligible for PIP their award is backdated to the point they claimed, so no one loses out financially.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disability

Vicky Foxcroft:

[16167]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 15 June 2021 to Question 11597 on Disability: Public Consultation, whether the full details of the independent research commissioned by her Department to understand the needs of disabled people to live independent lives and how health and disability benefits can better support them will be published separately.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Department commissions independent research with disability benefit claimants on an ongoing basis. The forthcoming Health and Disability Support Green Paper, will explore proposals to improve the health and disability benefit system in the short and long-term, which are grounded in research evidence, data analysis and consultation.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Business Update

UK International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience for the COP26 Presidency and Minister of State (Minister for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change) (Anne-Marie Trevelyan): [\[HCWS114\]](#)

The Government is today entering into a new set of arrangements to deliver safe, lower cost and more efficient decommissioning of the UK's operating nuclear power stations, once they stop generating power.

Those nuclear power stations are all owned and operated by EDF, and the new arrangements have been negotiated by the Government to provide significant cost savings for the taxpayer, with the potential to achieve upward of £1bn of savings without compromising on safety and security. They will also provide the Government with enhanced oversight of the decommissioning costs.

The new commercial arrangements relate to the fleet of seven Advanced Gas Cooled Reactor (AGR) stations (Hunterston B, Hinkley Point B, Dungeness B, Hartlepool, Heysham 1, Heysham 2 and Torness). EDF last year announced the end of generation of Hunterston B and Hinkley Point B in 2022 and recently, Dungeness B with immediate effect. The other four are all scheduled to close on a rolling basis by 2030.

The new arrangements do not relate to the Sizewell B station, which is of a different technology (Pressurised Water Reactor) and is due to continue operating until at least 2035. The new arrangements also do not cover the Hinkley Point C station, which is currently under construction.

Once a nuclear station closes the nuclear fuel from that station must first be removed (defueling) before it can be prepared for deconstruction. Then, following deconstruction, the site can be remediated.

The new arrangements we have negotiated will incentivise EDF to achieve the defueling of the AGR stations in a cost-effective and timely manner and include real risk share. EDF Energy have agreed to up to a total of £100m in charges for underperformance in return for the potential to earn up to a total £100m for good performance across the AGR fleet.

Shortly after EDF has completed the defueling activity, and subject to regulatory approval, the ownership of the AGR stations will transfer to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), on a station-by-station basis, to prepare for and manage the long-term decommissioning. The NDA will deliver this mission alongside their ongoing mission to decommission the first-generation Magnox nuclear power stations. This will allow the NDA to employ their unique expertise and experience of nuclear decommissioning and seek synergies with their wider mission to achieve savings for the taxpayer.

These new arrangements will harness the best of both organisations: EDF's in defueling as an extension of its operational activity; NDA's in decommissioning as the nation's civil nuclear decommissioning authority – in order to deliver best value for the taxpayer, whilst maintaining strong regulatory oversight on, safety, security, environmental and health matters.

The NDA and EDF will cooperate to help ensure a seamless transfer of the AGR sites and to enable efficiencies and identify and realise cost savings across the AGR decommissioning programme.

Under previous arrangements, EDF was responsible for the full defueling and deconstruction of the AGR stations, using funding provided by the Nuclear Liabilities Fund (NLF), a segregated fund managed by trustees and underwritten by Government. EDF's AGR defueling and decommissioning work will continue to be funded by the NLF.

To facilitate these revised arrangements, Designation Directions have been laid in Westminster and jointly with Scottish Ministers in Holyrood (for Scottish Stations) which provide the appropriate vires for the NDA to undertake their pre-transfer work and obligations on these stations.

I will deposit the Designation Directions in the libraries of the House and further details are available on the GOV.UK website.

DEFENCE

■ Call-Out Order in Support of the Defence Contribution to Summits, Conferences or Events

The Minister for the Armed Forces (James Heappey): [\[HCWS115\]](#)

A new order has been made under section 56(1B) of the Reserve Forces Act 1996 to enable reservists to be called into permanent service to support HM Forces in connection with military operations in support of summits, conferences or events.

The Ministry of Defence is regularly tasked to support summits, conferences or events. As part of this support, Reserve Forces will be on standby, as part of a Whole Force approach with Regular Forces, to deliver a range of Defence outputs such as (but not limited to) the reinforcement of Regular units, provision of specialist knowledge, skills and experience, and support to Partners Across Government.

The order shall take effect from the day on which it is made and shall cease to have effect 12 months from the date on which it is made.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Broadcasting Policy**

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Oliver Dowden):

[\[HCWS113\]](#)

Today, we are announcing our intention to publish a Broadcasting White Paper in the Autumn. In order to inform the White Paper, we will consult on the future of Channel 4 and on regulating video-on-demand services.

We believe that the need for public service broadcasting (PSB) remains as strong as ever and it is therefore necessary to bring the UK's broadcasting framework into the 21st century.

The forthcoming White Paper will look ahead to the challenges of tomorrow, ensuring the UK's broadcasting system is dynamic, relevant and can continue to meet the needs of UK audiences in the future. This will include proposals on prominence, to ensure that high quality public service content is made easily accessible to UK audiences across online platforms. The White Paper will also be influenced by Ofcom's ongoing PSB review, the Government's own strategic PSB review, as well as the recommendations of the Digital Radio and Audio Review which will report this summer.

This summer we will launch a consultation on the future success and sustainability of Channel 4.

Since its inception almost 40 years ago, Channel 4 has delivered on its remit, aims and objectives, and has done an excellent job in managing the uncertainty in the market over recent years.

However, Channel 4's current ownership model and remit places material restrictions on its ability to keep pace with the challenges posed by the fast-evolving media landscape.

Now is the time to proceed on the basis that an alternative ownership model (but one where it keeps a public service remit) may be better for the broadcaster and better for the country.

We will also launch a consultation on the regulation of video-on-demand services. Services such as Netflix, ITV Hub or Amazon Prime Video provide huge value to UK audiences, and in many cases significant, and growing, contributions to the UK economy. However, they are also services that are regulated far less robustly than traditional broadcast television stations, particularly in relation to the regulation of content standards and audience protection, and some services are not regulated in the UK at all.

So this summer we will consult on whether it's time to set the same basic rules for video-on-demand services as we do for traditional broadcasters.

EDUCATION**■ Condition Improvement Fund Update****Secretary of State for Education (Gavin Williamson):****[[HCWS116](#)]**

Today, I am announcing the allocation of almost £483 million for 1,466 Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) projects across 1,199 academies, sixth-form colleges and voluntary aided schools to maintain and improve the condition of the education estate.

This funding is provided to ensure schools have well maintained facilities and give students safe environments that support a high-quality education. Many of the projects funded by CIF will lead to more energy efficient buildings and will reduce energy bills for schools. Since March 2015 CIF has delivered 8,018 projects and continues to deliver 1,571 projects across the school estate with essential maintenance projects.

Details of today's announcement are being sent to all CIF applicants and a list of successful projects will be published on GOV.UK. Copies will be placed in the House Library.

Attachments:

1. Condition Improvement Fund 2021-22 outcome
[\[Condition_improvement_fund_2021_to_2022_outcome.xlsx\]](#)