



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 24 June 2021 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:29 P.M., 24 June 2021). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

CONTENTS

Table with 4 columns: Section Name, Page Number, Section Name, Page Number. Includes categories like ANSWERS, BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY, CABINET OFFICE, CHURCH COMMISSIONERS, DEFENCE, Armed Forces: Housing, AWE, Mali: Peacekeeping Operations, Navy: Shipping, Type 26 Frigates: Iron and Steel, DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT, Broadband: Finance, Buses: Coronavirus, Choirs: Coronavirus, Gambling Commission: Reform, Gambling: Internet, Social Security Benefits: Voluntary Work, Youth Investment Fund, Youth Services, EDUCATION, Academies: Inspections, Bletchley Park: Anniversaries, Children: Coronavirus, Day Care: Children, Extracurricular Activities: Coronavirus.

■ Newton Rigg College: Sales	25	■ Oman: Economic Situation	39
■ Newton Rigg College: University of Cumbria	25	■ Palestinians: Textbooks	39
■ Pre-school Education: Admissions	26	■ Soulaiman Raissouni	40
■ Primary Education: Assessments	26	■ Travel Restrictions: Coronavirus	40
■ Pupil Premium: Arts	27	■ Turkey: Violence	41
■ Schools: Coronavirus	27	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	41
■ Schools: Racial Discrimination	28	■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	41
■ Schools: Sports	29	■ Care Homes: Coronavirus	41
■ Special Educational Needs	30	■ Community Care: Learning Disability	42
■ Vocational Education: Disadvantaged	30	■ Coronavirus: Disease Control	42
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	31	■ Coronavirus: Public Houses and Retail Trade	43
■ Chemicals: Health Hazards	31	■ Coronavirus: Social Prescribing	43
■ Nitrates: Netherlands	31	■ Coronavirus: Vaccination	44
■ Squirrels: Conservation	33	■ Dental Services	45
FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	34	■ Dental Services: Plymouth	46
■ Afghanistan: Taliban	34	■ Dental Services: Staffordshire	46
■ Bangladesh: Ahmadiyya	34	■ Department of Health and Social Care: Freedom of Information	47
■ Bangladesh: Atheism	35	■ General Practitioners: Coronavirus	47
■ Bangladesh: Christianity	35	■ Integrated Care Systems: Third Sector	47
■ Bangladesh: Humanitarian Aid	36	■ Medical Records: Data Protection	48
■ Conflict Resolution	36	■ Mental Health Services	48
■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Oman	37	■ Mental Health Services: Fathers	50
■ Global Partnership for Education	37	■ Mental Health Services: Standards	50
■ Hungary: LGBT People	37	■ Mental Health Services: Young People	50
■ Myanmar: Armed Conflict	38		
■ Myanmar: HIV Infection	38		
■ Myanmar: Humanitarian Aid	39		

■ NHS: Voluntary Work	51	■ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Freedom of Information	66
■ Niraparib	51	■ National House Building Council: Standards	66
■ Obesity: Children	51	■ Planning Permission: Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	66
■ Podiatry	51	■ Planning: Urban Areas	67
■ Prescription Drugs	52	■ Water Supply	68
■ Processed Food: Children	52	■ Water Supply: Planning	68
■ Respite Care: Finance	52	INTERNATIONAL TRADE	69
■ Travel: Coronavirus	53	■ Department for International Trade: Freedom of Information	69
■ Travel: Quarantine	53	■ Trade Agreements	69
■ Visual Impairment: Rehabilitation	54	JUSTICE	70
HOME OFFICE	54	■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Staff	70
■ Alcoholic Drinks: Minimum Prices	54	■ Prisoners: Gender Recognition	92
■ Daniel Morgan Independent Panel	54	■ Social Services: Gender Recognition	93
■ Immigration: EU Nationals	56	NORTHERN IRELAND	93
■ Migrant Workers: Large Goods Vehicle Drivers	59	■ Air Pollution: Northern Ireland Executive	93
■ Migrants: National Insurance	60	TRANSPORT	94
■ Offences against Children	61	■ Aviation	94
■ Overseas Aid: Asylum and Migrants	61	■ Bus Service Operators Grant	94
■ Undocumented Migrants: English Channel	62	■ Cycling and Walking	94
■ Unexplained Wealth Orders	62	■ Driving Tests: Scotland	95
HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	62	■ Electric Vehicles	97
■ Building Safety Fund	62	■ Electric Vehicles: VAT	97
■ Collective Worship: Coronavirus	63	■ First Group: Contracts	97
■ Derelict Land: Planning	64	■ Great British Railways: Fares	97
■ Housing: Construction	64	■ Large Goods Vehicles	98
■ Housing: Standards	65	■ Motor Vehicles: Biofuels	98
■ Immigration: Hong Kong	65		

■ Parking: Pedestrian Areas	99	WOMEN AND EQUALITIES	110
■ Public Transport: Environment Protection	99	■ Gender Recognition	110
■ Railways	99	WORK AND PENSIONS	111
■ South West Railway Line: Rolling Stock	100	■ Bereavement Support Payment	111
■ Transport: North of England	100	■ Employment and Support Allowance	111
■ Transport: Rural Areas	100	■ Personal Income	111
■ Transport: Urban Areas	101	■ Restart Scheme: Disability	112
■ Travel: Coronavirus	101	■ Social Security Benefits: EU Nationals	112
TREASURY	103	■ Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations	113
■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	103	■ Unemployment	113
■ Coronavirus: Government Assistance	103	■ Universal Credit: Internet	114
■ Coronavirus: Screening	104	<b>WRITTEN STATEMENTS</b>	<b>115</b>
■ Digital Technology: Taxation	104	DEFENCE	115
■ Electric Vehicles: VAT	105	■ Exercises in the Black Sea	115
■ Free Zones	105	■ UK MINUSMA Deployment	116
■ Inflation	105	DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	117
■ Multinational Companies: Taxation	106	■ Media Matters	117
■ National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: Life Sciences	106	ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	118
■ National Savings Bonds: Environment Protection	107	■ Government response to the Landscapes Review	118
■ Owner Occupation	107	FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	119
■ Performing Arts and Weddings: Coronavirus	108	■ FCDO Services Ministerial Targets 21/22	119
■ Premium Bonds	109	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	120
WALES	109	■ High Fat, Sugar and Salt Advertising Consultation Response	120
■ Air Pollution: Wales	109		
■ Air Pollution: Welsh Government	110		

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TREASURY	122	■ Public Service Pensions: Consultations on the cost control mechanism and discount rate methodology	122
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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

#### ■ Amazon: Competition

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[19582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will ask the Competition and Markets Authority to undertake an assessment of (a) Amazon Prime Day as a potential competitive marketing practice and (b) the extent to which (i) suppliers and (ii) customers can choose whether to participate in that day.

**Paul Scully:**

The Competition and Markets Authority is independent of the government, with a remit to tackle individual and market-wide competition issues, including breaches of competition law. The CMA is currently active in digital markets, but we intend to strengthen its ability to tackle digital competition issues. This why the Government committed in November 2020 to establish a new digital competition regime, to be overseen by a Digital Markets Unit within the CMA, to tackle the market power of dominant digital platforms. We will consult on the new regime and legislate to put the Digital Markets Unit on a statutory footing as soon as parliamentary time allows.

#### ■ Business Premises: Rents

**Seema Malhotra:**

[\[19596\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the press release, Eviction protection extended for businesses not in need, published 16 June 2021, when he plans to set out further details of the new arbitration process for resolving issues in relation to commercial rent debts where tenants and landlords cannot come to an agreement themselves.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government has announced that it will introduce legislation to support the orderly resolution of rental payments accrued by commercial tenants affected by non-pharmaceutical interventions during the pandemic, in this Parliamentary session.

The details of the process will be released in due course. We will aim to ensure that this is an impartial and manageable process which should only be used as a last resort when negotiations have failed and providing a faster and easier resolution than through the courts.

In the interim we expect businesses that are open and trading as normal to pay their full rent unless otherwise agreed as periods of normal operation will not be covered by further legislation.

## ■ Copyright

**Dawn Butler:**

[\[18504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to protect the UK copyright system to support (a) author incomes, (b) publishing companies and (c) the wider book trade.

**Amanda Solloway:**

While the Government is not presently taking any specific steps in relation to these matters, it keeps the copyright framework under constant review to ensure it remains fit for purpose and that changes are driven by the evidence.

For example, the Government is currently consulting on potential changes to the intellectual property framework in relation to the trade of parallel goods into the UK. It welcomes evidence and submissions from all those who might be affected, including authors, publishers, and the book trade.

The UK's IP framework is consistently rated as one of the best in the world. A good copyright framework alongside an effective enforcement regime provides the best environment for creators, including authors and publishers, to thrive.

## ■ Medicine: Research

**Zarah Sultana:**

[\[17857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to (a) modernise medical research and (b) replace animal testing with human-relevant techniques.

**Amanda Solloway:**

As part of a modern research system, we believe that animals should only be used where there is no practical alternative. The use of animals in research is carefully regulated and remains important in ensuring new medicines and treatments are safe.

However, we are actively supporting and funding the development and dissemination of techniques that replace, reduce and refine the use of animals in research (the 3Rs). This is achieved primarily through funding for the National Centre for the 3Rs which works nationally and internationally to drive the uptake of 3Rs technologies and ensure that advances in the 3Rs are reflected in policy, practice and regulations on animal research. Since the NC3Rs was launched it has committed £100 million through its research, innovation, and early career awards to provide new 3Rs approaches for scientists in academia and industry to use. This includes almost £27 million in contracts through its CRACK IT Challenges innovation scheme to UK and EU-based institutions, mainly focusing on new approaches for the safety assessment of pharmaceuticals and chemicals that reduce the use of animals.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funds a portfolio of research projects involving humans, human materials, animal models, and non-animal technologies. At this time, no artificial model or simulation can replicate the complexity of disease processes in a living organism and as such, whole organism approaches continue to be important;

animal models are used when experimentation in human volunteers is not possible for safety or ethical reasons. However, we do recognise the increasing value of *in vitro* and *in silico* models, including organs-on-chips and 3-dimensional mini-brains, which can greatly aid the development of new healthcare innovations and also reduce, refine or replace the use of animals in research.

## ■ Merchant Shipping: Pensions

**Matt Rodda:** [\[18565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an estimate of the future cost to the public purse in the (a) short term and (b) long term in relation to the Natural Environment Research Council and British Antarctic Survey's role as a sponsoring employer of the Merchant Navy Ratings Pension Fund pension scheme.

**Matt Rodda:** [\[18566\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the projected average entitlement for members of the Merchant Navy Ratings Pension Fund pension scheme through the Natural Environment Research Council and British Antarctic Survey.

**Amanda Solloway:**

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) no longer have any employees enrolled in the Merchant Navy Officers Pension Fund Scheme. There are no anticipated upcoming costs to these organisations related to this scheme with their share of the fund's future deficit having been paid in full. As there are no active members of the scheme who are current employees of NERC or BAS an estimate cannot be made of entitlements as records of current pensions scheme memberships are not held.

## ■ Post Office: ICT

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[19503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the average payment has been to subpostmasters receiving redress through the Historic Settlement Scheme.

**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[19504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the length of time required for sub-postmasters who have not yet received payments under the Historic Shortfall Scheme to receive those payments.

**Paul Scully:**

The Historical Shortfall Scheme received over 2,450 claims. Around 400 compensation payments have been made through the scheme and other claims are progressing.



Post Office and the independent panel are focused on progressing claims as quickly as they can and the Department continues to monitor the Scheme's progress closely. It is essential claims are assessed thoroughly and a number of the cases are complex and stretch back over a long period of time.

#### ■ **Travel Agents: Coronavirus**

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

[\[19494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take further steps to support the travel agency sector in the context of the continuing uncertainty for airline travel as a result of the covid-19 pandemic.

**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.

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. To help businesses manage the transition back to the standard rate, a 12.5% rate will then apply for a further six months.

### CABINET OFFICE

#### ■ **Civil Service Agencies: Re-employment**

**Angela Rayner:**

[\[R\] \[19599\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 17 June 2021 to Question 15262 on Civil Service Agencies: Re-employment, if he will issue guidance to Government (a) departments and (b) agencies enforcing the Government's position that threatening fire and rehire as a negotiating tactic is unacceptable; and whether he plans to take steps to implement that position for other public sector employers.

**Angela Rayner:**

[\[R\] \[19600\]](#)

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 15261 on Mitie: Re-employment, if he will inform Mitie that his policy is that threatening fire and rehire as a negotiating tactic is completely unacceptable; and what steps he plans to take to ensure that other contracting authorities communicate that policy to suppliers.

**Julia Lopez:**

I refer the Rt. Hon. Member to the answer given to [PQ 16831](#) on 24 June 2021.

**■ Coronavirus: Vaccination****Martyn Day:** [\[15321\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Answer of 30 March 2021 to Question 171522 on Coronavirus: Vaccination, what the Government's timescale is for (a) developing and (b) introducing a covid-19 vaccine certificate scheme.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Government committed to explore whether and how COVID-status certification might be used to reopen our economy, reduce restrictions on social contact and improve safety. As set out in the 'COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021,' the Government will set out its conclusions on the COVID-status Certification Review in advance of Step 4 of the Roadmap, in order to inform the safe reopening of society and the economy.

An update on the Roadmap Reviews was published on 5 April and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021-reviews-terms-of-reference/roadmap-reviews-update>.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster further updated via a Written Ministerial Statement on 29 April 2021, which can be found below:

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-04-29/hcws947>

**■ Government Property Agency: Mitie****Grahame Morris:** [\[16831\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what contracts the Government Property Agency has for facility management with Mitie.

**Grahame Morris:** [\[16832\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of whether Mitie's indication to some of its staff working on civil service contracts that it will fire and rehire them if they do not agree to change their pay dates is compatible with the social value that Mitie is required to deliver through civil service contracts.

**Grahame Morris:** [\[16833\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how Mitie Group Plc has performed against the Government Property Agency's Facilities Management contract requirement to give its staff an effective voice.

**Grahame Morris:** [\[16834\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he has taken to ensure that the proposed pay changes announced as part of the

Government Property Agency's 10 South Colonnade Facilities Management contract in May 2021 comply with the Cabinet Office's Principles of Good Employment Practice with regards to employee engagement.

**Julia Lopez:**

The Government Property Agency contracts with Mitie for the provision of Total Facilities Management services for some of the Whitehall estate and London, 10 South Colonnade.

The Government Property Agency has not currently undertaken a formal assessment of Mitie's internal policies nor specifically raised concerns about Mitie's treatment of their staff. Mitie has assured us that they are consulting with their employees and recognised representatives about the proposed changes and that a solution can be found through negotiation and agreement.

An informal assessment indicates that Mitie holds an annual all employee engagement survey and local activities such as staff newsletters, town halls and engagement forums. They have consulted with their employees working at 10 South Colonnade on the proposed pay harmonisations and held meetings with those affected. This is consistent with principle six of the Cabinet Office Principles of Good Employment Practice.

GPA has a Social Value Plan in development that will, amongst other things, ensure social value is properly taken into account in the award of new GPA contracts.

■ **Ministers: ICT**

**Angela Rayner:** [\[19601\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what guidance his Department has issued on the security of Ministers' personal electronic communications devices and mobile phones; and what assessment he has made of the security of those devices belonging to the Prime Minister.

**Angela Rayner:** [\[19602\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the Government's policy is on confiscation of ministerial (a) mobile phones and (b) personal electronic devices by officials.

**Angela Rayner:** [\[19603\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government took in response to reports that the Prime Minister's mobile phone number was publicly available.

**Julia Lopez:**

It has been the long-standing practice of successive Governments not to comment on security related matters.

**■ Weddings: Coronavirus****Andrew Rosindell:** [\[18496\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of removing all covid-19 restrictions on weddings pending a negative lateral flow test in line with large sporting events.

**Dr Julian Lewis:** [\[19473\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will introduce a scheme to remove the limit for attendees at weddings held indoors, provided that such attendees can produce verifiable evidence that they (a) have twice been vaccinated in time for the vaccine to have fully taken effect or (b) are not infected with covid-19, demonstrated by means of tests the results of which remain valid for the duration of the wedding celebrations.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

From 21 June, there is no longer a maximum number of attendees at weddings set out in law. Instead, the number of attendees at weddings, civil partnerships and receptions will be determined by how many people the venue or space can safely accommodate with social distancing measures in place.

The Government committed to explore whether and how COVID-status certification might be used to reopen our economy, reduce restrictions on social contact and improve safety. As set out in the 'COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021,' the Government will set out its conclusions on the COVID-status Certification Review in advance of Step 4 of the Roadmap, in order to inform the safe reopening of society and the economy.

An update on the Roadmap Reviews was published on 5 April and can be found here:

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**CHURCH COMMISSIONERS****■ Collective Worship: Coronavirus****Tim Farron:** [\[19560\]](#)

To ask the hon. Member for South West Bedfordshire, representing the Church Commissioners, what recent discussions the Commissioners have had with the Government on the potential merits of reconsidering guidance on sung worship in churches from 21 June 2021 as covid-19 restrictions are eased.

**Andrew Selous:**

The Bishop of London chairs the Church of England's Covid Recovery Group and issued a statement on 15<sup>th</sup> June in which she said: "While we look forward to restrictions on worship being lifted in the near future, I will continue to press for ongoing appraisal of choral and congregational singing." Also on 15<sup>th</sup> June the Bishop of Leeds raised concerns in a question in the House of Lords about inconsistencies on how restrictions are being applied.

Across our parishes live music is valued as integral to worship and for other well-being benefits that choral singing brings.

The Church continues to engage the Government through the Places of Worship Taskforce, and the Bishop of London has requested that the Taskforce reviews the future rules around singing before publication.

Meanwhile, singing under the current guidance remains possible within a very limited framework, both for indoor and outdoor singing.

The Church of England's own guidance on singing is available here:

[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/COVID%2019%20advice%20on%20conducting%20public%20worship%20v3.5\\_0.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/COVID%2019%20advice%20on%20conducting%20public%20worship%20v3.5_0.pdf)

The Government guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-suggested-principles-of-safer-singing/covid-19-suggested-principles-of-safer-singing> The Royal School of Church Music guidance is here: <http://www.rscm.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FAQs-re-Singing-19th-May-2021-1.pdf>

**DEFENCE**■ **[Subject Heading to be Assigned]****Jim Shannon:****[17739]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he has had recent discussions with representatives of Lockheed Martin on matters relating to national security.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The Ministry of Defence publishes in arrears details of Ministers' meetings on a quarterly basis on:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ministerial-gifts-hospitality-travel-and-meetings-with-external-organisations-in-the-ministry-of-defence>

**■ Aircraft Carriers****Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[18486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 16 June 2021 to Question 12078, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of furnishing vertical launch silos on the UK's aircraft carriers.

**Jeremy Quin:**

There is no requirement to fit the Queen Elizabeth Class carriers with vertical launch missile silos. Vertical launch capabilities can be provided by escorts.

**■ Armed Forces: Coronavirus****Mr Tobias Ellwood:** [\[19509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many and what proportion of personnel at sea as part of the Queen Elizabeth Carrier battle group have received two covid-19 vaccinations.

**James Heapey:**

Service personnel currently deployed on the UK's Carrier Strike Group have been fully vaccinated with two doses.

**■ Armed Forces: Housing****Neil Coyle:** [\[18534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to insulate its housing stock to help meet Government targets to reduce carbon emissions.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Ministry of Defence has taken significant steps in improving insulation in Service Family Accommodation (SFA). In the last three years, the Department has invested £90 million to enhance over 10,000 SFA. Works have included fitting External Wall Insulation (EWI), new double glazed doors and windows and loft insulation.

The Department has delivered 2,458 EWI improvements, 2,509 new double glazed doors and windows 1,250 loft insulations.

These works improve the energy efficiency of properties in line with Government targets and respond to the issue of reducing carbon emissions with an efficiency first approach.

**■ AWE****Fabian Hamilton:** [\[19488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what his most recent estimate is of the (a) anticipated out-turn cost and (b) projected in-service date of each of the projects in the Atomic Weapons Establishment Site Development Context Plan.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The currently approved cost and in-service dates for AWE infrastructure projects, are as follows:

PROJECT/PROGRAMME	APPROVED COST	APPROVED IN-SERVICE DATE
MENSA	£1806 million	2023
PEGASUS	£634 million	Material Handling Store- 2025 Manufacture Capability - 2030

All outstanding infrastructure related projects at AWE remain in pre-approval stage and approved outturn cost and in-service dates are not available.

### ■ Mali: Peacekeeping Operations

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**[\[19507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many cases of covid-19 there have been among UK armed forces personnel participating in the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali to date.

**James Heappey:**

There have been 24 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 amongst Service personnel deployed under Operation NEWCOMBE in Mali. Of these, 15 have been in the UK force providing support to Operation BARKHANE and nine cases amongst the Long Range Reconnaissance Group who support the UN mission.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**[\[19508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many of the armed forces personnel that departed from the UK to participate in the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali received (a) no, (b) one and (b) two covid-19 vaccinations.

**James Heappey:**

Rotation one of the Long Range Reconnaissance Group (LRRG) force deployed in December 2020 before the national vaccination programme began – whilst deployed vaccinations were given.

Rotation two of the LRRG are now deployed. On 24 June 2021 97% had received their first COVID-19 vaccination dose and 85% their second.

### ■ Navy: Shipping

**John Redwood:**[\[19472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to subject contracts for (a) naval support vessels and (b) warships to UK-only competition to increase shipbuilding capacity in the UK.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Ministry of Defence's (MOD) updated shipbuilding policy was set out in the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy, which stated that the procurement approach for each class of ship will be determined on a case-by-case basis. As well as considering the specific capability requirements, the MOD will consider the long-term industrial impact of different options, including delivering value for money for the overall programme and maintaining the key industrial capabilities required for operational independence.

For national security reasons, the UK needs to maintain a shipbuilding enterprise with the industrial capabilities to design, manufacture, integrate, modify and support current and future naval ships (both Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary). Overall, the MOD considers that a regular drumbeat of design and manufacturing work in UK yards is needed to maintain the industrial capabilities important for UK national security and to drive efficiencies which will reduce longer-term costs in the shipbuilding portfolio.

■ **Type 26 Frigates: Iron and Steel**

**John Healey:**[\[19487\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will list the (a) steel products used in the construction of the Type 26 frigate and (b) locations from which each of those steel products is sourced.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The information requested has been obtained from the Prime Contractor (BAE Systems) and is provided in the following table:

TYPE OF STEEL	SOURCE COUNTRY
Thin plate	Sweden
Thick plate > 20mm	UK
Bulb	UK, Spain
Angle Bar	UK
Flat bar	UK, Sweden
IPE beam	Luxemburg, Spain, Germany
Other sections and plates	UK, EU sources



**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT****■ Broadband: Finance**

**Dan Jarvis:** [\[19591\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he has had discussions with the Financial Conduct Authority on introducing rules for broadband providers on the same model as its rules from May 2022 for insurers on offering existing customers new customer prices.

**Matt Warman:**

The Secretary of State has not met with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to discuss its new measures on offering existing customers the same prices as new customers. It should be noted however that Ofcom, the independent telecoms regulator, has a statutory duty to further and protect the interests of telecoms consumers and end-users, and as Minister for Digital Infrastructure I have regular engagement with Ofcom on these matters.

In December 2020, the Government strengthened Ofcom's telecoms consumer protection powers. As a result, Ofcom introduced new rules, in February 2021, so that a customer near the end of their contract will receive a notice from their current provider informing of the date their contract will end; the notice period to leave; the service they receive and price they pay as well as any changes to the service and price should they take no action to renew or move their service. These notices must also include information on the prices available to other customers, including new customers. We consider this approach encourages operators to offer competitive pricing to their loyal customers and equally empowers consumers to switch to better deals if those offers do not meet their needs.

**■ Buses: Coronavirus**

**Emma Hardy:** [\[19661\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the clarity of the advice in The visitor economy - Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) on coach party travel after June 21 2021; and whether he has plans to issue revised guidance.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The Government's 'Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)' guidance pages, including the visitor economy guidance, outline what is currently permitted at Step 3 of the Roadmap and how businesses can operate safely under current restrictions.

The Prime Minister's reopening Roadmap sets out the forward look for Step 4. The roadmap also sets out how ongoing reviews (for example, the Social Distancing Review) will inform how businesses will operate in Step 4. It is expected that England will move to Step 4 on 19 July, though the data will be reviewed after 2 weeks in case the risks have reduced. The Government will continue to monitor the data and the move to Step 4 will be confirmed one week in advance, at which point, the 'Working

safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance for businesses across the economy - including the visitor economy guidance - will be updated.

## ■ **Choirs: Coronavirus**

**Mary Kelly Foy:**

[\[19694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to his oral contribution of 20 May 2021 Official Report 860, what the latest public health guidance is that he referred to; how that guidance takes into account research conducted by Public Health England in summer 2020 that showed that singing was no more dangerous than shouting or exercising in an enclosed space; whether he has made an assessment of the ability of organisations that run choirs to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their members compared with informal clubs whose activities have resumed under covid-19 restrictions.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

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

However, it is important that we take a cautious approach in easing restrictions as we wouldn't want to reverse the progress we are making. There is evidence that singing loudly can increase aerosol and thus increase the risk of coronavirus transmission, particularly indoors. As with any activity, the cumulative effect of aerosol transmission means the more people involved, the higher the risk of transmission.

The Covid context has also changed with the emergence of more transmissible strains. This would include the so-called Alpha variant B.1.1.7 which research suggests may be 70% more transmissible, and now the Delta variant B1.617.2 which looks to be even more transmissible. This means the risks associated with transmission have increased since these studies were undertaken. For these reasons it is important that we take a cautious approach in easing restrictions, so that we can see the impact of this before moving to the next step.

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

## ■ **Gambling Commission: Reform**

**Mark Pritchard:**

[\[19557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans he has to reform the governance of oversight and due diligence of the Gambling Commission in response to the collapse of Football Index.

**Dr Rupa Huq:** [\[19643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what his timetable is for publishing the findings of the independent review into the collapse of Football Index announced on 20 April 2021.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

The Secretary of State has appointed Malcolm Sheehan QC to lead the independent review of the Football Index gambling product. He will provide an independent expert account of the actions taken by the Gambling Commission and other relevant regulatory bodies, and consider the lessons to be learnt for the future. As outlined in my Written Ministerial Statement of 7 June, the independent review is expected to provide a report for publication in the summer. The statement can be found at: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2021-06-07/hcws63> and the scope and terms of reference for the review are available on gov.uk.

#### ■ **Gambling: Internet**

**Philip Davies:** [R] [\[18507\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will meet with representatives of gambling affiliates to discuss the role they can play in promoting responsible gambling.

**Philip Davies:** [R] [\[18508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will bring online gambling affiliates under the purview of the Gambling Commission.

**Philip Davies:** [R] [\[18509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will introduce a registration and licensing regime for online gambling affiliates.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

The government launched its Review of the Gambling Act 2005 on 8 December with the publication of a Call for Evidence. This closed on 31 March and received approximately 16,000 submissions from a broad range of interested organisations and individuals, including representatives of gambling affiliates. We are considering all the evidence received carefully and aim to publish a white paper by the end of the year outlining conclusions and next steps.

#### ■ **Social Security Benefits: Voluntary Work**

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[17780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the potential merits of volunteering for people on universal credit and other legacy benefits.

**Matt Warman:**

Government is always interested in understanding and maximising the benefits of volunteering for all individuals.

Increasingly, we know that volunteering can bring considerable benefits to the individual themselves, in addition to the social value they generate for the people and causes they support through their activity. The What Works Centre for Wellbeing's Rapid Evidence Review of volunteering and wellbeing (October 2020) found that while the context of volunteering is an important factor, there is 'high quality evidence that volunteering is positively linked to enhanced wellbeing, including improved life satisfaction, increased happiness and decreases in symptoms of depression'. (What Works Centre for Wellbeing, Institute for Volunteering Research Universities of Sheffield, Salford, UEA and Manchester, [The Impacts of Volunteering on the Subject Wellbeing of Volunteers: A Rapid Evidence Assessment](#), 2020.)

Beyond wellbeing, other studies have examined the links between volunteering and employability, particularly for young people and though socioeconomic factors are thought to be key, these also demonstrate positive benefits. A study by the Behavioural Insights Team for the #iwill youth social action campaign in 2019 found that employers prefer employees who have undertaken social action, since they demonstrate better skills. Accordingly, 81% of young people who have participated in social action believe that this will help them develop new skills.

**■ Youth Investment Fund****Stuart Anderson:**[\[17843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with representatives of the youth sector on ensuring that the Youth Investment Fund tackles local priorities.

**Matt Warman:**

Ministers and officials are in regular contact with the youth sector during the development of the Youth Investment Fund. Officials are working with representatives from the youth sector and young people to shape the design and delivery of the fund. Feedback from the sector on previous funding programmes such as the Youth Covid Support Fund has also been key to development of the Youth Investment Fund. This will ensure a delivery model that is inherently placed based and locally led, achieving maximum impact for young people in left behind places.

**■ Youth Services****Rachael Maskell:**[\[16884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Education on the adequacy of the statutory provision of youth services.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[16885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on young people's wellbeing, what recent assessment he has made of the importance of local authorities providing a comprehensive youth service.

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[16886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of commissioning a comprehensive statutory youth service.

**Matt Warman:**

The Government recognises the transformational impact that youth services can have on the wellbeing of young people. This is even more crucial given the significant impact of Covid-19 on young people, particularly the most vulnerable, and the important role of youth services in supporting them.

Local authorities are directly responsible for allocating public funding to youth services in their areas, and working with youth stakeholders, communities and young people are best placed to know what is needed in their communities.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has been reviewing the guidance which accompanies the statutory duty placed on Local Authorities to secure local youth services. Officials held consultations with the youth sector and young people, and ran a public call for evidence, which closed in December 2019. The conclusions of the review were delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and are now being considered as part of a wider review of out of school youth programmes. The review will inform the future out of school offer for young people which will be set out at the 2021 Spending Review.

The Youth Investment Fund remains a manifesto commitment to level up access to youth services over the course of this Parliament. £30m of this has been committed as capital funding in 2021/22, to support investment in new and refurbished safe spaces for young people in left behind places.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Academies: Inspections

**Peter Kyle:**

[\[16905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the strength of the inspection regime for multi-academy trusts.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department requires a high level of accountability and transparency of all academy trusts. The Department's Regional Schools Commissioners and their teams, together with the Education and Skills Funding Agency, provide robust educational and financial oversight of all academy trusts. Their status as companies,

charities and public sector bodies means they are all subject to rigorous accountability systems.

Ofsted also plays a vital role in trust accountability by providing independent judgement on the educational performance of schools within a trust and through its process of trust summary evaluations. Ofsted's summary evaluations are not currently being undertaken due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the Department will confirm details on when they will return shortly. Whilst these are still relatively small scale, the Department anticipates future findings from Ofsted's summary evaluations as the programme continues and my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, will continue to talk to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector about their robustness.

### ■ **Bletchley Park: Anniversaries**

**Stephen Timms:**

[\[19481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to mark the contribution of pure mathematics as part of the 80th anniversary of the breaking of the Enigma code.

**Nick Gibb:**

It is for schools, colleges, and universities to decide how or if they choose to celebrate this important anniversary.

The Department remains committed to encouraging more students to study advanced mathematics so they can follow in the footsteps of those men and women whose brilliant grasp of mathematics led to the breaking of the Enigma code.

### ■ **Children: Coronavirus**

**Sir David Evennett:**

[\[16797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to help reduce the covid-19 infection rate among secondary school children.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department has worked closely with Public Health England to develop and refresh the system of controls, which are available to view here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-coronavirus-covid-19-operational-guidance#system-of-controls>. These include cleaning hands thoroughly more often than usual, minimising contact between individuals, and keeping occupied spaces well ventilated to reduce the risk of transmission in schools. Testing regimes and the system of controls, when implemented in line with schools' own workplace risk assessment, create an inherently safer environment for children and staff where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced. The way to control the COVID-19 outbreak is the same, even with the current new variants.

On 8 June the Government announced an enhanced support package for any areas affected by local outbreaks. The package includes specialist rapid response teams,

surge testing and enhanced contact tracing, military support, specialist communication, supervised in school testing, and discretion to reintroduce face coverings in communal areas in schools if directors of public health decide it is appropriate.

## ■ Day Care: Children

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[18495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has made an assessment of the merits of extending the eligibility requirements for free childcare for two year olds to support low income parents return to work.

**Vicky Ford:**

The core purpose of the 2-year-old entitlement is to provide a developmental boost to disadvantaged children who are less likely to use formal childcare, but who stand to benefit the most from it. Whilst the entitlement does provide some practical support to help parents return to work or attend training, this is not its main objective.

Parents of 2-year-olds who are in receipt of specified income support benefits, including Universal Credit, whose household income is £15,400 a year or less, are entitled to 15 hours free childcare over 38 weeks of the year.

We believe it is right to target this free entitlement for 2-year-olds from disadvantaged families who need it most. National eligibility criteria have been designed to target those groups who the evidence shows will most benefit from early education.

As well as the 2-year-old entitlement, the government provides other support with the cost of childcare for working parents. Working parents on a low income may be eligible for help with up to 85% of their childcare costs through Universal Credit Childcare. Working parents of 0- to 11-year-olds (or 16-year-olds if the child has a disability) can also access Tax Free Childcare, where the government will pay £2 for every £8 parents pay their provider via an online account, up to a maximum of £2000 per child each year. Parents must earn a minimum of £139 a week and no more than £100,000 annually.

## ■ Extracurricular Activities: Coronavirus

**Theresa Villiers:**

[\[19510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he youth summer camps will to be able to resume with groups of more than 30 children.

**Theresa Villiers:**

[\[19511\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on lifting covid-19 restrictions to allow on youth summer camps to take place.

**Theresa Villiers:** [19512]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has had discussions with the National Youth Agency on allowing youth summer camps run by (a) the scouts, (b) faith groups and (c) other organisations to resume.

**Fiona Bruce:** [19567]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that children and young people are able to attend youth residential activities over the forthcoming summer holiday period in the event that covid-19 restrictions are maintained beyond 19 July 2021.

**Rachael Maskell:** [19626]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure that outdoor activity centres can reopen after the covid-19 outbreak for the 2021 summer holidays for a full programme of outdoor activities.

**Rachael Maskell:** [19627]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps is he taking to ensure that residential Outdoor Activity Centres can fully reopen in summer 2021 after the covid-19 outbreak to support the needs of young people.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department recognises the significant benefits that summer camps and other forms of education outside the classroom can have on children's academic development as well as their mental health and wellbeing.

Since 17 May 2021, out of school settings, including outdoor education centres, have been able to operate in groups of any size for both indoor and outdoor provision. It remains important to continue minimising mixing between children where possible.

Since 21 June, out of school settings have been able to undertake residential visits and overnight stays with groups of up to 30 children. The Department has provided updated guidance which sets out how this can be operated safely. This guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/protective-measures-for-holiday-and-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>.

Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, the Government has listened to the views of the scientific community, in particular the information from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies and its sub-groups when taking decisions on the best way to tackle COVID-19.

Education and childcare settings continue to be supported with appropriate guidance on safety measures, and the Department is committed to ensuring that out of school settings are able to effectively manage risks, create an inherently safer environment and maximise face to face education wherever possible. As new evidence or data emerges, the Government will act accordingly to ensure that all out of school settings



have the right safety measures in place and that measures remain proportionate to the threat posed by COVID-19. The advice on residential visits and the need for protective measures will be reviewed again in advance of Step 4.

The Department is also working closely with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the National Youth Agency to ensure we have full awareness of the effect the COVID-19 outbreak has had on the youth sector. In response to youth sector engagement, dedicated youth sector COVID-19 guidance has been developed by the National Youth Agency in collaboration with DCMS, the Department, youth sector organisations and public health experts.

#### ■ **Newton Rigg College: Sales**

**Barry Gardiner:**

[\[19475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for what reasons the Chief Executive of Skills Funding and the Young People's Learning Agency agreed to execute a legal document on the sale of Newton Rigg in 2011 containing provisions purporting to absolve the parties cited in that legal document from liability for negligence or fraud; and whether that decision to execute a legal document was approved by his Department.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The deed of release was agreed by the Skills Funding Agency and Young People's Learning Agency in line with the policy on further education assets adopted by its sponsor department (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills at the time).

**Barry Gardiner:**

[\[19476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department sought advice from Government lawyers at the time of the sale of Newton Rigg in 2011 on the efficacy of a deed of release purporting to absolve the parties pursuant to that sale from liability for negligence or fraud; and whether that deed of release was deemed by Government lawyers to be (a) ultra vires, (b) void for illegality and (c) contrary to public policy.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The government continues to follow the general practice of successive governments not to comment on legal advice that may or may not have been sought or received.

#### ■ **Newton Rigg College: University of Cumbria**

**Barry Gardiner:**

[\[19477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for what reasons the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) agreed to change the terms of the 2010 Prospectus to require the University of Cumbria to make payments amounting to £3.4million for shared use of the Newton Rigg campus under an Occupancy Agreement; and what account was taken by the SFA when agreeing to change those terms of the original prospectus' provision for the shared use of those assets for the sum of £1 if demanded.

**Gillian Keegan:**

Commercial arrangements between two independent organisations, Askham Bryan College and the University of Cumbria, were entered into by both parties. This allowed the university to continue using Newton Rigg Campus for research related activities following the transfer of further education provision to Askham Bryan College in 2011.

**■ Pre-school Education: Admissions****Richard Fuller:**[\[16825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the impact on children of different local authority policies on school age start dates; and what he plans he has to amend the school admissions code to enable summer-born children to start reception at age five where that is what their parents want.

**Nick Gibb:**

Local authorities do not set policies on school age start dates. Compulsory school age is the start of the term following a child's fifth birthday. Admission authorities must provide for the admission of children in the September following their fourth birthday, but it is for parents to decide whether to send their child to school before compulsory school age.

For summer born children this means that they do not need to start school until the September after their fifth birthday. It is then the decision of the admission authority whether to admit the child to Year 1 or, at the parents' request, to Reception.

In May, the Department published the results of our latest research surveys of local authorities and parents into the delayed admission of summer born children to school.

It remains our intention to legislate, when an opportunity becomes available, so that summer born children can automatically be admitted to a Reception class, where that is what their parents want, and remain with that cohort throughout their education.

**■ Primary Education: Assessments****Caroline Lucas:**[\[16827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 9 June 2021 to Question 8570 on primary education: assessments, when the Information Commissioner's Office approved the Government's proposals; and if he place in the Library the Information Commissioner's Office correspondence on that matter.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department consulted the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) when developing the data processing and data protection aspects of the Reception Baseline Assessment. Documents relating to the consultation with the ICO, including paperwork relating to the Data Protection Impact Assessment, will be available in due course.

**■ Pupil Premium: Arts****Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [\[16805\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the arts pupil premium will be allocated; and whether that premium will be £90 million per year as announced in budget 2020.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Government is committed to high quality education for all pupils, including in the arts and creative subjects. Schools are required to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, and this includes promoting pupils' cultural development. Over £620 million has been spent between 2016 and 2021 on a range of cultural education programmes, which continue to be funded this year. The Department remained committed to this during the COVID-19 outbreak, introducing several initiatives for schools and parents, including signposting to a range of online resources.

Future funding for the arts premium is subject to the next Spending Review.

**■ Schools: Coronavirus****Mary Kelly Foy:** [\[19693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has plans to require schools to carry out on-site supervised lateral flow testing at the start of the 2021-22 school year before allowing new year seven students to commence home testing.

**Nick Gibb:**

Testing in schools and colleges should continue until the end of summer term. Further information on testing arrangements over the summer break and autumn term will be made available shortly.

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[19696\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to limit the (a) spread of covid-19 variants in schools and (b) disruptions caused by covid-19 variants in schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department for Education has worked closely with Public Health England (PHE) to develop and refresh the system of controls, which include cleaning hands thoroughly more often than usual, minimising contact between individuals, and keeping occupied spaces well ventilated to reduce the risk of transmission in schools. Robust testing regimes and the system of controls, when implemented in line with schools' own workplace risk assessment, create an inherently safer environment for children and staff where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced. The way to control the COVID-19 outbreak is the same, even with the current new variants. The system of controls is available to view here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-coronavirus-covid-19-operational-guidance#system-of-controls>.

The system of controls is kept under review and is based on the latest scientific and medical advice, including the context of prevalence, new variants, and progress of the vaccination programme. The Department will continue to develop comprehensive guidance and to understand the impact and effectiveness of these measures on staff, pupils, students, and parents.

In areas where there is a high prevalence of the Delta variant, the Department is increasing the availability of testing for staff, pupils, and families and working with Directors of Public Health to reduce local transmission. The reintroduction of face coverings for pupils, students, or staff may be advised for a temporary period in response to particular localised outbreaks. Further information on responding to individual or regional outbreaks can be found in the contingency framework for education and childcare: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-restrictions-in-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings>.

The Department recognises that extended school restrictions have had a substantial impact on children and young people's education and we are committed to helping pupils make up education lost as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. In June 2021 £1.4 billion was announced to support education recovery for children aged 2 to 19 in schools, colleges, and nurseries. This money will provide an additional £1 billion for tutoring, which will provide up to 100 million hours of tuition for 5 to 19-year-olds by 2024, targeting disadvantaged children and key subjects such as Mathematics and English. 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 Department is also making available an extra £400 million to help to provide 500,000 teacher training opportunities across the country, alongside professional development for early years practitioners.

## ■ Schools: Racial Discrimination

**Justin Madders:**

[\[13988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his Department's policy is on how school complaints relating to racism are (a) identified and (b) recorded.

**Nick Gibb:**

Previous departmental guidance on Recording and Reporting Racist Incidents, published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, encouraged state-funded schools to record, monitor, and report all racist incidents to their responsible body, informing local authorities at least annually of the pattern and frequency of any incidents. This changed with the introduction of the Equality Act 2010. Under section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty), state-funded schools must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and foster

good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Under regulation 4 of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, state-funded schools must publish information annually to demonstrate their compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Identifying and reporting incidents of prejudice-related behaviour can help responsible bodies to identify any actions required to eliminate discrimination, evaluate whether actions taken are effective and demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Academies also have their own procedures by which they record complaints. The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, Part 7, section 25, paragraph j – ‘provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints’. Complaints about racism in a school should first be made to the school itself. The Department may then be asked to consider them and does so on an individual basis, depending on the nature of the complaint and whether it falls within the scope of the Secretary of State’s powers of intervention. These are set out under sections 496/7 of the Education Act 1996 for maintained schools and the funding agreements in place for academy and free schools.

The Department does not use a separate category to identify school complaints relating to racism. Depending on the level of detail provided by the complainant, some complaint handling teams may record that the nature of the complaint is linked to racism under a broader subject heading of behaviour (for incidents involving pupils), governance (if a school’s policy or governance is deficient under the Equality Act 2010) or staff conduct (if an employee is accused of inappropriate conduct).

## ■ Schools: Sports

**Jane Hunt:**

[\[16992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for (a) Health and Social Care and (b) Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on the maintenance of the PE and Sport Premium for the 2021-22 academic year.

**Nick Gibb:**

Ministers at the Department meet regularly with their counterparts in the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to discuss shared policy issues, including physical education (PE) and school sport.

The Government has confirmed that the primary PE and sport premium will continue at £320 million for the 2021/22 academic year. Schools will also be permitted to carry forward any unspent PE and sport premium funding from the current academic year to ensure that this is spent to benefit primary pupils’ physical education, school sport and physical activity recovery.

## ■ Special Educational Needs

**Damien Moore:** [\[16943\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of waiting times to receive support for children in schools with special educational needs and disabilities.

**Vicky Ford:**

The department does not hold data on waiting times to receive support.

The department does publish data on the number and percentage of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans that are issued within the statutory 20 week timescale, which is available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans>. In the 2020 calendar year, 58.0% of EHC plans were issued within the 20-week timescale, excluding cases where exceptions apply.

## ■ Vocational Education: Disadvantaged

**Lisa Nandy:** [\[19578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of removing funding for Applied General Qualifications on the ability of students from disadvantaged backgrounds to progress to (a) higher education and (b) skilled employment.

**Gillian Keegan:**

The Department has consulted in two stages on proposals for the review of post-16 qualifications at level 3, which includes Applied General qualifications (AGQs). The review aims to ensure that students and employers have confidence that every qualification on offer is high quality and can lead to skilled employment or further study. The second stage consultation proposed that there should be a range of qualifications alongside A levels and T Levels in areas where those qualifications can demonstrate their necessity and meet new quality criteria.

The impact assessment published alongside the second stage of consultation stated that the changes will generally be positive because students will have access to higher quality qualifications in the future, including new T Levels. This will put them in a stronger position to progress to further study or skilled employment. It acknowledged that students from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to take qualifications that could have their funding approval removed but did not directly assess the effects of the proposed changes, including any changes to the availability of AGQs, on progression of disadvantaged students into higher education or skilled employment.

We are considering the feedback to the consultation carefully and will publish a full response, including an updated impact assessment, later this year.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****■ Chemicals: Health Hazards****Geraint Davies:**[\[19478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 16 June 2021 to Question 14143 on Chemicals: Health Hazards, if he will take steps to (a) introduce hazard-based protection measures for reducing exposures to endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) that are set out in the EU's Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, (b) update regulatory information requirements to allow the identification of endocrine disruptors under REACH and other relevant legislation, (c) amend REACH Article 57 to add EDCs to the list of substances of very high concern and (d) phase out EDCs from consumer products.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The UK Government's goal is to enhance protections to human health and the environment, while enabling economic growth through the safe management, production and disposal of chemicals.

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

Under Article 57 of REACH, endocrine disrupting properties can already be used to demonstrate that the substance is of 'equivalent level of concern' to be identified as a Substance of Very High Concern (SVHC). SVHC identification is the first step in making a substance subject to authorisation - controls that limit the use of the most hazardous substances.

The Government is committed to protecting consumers from unsafe products. Legislation is in place to require that manufacturers only place safe products on the market and take action where they identify a safety issue with products already on the market.

**■ Nitrates: Netherlands****Bill Wiggin:**[\[19498\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions officials in his Department have had with representatives of their Dutch counterpart on the Dutch Nitrates Case ruling in the Court of Justice of the European Union (C-293/17 and C-294/17).

**Bill Wiggin:**[\[19499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of the continued implementation of the

Dutch Nitrates Case ruling from the Court of Justice of the European Union (C-293/17 and C-294/17) in the UK.

**Bill Wiggin:** [\[19500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with Natural England on the Dutch Nitrates Case ruling from the Court of Justice of the European Union, C-293/17 and C-294/17; and what steps he plans to take to tackle nitrate pollution in England.

**Bill Wiggin:** [\[19501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with its Dutch counterpart in relation to the Dutch Nitrates Case ruling in the Court of Justice of the European Union, C-293/17 and C-294/17 and the restarting of housebuilding in affected areas in that country.

**Bill Wiggin:** [\[19502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the Dutch Nitrates Case ruling in the Court of Justice of the European Union (C-293/17 and C-294/17), what assessment he has made of the potential merits of the Dutch agricultural sector's approach to mitigating nitrate pollution in farming practices.

**Rebecca Pow:**

I am aware of the challenges from excess nutrient pollution that you highlight and the impact this is posing for development in Herefordshire. Sites in England affected by the same issues as those raised in the 'Dutch nitrogen' case are internationally important for biodiversity, and host a wide range of rare river wildlife afforded protected status under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017). It is important to achieve the right balance of measures to allow sustainable development to continue whilst also securing improvement in the condition of our most important natural habitats.

We have therefore set up a monthly government task force involving MHCLG, Natural England and the Environment Agency to ensure a clear action plan is in place, focusing on solutions for both permitting housebuilding to resume while not compromising the condition of Protected Sites. Solutions are being brought forward, including agreed mitigation measures in the River Avon SAC and the development of wetland proposals in Herefordshire. A £3.9 million Defra pilot in the Solent in Hampshire, aims to test market-based approaches that, if successful, could be replicated across the country.

I am continuing to discuss Natural England's approach with them and officials are working on additional support and updated guidance to be provided to Herefordshire and other affected catchments as well as working closely with local authorities across the country to support the implementation of nutrient neutral approaches.

We are also introducing a range of new measures in the Environment Bill to help facilitate improved collaboration, reductions in pollution and provide a more statutory footing for more innovative strategic approaches (such as those which have been



used in the Solent) through the introduction of Protected Site Strategies. These aim to bring together key stakeholders to strategically address the multiple and complex offsite pressures protected sites face, identifying potential options to conserve and restore these sites whilst maximising local economic benefits. The way they will do this is by encouraging the design of bespoke solutions up front to address the cumulative, offsite issues affecting our most sensitive habitats.

The Government is also committed to addressing the sources of nutrient pollution, including by working with farmers. We have committed in the Agricultural Transition Plan (to replace EU-scheme-based regulation and enforcement with a new, more effective, and trusted approach and bring forward a slurry investment scheme from 2022 to address a key source of agricultural diffuse pollution. Catchment Sensitive Farming advice and Countryside Stewardship incentives also aim to reduce pollution from agricultural sources and Environmental Land Management will also incentivise actions that protect the environment. Work is also underway to tackle phosphate pollution from wastewater treatment through Catchment Partnerships and the recently announced Storm Overflows Taskforce seeks to make further improvements in this space.

Finally, officials take an evidence-based approach to policy development and look to learn from practices in other countries where similar challenges are faced. However, I have not spoken to my Dutch counterpart and do not believe my officials have consulted their respective counterparts, but we will continue to seek engagement opportunities with other countries on specific issues if required.

## ■ Squirrels: Conservation

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

[\[19497\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many conservation projects to reintroduce red squirrels have been undertaken in the last two years; and how many of those projects were successful.

**Rebecca Pow:**

We work, through the UK Squirrel Accord, with a number of organisations towards the conservation and recovery of red squirrels in England. This work is primarily focused on the management of habitat for the benefit of red squirrels and the culling of grey squirrels to reduce competition and the spread of squirrel pox. Additionally, we continue to support the development of fertility control for grey squirrels. We are not aware of any projects which seek to reintroduce red squirrels into areas from which they have been lost.

The recently announced Species Reintroduction Taskforce will bring together experts, landowners and NGOs to prioritise, share knowledge, find consensus and build collaborative projects, towards a more ambitious approach to recovering iconic species in England such as red squirrel.

**FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE****■ Afghanistan: Taliban****Imran Ahmad Khan:**[\[17883\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Afghani counterpart on the ongoing talks between that government and the Taliban.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK is in regular contact with the Afghan Government on a number of issues, including the Afghan peace negotiations. The Prime Minister spoke to President Ghani on 17 June, and reiterated the UK's commitment to Afghanistan. Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon spoke to the Afghan Foreign Minister, Hanif Atmar, most recently on 2 June and 3 May. The UK remains committed to supporting Afghanistan and continues to encourage efforts to reach a sustainable and inclusive political settlement. For there to be a lasting peace, the Taliban must engage meaningfully in a dialogue with the Afghan government.

**■ Bangladesh: Ahmadiyya****Imran Ahmad Khan:**[\[17886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Bangladeshi counterpart on the persecution of Ahmadis in that country.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK Government is committed to defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. Promoting the right to FoRB is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities.

Bangladesh is a human rights priority country for the FCDO. Ministers and our High Commission in Dhaka regularly raise human rights concerns as part of continued dialogue with the Government of Bangladesh. The UK supports community leaders in Bangladesh to address the causes and effects of inter-religious, ethnic and political conflict. Our development programming supports citizen groups in 31 districts across the country to come together to resolve grievances, mitigate religious violence and advocate for inclusive and peaceful co-existence.

While Bangladesh is a secular people's republic with formal guarantees of religious freedom, we recognise the risk of religious persecution faced by Ahmadiyya Muslims and other groups including Hindus, Christians and atheists in Bangladesh, and actively engage with minority communities to understand their concerns. We will continue to monitor this closely and advocate for FoRB as well as other human rights.

## ■ Bangladesh: Atheism

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

[\[17887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions his Department have had with their Bangladeshi counterparts on the persecution of atheists in that country.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK Government is committed to defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. Promoting the right to FoRB is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities.

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## ■ Bangladesh: Christianity

**Imran Ahmad Khan:**

[\[17885\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with their Bangladeshi counterparts on the persecution of Christians in that country.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK Government is committed to defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities. Promoting the right to FoRB is one of the UK's longstanding human rights priorities.

Bangladesh is a human rights priority country for the FCDO. Ministers and our High Commission in Dhaka regularly raise human rights concerns as part of continued dialogue with the Government of Bangladesh. The UK supports community leaders in Bangladesh to address the causes and effects of inter-religious, ethnic and political conflict. Our development programming supports citizen groups in 31 districts across the country to come together to resolve grievances, mitigate religious violence and advocate for inclusive and peaceful co-existence.

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## ■ Bangladesh: Humanitarian Aid

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[19616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to facilitate increased humanitarian access to the Kutupalong refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[19618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to work with agencies at a local level to facilitate the removal of the fence surrounding the Kutupalong refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[19619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to (a) assist with support for refugees at the Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh and (b) work with local officials to facilitate long-term solutions for people living in that camp.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK Government regularly engages with the Bangladesh authorities in Dhaka and Cox's Bazar on the need to allow humanitarian agencies unhindered access to the camps to provide protection and critical assistance, including during the pandemic. I met with UNHCR last week to discuss conditions in Cox's Bazar. The UK has emphasised the importance of maintaining the civilian nature of the camp, as well as ensuring fencing does not block access in or out of the camps and to services. We have also stressed the importance of providing education and livelihood opportunities for the Rohingya refugees for their well-being and to prepare for their voluntary, safe and dignified return to Myanmar when the conditions are right.

The UK remains a leading donor to the Rohingya response in Bangladesh. At the launch of the Joint Response Plan on 18 May, we announced £27.6 million in new funding to the Rohingya response in Bangladesh, bringing our total contribution over £320 million since the crisis started in 2017. Our financial contribution will continue to deliver lifesaving aid to both Rohingya refugees and host communities.

## ■ Conflict Resolution

**Chris Law:** [\[13967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he is developing a conflict prevention strategy.

**James Cleverly:**

As announced in the Integrated Review, the FCDO's new conflict centre will support a more integrated HMG approach to conflict prevention, management and resolution, including working with teams across FCDO and HMG to support the wide range of interconnected agendas aimed at building inclusive and stable environments and preventing possible atrocities. A core part of the centre's role will be to draw on expertise from across HMG and beyond to support the UK's work on conflict, including from civil society, academia, and the private sector, and through cooperation with bilateral partners and multilateral organisations.

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Oman**

**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[19706\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has visited the property in his constituency that is reportedly owned by Oman's Royal Office minister.

**James Cleverly:**

We have no record of the Foreign Secretary visiting this property.

**Global Partnership for Education**

**Claire Hanna:** [\[19730\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how much will the UK's next contribution to the Global Partnership for Education be.

**Wendy Morton:**

At the G7 Summit the Prime Minister announced the UK pledge of £430 million to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). This five year pledge is our largest ever pledge to GPE and an uplift of 15% from our current position as top bilateral donor.

**Hungary: LGBT People**

**Catherine West:** [\[19645\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government has expressed concerns on the recent changes to LGBT+ legislation in Hungary to representatives of the (a) EU and (b) Hungarian Government.

**Wendy Morton:**

The UK is concerned by measures that discriminate against the LGBT+ community in the law passed by the Hungarian parliament on 15 June. We firmly support the rights of LGBT+ people, and condemn discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. The strongest, safest and most prosperous societies are those in which all citizens can live freely without discrimination, and where all citizens, including LGBT+ people, can play a full, equal and active part in an open society.

I tweeted my concern about this legislation on 21 June. The Prime Minister raised his significant concerns about human rights in Hungary, including LGBT+ rights, when he met Hungarian Prime Minister Orbán on 28 May.

## ■ Myanmar: Armed Conflict

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[19620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Myanmar on (a) the de-escalation of the current crisis in Myanmar and (b) a long-term peace process involving all parties.

**Nigel Adams:**

The UK is clear in its condemnation of the coup and the appalling violence by the military, which has left over 850 people dead. The UK is calling for a peaceful and inclusive political resolution to the crisis. Following the coup, Our Ambassador to Yangon attended an Ambassador's briefing with the military appointed officials, where he clearly set out UK demands and our opposition to the coup. We continue to call publicly for a return to democracy and the release of all those in arbitrary detention, including democratically elected politicians, journalists, civil society and foreign nationals. We are using all levers available to us to achieve this end, this includes sanctions and working to prevent the flow of arms to Myanmar.

We have also welcomed the Five Point Consensus on Myanmar reached at the ASEAN leaders' meeting in April and ASEAN's role in addressing the crisis and supported ASEAN's call for an end to violence, for restraint, and for a peaceful resolution. As was made clear in the communique after the G7 leaders, under UK leadership, made clear earlier this month the military must implement this plan without delay.

## ■ Myanmar: HIV Infection

**Sarah Owen:** [\[19711\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Myanmar Government on reports of the closure of HIV treatment clinics and the stopping of anti retro-viral treatment in that country.

**Nigel Adams:**

We were extremely concerned by reports the military regime has closed internationally-run clinics in the Tanintharyi region of Myanmar. It is vital that HIV treatment programmes are not interrupted - for the wellbeing of patients and for wider public health. HIV services must be allowed to resume. We have called on the regime to ensure health workers can go about their lifesaving work freely.

## ■ Myanmar: Humanitarian Aid

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[19617\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to (a) facilitate increased humanitarian access in Myanmar and (b) ensure that aid agencies and staff are protected.

**Nigel Adams:**

The humanitarian situation in Myanmar is extremely serious. Displacement and humanitarian needs are increasing, and the military junta is denying humanitarian and commercial food supplies to some places in the southeast and west of Myanmar. We are increasingly working through small scale local civil society organisations which are able to mobilise community support and reach places the UN and international humanitarian community cannot access. The UK has used the UN Security Council to call for humanitarian access, including the session on 18 June. G7 Foreign Ministers under UK leadership made a clear call for humanitarian access at their meeting in May. The UK supported the UN General Assembly resolution on Myanmar, adopted on 18 June, which called for humanitarian access.

Humanitarian supplies and actors are increasingly targeted. We are adapting our humanitarian programme to respond to the changing context; increasing the use of remote management to minimise movements of humanitarian staff, engaging with ethnic armed organisations on security and supporting the community as first responders where we can.

## ■ Oman: Economic Situation

**Kenny MacAskill:** [\[19707\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the Gulf Strategy Fund, what steps he is taking to support economic reform in Oman.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK works closely with Oman on economic reform in support of Oman's Vision 2040. Through the Gulf Strategy Fund we are sharing UK expertise and best practice in a number of areas including economic diversification.

## ■ Palestinians: Textbooks

**Lee Anderson:** [\[17844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the European Commission on the publication date of the EU-funded review of the content of Palestinian Authority school textbooks.

**James Cleverly:**

The Georg Eckert Institute, who were commissioned by the EU to undertake a review into Palestinian textbooks published the final report on 18 June 2021. The UK

engaged closely with our European partners to urge publication. The review is publicly accessible on their website:

**Lee Anderson:** [\[17845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made for the implications of his policies of the finding by the review commissioned by the EU of the content of Palestinian Authority school textbooks that those textbooks encourage and glorify violence against Israelis and Jews.

**James Cleverly:**

We have been clear that incitement to hatred or violence is unacceptable from all parties and should have no place in education. This report on Palestinian textbooks highlights progress in key areas, but also indicates that anti-Israel content remains. We will continue to raise concerns about this with the Palestinian Authority, and continue to urge all parties to condemn incitement wherever and whenever it occurs.

#### ■ **Soulaiman Raissouni**

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[19695\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure imprisoned Moroccan journalist, Soulaiman Raissouni, is given access to adequate medical treatment.

**James Cleverly:**

We are aware of reports concerning Soulaiman Raissouni and continue to monitor the case. Support for human rights is a priority around the world, and we regularly raise human rights issues with the Moroccan Government, including prison conditions.

#### ■ **Travel Restrictions: Coronavirus**

**Dan Jarvis:** [\[19592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of support for UK citizens in countries where red, amber or green ratings for covid-19 have changed during their stay.

**Nigel Adams:**

British nationals should not travel to red list countries or territories. Those already overseas should follow the public health advice of the country which they are in, including current COVID-19 restrictions. Those wishing to return to the UK can use commercial travel options to do so. The Government has announced that, as part of a limited trial, from 8 June direct flights are permitted to England from red list countries that were previously subject to flight bans, so long as they arrive at dedicated terminals at Heathrow and Birmingham. Those returning should check current COVID-19 related restrictions on gov.uk (<https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control>), noting that individuals returning from red listed countries must enter managed quarantine in a hotel. British nationals requiring assistance should contact their nearest embassy, consulate or high commission. Our consular staff endeavour to



give appropriate and tailored support to British nationals overseas and their families in the UK, 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year. This support includes providing assistance to return to the UK where it is appropriate. The assistance the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) can provide to British nationals abroad is set out in the publication: Support for British nationals abroad: A Guide (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-british-nationals-abroad-a-guide>).

## ■ Turkey: Violence

**Navendu Mishra:**

[\[19723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the Turkish Government in response to violence against the People's Democratic Party in that country.

**Wendy Morton:**

The attack on the office of the People's Democratic Party (HDP) in Izmir, and the death of an HDP employee, was a shocking event. Our Embassy meets regularly with the HDP leadership, as it does with other opposition parties, to discuss their concerns, including the arrests of HDP MPs. We will continue to engage closely with Turkey to encourage the full protection of the fundamental rights and security of all peoples, regardless of their legitimate political affiliations, particularly in the areas of freedom of expression and assembly, press freedom and the treatment of detainees.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### ■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[17736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people have been diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma in each of the last three years.

**Jo Churchill:**

The most recent data available shows that in 2016, 1,725 people were diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma, 1,818 people in 2017 and 1,779 people in 2018.

### ■ Care Homes: Coronavirus

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[17835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department's guidance in respect of care homes and the covid-19 outbreak states that care home residents can still access care inside the care home in the event that that person is undergoing a period of self-isolation after an overnight visit.

**Helen Whately:**

Care home residents should continue to receive the personalised care and support they need throughout the pandemic, even during periods of isolation. We have set

out guidance on how to provide care to residents who are COVID-19 positive or isolating which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-how-to-work-safely-in-care-homes>

Since 22 April care home residents have been able to access care from an 'essential care giver' who may visit to provide essential care, including during periods of isolation. These care givers must comply with the same testing, personal protective equipment and infection control arrangements as care home staff. From 21 June, care home residents no longer need to self-isolate after an overnight stay unless the visit out is an overnight stay in a hospital or has been assessed as high-risk following an individual risk assessment.

### ■ Community Care: Learning Disability

**Zarah Sultana:**

[\[17859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if the Government will make it its policy to make community support available to prevent people with learning disabilities from being admitted to inpatient units.

**Helen Whately:**

'Building the right support', published in October 2015, is our national plan to improve the quality of care, reduce avoidable admissions and reduce reliance on specialist inpatient care for people with a learning disability and autistic people. The NHS Long Term Plan commits to increased investment in intensive, crisis and forensic community support for people with a learning disability and autistic people by 2023/24, which will enable more people to receive personalised care in the community and reduce preventable admissions to inpatient services.

### ■ Coronavirus: Disease Control

**Helen Hayes:**

[\[18548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to extend the Infection Control Fund for social care providers beyond 30 June 2021 in response to the increasing number of covid-19 cases.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2021]:* In 2021/22, we are providing local authorities with an estimated £3 billion to help manage the impact of COVID-19 across their services, including in adult social care. The Government will continue to monitor pressures on the sector and will keep future funding under review.

## ■ Coronavirus: Public Houses and Retail Trade

**Charlotte Nichols:**

**[10684]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the scientific evidential basis was for the decision to allow non-essential shops to reopen on 12 April 2021 and to allow pubs to serve customers outside only.

**Jo Churchill:**

Throughout the pandemic the Government has had to balance the economic and social implications of restrictions with the need to protect public health when considering packages of measures to control the virus. These are complex decisions which take into account a range of health, economic, and social and wellbeing metrics when considering the design of measures but it is difficult analytically to isolate individual sectors or measures. We keep measures under constant review to ensure they reflect the latest science and clinical data.

The Government published a wide range of economic and social data in the 'COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021' roadmap and in the data annex supporting the roadmap publication. The roadmap is available at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/963491/COVID-19\\_Response\\_-\\_Spring\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963491/COVID-19_Response_-_Spring_2021.pdf)

The data annex is available at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/963276/COVID-19\\_RESPONSE\\_-\\_SPRING\\_2021\\_Data\\_Annex.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963276/COVID-19_RESPONSE_-_SPRING_2021_Data_Annex.pdf)

This, along with wider scientific advice from the Scientific Advisory Group on Emergencies, contributed to the decisions on the order of easing and the overall pace of the roadmap, which included the reopening of non-essential retail and outdoor hospitality at step two.

## ■ Coronavirus: Social Prescribing

**Mr Nicholas Brown:**

**[18473]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to promote to health professionals the Reading Well social prescribing scheme available free from public libraries as part of a Government-funded covid-19 recovery initiative.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2021]:* Social prescribing link workers (SPLWs) can connect those who are referred to them by health professionals to community groups and agencies for practical, social and emotional support, such as libraries and the Reading Well initiative. SPLWs work closely with local partners across health, local authorities, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, communities and other partners to identify and nurture community assets, such as local libraries and to raise awareness of the range of support available, such as the Reading Well resources.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have worked with the Reading Agency to share their resources and the role of local libraries via its social prescribing bulletin, its collaborative platform and via regional networks and will continue to work with Reading Well to share its resources, including via the new cross Government green social prescribing programme. The National Academy of Social Prescribing has promoted the Reading Well programme via a blog post and via their Thriving Communities programme.

## ■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[13001\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to (a) pages 22 to 23 of Public Health England's COVID-19 - SARS-CoV-2 Green Book Chapter 14a, published on 7 May 2021, and (b) the Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's Information for Healthcare Professionals on COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca, 4.4, published on 15 April 2021, whether he has made an assessment of whether (i) previous experience of thrombosis and (ii) the presence of thrombophilia such as antiphospholipid syndrome should be treated as contraindications for (A) Pfizer/BioNTech, (B) Oxford/AstraZeneca, (C) Moderna and (D) Janssen Covid-19 vaccination in relation to risks of vaccine-induced immune thrombocytopenia and thrombosis.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

*[Holding answer 14 June 2021]:* The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has undertaken a thorough review into reports of an extremely rare specific type of blood clot in the brain in the United Kingdom, following vaccination with the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine. It is also considering other types of blood clots alongside low platelet levels. No risk factors for this unusual type of clotting disorder have been identified although the MHRA is continuing to monitor the emerging data.

There is no evidence those with a history of common types of thrombosis are more at risk of developing rare blood clots with low platelets after vaccination. Therefore, the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine in individuals with a history of these conditions is not currently a contraindication. Individuals with past clotting episodes without low platelets and those diagnosed with thrombophilia remain at risk of COVID-19 disease and should be vaccinated with any of the available vaccines. However, as a precautionary measure, administration of the AstraZeneca vaccine in patients with a history of cerebral venous sinus thrombosis or antiphospholipid syndrome should only be considered when the benefit outweighs any potential risks and use is contraindicated in those who have experienced major clots with low platelets after any COVID-19 vaccine or after exposure to heparin.

These rare events have also been reported in other countries with the Janssen vaccine. However, no predisposing risk factors have been identified. The available evidence does not suggest an increased risk of these rare events following administration of either the Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna vaccines.

**Mr Ben Bradshaw:**

[\[17675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the covid-19 outbreak, whether his Department has conducted a recent analysis of the (a) transmissibility of the Beta variant compared with the Alpha variant, (b) severity of disease caused by the Beta variant compared with the Alpha variant and (c) ability of the Beta variant to evade the AstraZeneca covid-19 vaccine.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England's (PHE) data published on 11 June shows that transmissibility of the Beta variant is similar to Alpha in the United Kingdom. PHE monitors the epidemiology and growth rate of all variants of concern in England. PHE also monitors the case fatality ratio of all variants of concern in England. The current case fatality ratio in England is similar between Alpha and Beta amongst those individuals who have completed 28 day follow up.

PHE's risk assessment of 1 April 2021 states that there is evidence of reduced ability of vaccinated individuals to neutralise the virus, across vaccines. Evidence suggests the magnitude of this effect is larger for Beta, compared to Gamma or Alpha. There is clinical trial evidence of decreased effectiveness in humans for preventing mild to moderate infection with Beta variant. This varies by vaccine. PHE reviews and updates the variant risk assessment.

## ■ Dental Services

**Charlotte Nichols:**

[\[15422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people are unable to access an NHS dentist in their local area; and what plans he has to ensure everyone can access an NHS dentist locally for routine care.

**Jo Churchill:**

The GP Patient Survey from March 2020 indicates that in the previous year, of 334,181 patients, 5% or 16,709, were unable to access a National Health Service dental appointment.

In light of the impact of COVID-19, NHS dentists have been asked to maximise safe throughput to meet as many prioritised needs as possible, focussing first on urgent care and vulnerable groups, followed by overdue appointments. NHS England and NHS Improvement have provided a flexible commissioning toolkit to local commissioners to help focus the available capacity on those that need it most and to reduce oral health inequalities.

We are working with NHS England and NHS Improvement and Public Health England to increase access, including for routine care, taking into account the ongoing infection prevention and control and social distancing requirements. For the longer term, the Department has asked NHS England and NHS Improvement to work with the British Dental Association, to build on the learning from the dental contract reform programme and bring forward proposals to address the key challenges facing the delivery of NHS dentistry and improve patient access.

**Stephen Morgan:**

[\[7260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the findings of the British Dental Association's survey of dentists published on 25 May 2021; and if he will make a statement.

**Jo Churchill:**

We continue to work closely with the National Health Service, Public Health England and Health Education England to address the issues raised in the British Dental Association's survey.

This includes increasing access to dental services, while maintaining measures to protect staff and patients from COVID-19 infection; reviewing the current dental contract; and exploring opportunities and options for flexible dental training pathways, to develop dental care teams, improve retention and deliver safe and effective care.

#### ■ **Dental Services: Plymouth**

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[14212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) children and young people under 18 and (b) adults waiting for an NHS dentist in Plymouth.

**Jo Churchill:**

There are currently approximately 13,570 adults and 3,615 children on the Devon Dental Helpline waiting list for a National Health Service dentist in Plymouth.

We are working with NHS England and NHS Improvement and Public Health England to increase levels of service as fast as possible, taking into account the ongoing infection prevention and control and social distancing requirements. In resuming services, a careful balance is needed between increasing dental activity and ensuring patients and staff are protected from ongoing infection risk.

#### ■ **Dental Services: Staffordshire**

**Kate Griffiths:**

[\[13231\]](#)

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

**Jo Churchill:**

In order to increase access to dental care in the Midlands, NHS England commissioned a scheme from 8 January to 31 March 2021 to provide additional sessions at weekends. This initiative saw an additional 17,250 patients treated by 91 participating practices. NHS England has evaluated the scheme and is considering recommissioning the service to further improve access in the region.

**■ Department of Health and Social Care: Freedom of Information****Jonathan Ashworth:****[19593]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has referred any Freedom of Information requests received by his Department to the central Cabinet Office Clearing House on Freedom of Information requests for advice on handling, in the last two years.

**Edward Argar:**

The Department has occasionally referred Freedom of Information requests to the central Cabinet Office Clearing House for advice on handling in the last two years, in accordance with referral criteria which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-and-freedom-of-information>

**■ General Practitioners: Coronavirus****Rachael Maskell:****[17896]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the covid-19 vaccine roll-out programme, what discussions he has had with stakeholders on best practice for GP services' organisation to support (a) clearing the backlog of patients and (b) tackling acute increases in demand for GP services that has accrued as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

We have regular meetings with stakeholders to discuss recovery in general practice and support through funding, clinical prioritisation, tackling health inequalities and population health management. There have been further discussions on primary care's role in the reduction of the elective care waiting list and its impact on general practice.

**■ Integrated Care Systems: Third Sector****Rachael Maskell:****[17776]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to provide statutory guidance to ensure that the community and voluntary sector will have a reserved place in the new (a) integrated care systems and (b) integrated care providers.

**Edward Argar:**

We are proposing to establish statutory integrated care systems, made up of an integrated care board (ICB) and integrated care partnership (ICPs).

The 'Integrated Care Systems: design framework', published by NHS England on 17 June, made clear that partnerships with the community and voluntary sectors should be embedded as an essential part of how integrated care systems operate at all levels. By April 2022, ICBs and ICPs will be expected to develop a formal agreement for engaging and embedding the community and voluntary sector in system level

governance and decision-making arrangements. Statutory guidance on ICP and ICBs will be published in due course.

We will consider what guidance is necessary to support integrated care providers (ICPs), should we decide to introduce the ICP contract.

## ■ Medical Records: Data Protection

**Julian Sturdy:**

[\[11537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he has taken to assess the level of public concern on the transfer of patient records from GPs to a centralised NHS Digital system; and what steps he is taking to protect patient confidentiality under that new system.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

NHS Digital has engaged widely with stakeholders over several years on the new system, including patient groups and professional clinical organisations. NHS Digital has publicised this coming into effect through a press notice, web content, social media, engagement with the media and through stakeholder channels. The new system will now start on 1 September, allowing an additional two months to engage with patients, doctors, health charities and others.

Applications to use data are always subject to the greatest scrutiny. Access to data can only be requested for specific purposes, such as medical research and planning and audits are carried out to ensure it is only being used for the purpose given.

## ■ Mental Health Services

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**

[\[10552\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment the Government has made of the effectiveness of the Serenity Integrated Mentoring model used in mental healthcare; and what plans he has to review the use of that model nationally.

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**

[\[10553\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department holds on the (a) effectiveness and (b) safety of the Serenity Integrated Mentoring model in mental healthcare.

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**

[\[10554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government has consulted mental health service users with complex needs on the use of the Serenity Integrated Mentoring (SIM) model; and whether he has plans to further consult users about the SIM model.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 9 June 2021]:* No recent assessment has been made and such data is held.



NHS England and NHS Improvement have written to the medical directors of National Health Service mental health trusts asking them to review the implementation of Serenity Integrated Mentoring and similar models in trusts, in partnership with local patient representatives and those who might have been in the care of such models.

NHS England and NHS Improvement intend to gather learning from these local reviews, to inform the expansion and transformation of community and crisis care services for adults and older adults with mental health needs as part of the NHS Long Term Plan.

**Fleur Anderson:**

[\[16237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to concerns raised by the British Psychological Society, if he will review the High Intensity Network's serenity integrated mentoring.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 21 June 2021]:* NHS England and NHS Improvement have written to the medical directors of National Health Service mental health trusts asking them to review the implementation of Serenity Integrated Mentoring and similar models in trusts, in partnership with local patient representatives and those who might have been in the care of such models.

NHS England and NHS Improvement intend to gather learning from these local reviews, to inform the expansion and transformation of community and crisis care services for adults and older adults with mental health needs as part of the NHS Long Term Plan.

**Zarah Sultana:**

[\[17864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will conduct an independent inquiry and evaluation of Serenity Integrated Mentoring within the NHS, with regards to its evidence base, safety, legality, ethics, governance and acceptability to service users.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 22 June 2021]:* We have no plans to conduct such an inquiry. However, in light of the concerns that have been raised regarding the Serenity Integrated Mentoring model, NHS England and NHS Improvement have written to the medical directors of National Health Service mental health trusts asking them to review the implementation of Serenity Integrated Mentoring and similar models in trusts, in partnership with local patient representatives and those who might have been in the care of such models.

NHS England and NHS Improvement intend to gather learning from these local reviews, to inform the expansion and transformation of community and crisis care services for adults and older adults with mental health needs as part of the NHS Long Term Plan.

**■ Mental Health Services: Fathers****Cherilyn Mackrory:** [\[17850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that fathers and partners can access psychological therapy through the NHS in the event that they are identified as needing help by a Maternal Mental Health Hub.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

We are expanding access to psychological therapies within specialist perinatal mental health services so that they include couple, co-parenting and family interventions. Partners of women accessing specialist perinatal mental health will also be offered evidence-based assessments for their mental health and signposting to support as required.

**■ Mental Health Services: Standards****Bell Ribeiro-Addy:** [\[10663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to (a) investigate and (b) respond to concerns relating to Serenity Integrated Mentoring for mentally unwell patients, relating to the evidential basis, safety, legality, ethics, governance and approach to service users of that company.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement have written to the medical directors of National Health Service mental health trusts asking them to review the implementation of Serenity Integrated Mentoring and similar models in trusts, in partnership with local patient representatives and those who might have been in the care of such models.

NHS England and NHS Improvement intend to gather learning from these local reviews, to inform the expansion and transformation of community and crisis care services for adults and older adults with mental health needs as part of the NHS Long Term Plan.

**■ Mental Health Services: Young People****Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[17749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to create a network of early support hubs across the country for young people who experience mental health issues.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 22 June 2021]:* While we are investigating the early access model of support, there are no current plans to create such a network. In England, there are approximately 60 'hubs' offering early intervention and prevention services. They are locally designed and funded and often provide several different services such as sexual health clinics or careers advice. Clinical commissioning groups and local

authorities work with local partners to understand local needs and commission services on that basis.

## ■ NHS: Voluntary Work

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[17777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the success of the NHS volunteer scheme during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Jo Churchill:**

As of 14 June, NHS Volunteer Responders have completed over 1.9 million tasks, supporting over 171,000 unique clients. The Royal Voluntary Service conducted a patient survey on the NHS Volunteer Responders programme in May 2021, which found that 84% of patients or clients surveyed felt the service enabled them to stay safe.

## ■ Niraparib

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

[\[19495\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when NICE plans to publish the outcome of its assessment of the effectiveness of Niraparib for maintenance treatment of advanced ovarian, fallopian tube and peritoneal cancer.

**Jo Churchill:**

In February 2021, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence issued final guidance that recommends niraparib for use within the Cancer Drugs Fund (CDF) for the maintenance treatment of advanced ovarian, fallopian tube and peritoneal cancer after response to first-line platinum-based chemotherapy. Niraparib is now available to eligible National Health Service patients in England through the CDF in line with this recommendation.

## ■ Obesity: Children

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[18494\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of trends in the level of childhood obesity as a result of inactivity during covid-19 lockdown.

**Jo Churchill:**

Public Health England has not made an assessment as the data is not yet available.

## ■ Podiatry

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[\[18526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of increasing accessibility to podiatric surgery on waiting times for elective foot surgery.

**Edward Argar:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2021]:* We have made no formal assessment.

**■ Prescription Drugs**

**Peter Dowd:** [\[18537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions his Department has had with (a) NICE and (b) NHS England and NHS Improvement on the changes needed in the NICE methods and process review to improve access to new medicines for patients.

**Peter Dowd:** [\[18538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions his Department has had with (a) NICE and (b) NHS England and NHS Improvement on setting levels of ambition in the NICE Methods Review.

**Jo Churchill:**

The Department regularly discuss a range of issues with colleagues in the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and NHS England and NHS Improvement, including NICE's methods review. However, NICE is an independent body and is responsible for its own methods and processes. NICE expects to consult on the draft programme manual in the summer, with implementation of the changes from early 2022.

**■ Processed Food: Children**

**Anne Marie Morris:** [\[18527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to tackle the harmful effects on children of the consumption of ultra-processed foods.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2021]:* There is no universally agreed description of ultra-processed foods based on either their ingredients and/or additives or by how much processing has been involved in their production. However, a diet high in processed foods is often high in calories, salt, saturated fat and sugar.

'Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives', sets out our intention to end the advertising of high fat, salt and sugar products being shown on TV before 9pm and we have consulted on a total high fat, salt and sugar products advertising restriction online. We have also confirmed we will restrict the promotions of high fat, salt and sugar food and drinks in retailers.

**■ Respite Care: Finance**

**Zarah Sultana:** [\[18606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will increase funding for (a) paid and (b) unpaid carers to have access to breaks from their caring responsibilities.

**Helen Whately:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2021]:* The Care Act 2014 introduced rights for carers which includes an assessment of and support for, their needs where eligible. During the pandemic, we have provided £1.35 billion via the Infection Control Fund, part of which has been used to support the safe reopening of day and respite services. In addition, we have committed at least £6.9 billion in 2021-2022 to the Better Care Fund, which includes funding that can be used on social care support, including respite services.

We have also taken steps to support the social care sector workforce during the pandemic. To support the wellbeing of social care workers, the Department, the National Health Service and other organisations have provided a package of emotional, psychological and practical resources. This includes support helplines, guidance, bereavement resources and a bespoke package of support for registered managers.

**■ Travel: Coronavirus****Emma Hardy:****[18559]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data his Department is using to determine which countries are placed on the (a) red, (b) amber and (c) green international covid-19 travel restriction lists; and if he will publish that data.

**Jo Churchill:**

Decisions to designate countries as either 'red', 'amber' or 'green' on the 'international traffic light' system are taken by the Government to protect public health. They are informed by evidence including the Joint Biosecurity Centre's risks assessment methodology alongside wider public health factors. We are unable to provide the advice and evidence which informs these decisions as it relates to the ongoing development of Government policy. However, further information on the data informing the international travel traffic light risk assessments is published on GOV.UK at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/data-informing-international-travel-risk-assessments>

**■ Travel: Quarantine****Daisy Cooper:****[18597]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the capacity of covid-19 hotel quarantine ahead of international students from red list countries arriving in the UK at the start of the 2021-22 academic year.

**Jo Churchill:**

We currently have thousands of hotel rooms available to meet anticipated demand from 'red list' countries. Travellers arriving from these countries should continue to book a place in a quarantine hotel at least 48 hours before arrival. The Government will monitor future demand to match with available hotel capacity.

**■ Visual Impairment: Rehabilitation****Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[18543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how local authority rehabilitation services, such as specialist vision rehabilitation will be included in the proposed new Health and Care Bill duty for the Care Quality Commission to assess how local authorities are meeting their adult social care duties.

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[18545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how his Department is planning to monitor the quality of local authority rehabilitation services for blind and partially sighted people across England.

**Helen Whately:**

Under the Care Act 2014, local authorities are responsible for making sure people who live in their areas have access to timely, high quality and appropriate adult social care services, including specialist vision rehabilitation. The forthcoming Health and Care Bill will introduce the Department's plans to develop an enhanced assurance framework to improve adult social care oversight across England. This includes a new duty for the Care Quality Commission to review and make an assessment of local authorities' delivery of their adult social care duties to help drive quality and outcomes for care users.

**HOME OFFICE****■ Alcoholic Drinks: Minimum Prices****Dan Carden:** [\[19662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of evidence from the (a) Scottish and (b) Welsh Governments following the introduction of minimum unit pricing on (i) the consumption of alcohol and (ii) levels of alcohol harm.

**Kit Malthouse:**

There are no plans to introduce Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) in England at this time. The Government continues to monitor the impact of MUP in Scotland and Wales as it emerges, including the recent report by Public Health Scotland. We have an existing agenda on tackling health harms from alcohol and are committed to supporting the most vulnerable at risk from alcohol misuse.

**■ Daniel Morgan Independent Panel****Daisy Cooper:** [R] [\[6475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on what date she first informed the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel of her intention to review the content of their report.

**Victoria Atkins:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* The murder of Daniel Morgan is a tragedy for which no one has been successfully convicted after 34 years. To seek answers, the then Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP, announced in 2013 that the Government was setting up the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel (DMIP) to review police handling of the murder investigation.

The remit of the Panel was to shine a light on the circumstances of Daniel Morgan's murder, its background and the handling of the case over the period since 1987.

Over the past 8 years, the panel have conducted a thorough and extensive review of the relevant documentation, and the final report was published by the Home Secretary in Parliament on 15th June 2021.

The terms of reference for the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel made it clear that the Chair of the Panel was to submit the completed report to the Home Secretary, who would arrange for its publication in Parliament.

The Panel's report is independent, and the Home Office did not seek to, nor made any amendments to it. Checks were carried out to confirm the report was compliant with the Home Secretary's obligations to protect human rights and national security.

**Daisy Cooper:****[R] [\[6476\]](#)**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on what date she first sought advice from officials on her powers to carry out a review of the report of the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel.

**Victoria Atkins:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* The murder of Daniel Morgan is a tragedy for which no one has been successfully convicted after 34 years. To seek answers, the then Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP, announced in 2013 that the Government was setting up the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel (DMIP) to review police handling of the murder investigation.

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**Daisy Cooper:**

[R] [\[6477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on the Report of the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel.

**Victoria Atkins:**

*[Holding answer 27 May 2021]:* The murder of Daniel Morgan is a tragedy for which no one has been successfully convicted after 34 years. To seek answers, the then Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP, announced in 2013 that the Government was setting up the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel (DMIP) to review police handling of the murder investigation.

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## ■ Immigration: EU Nationals

**Feryal Clark:**

[\[16986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of introducing an alternative means to prove settler status for EU Nationals, such as a (a) mobile application where a pdf download can be held and (b) telephone service where paper copies can be ordered to avoid future instances of problems caused by the Government website being inaccessible.

**Kevin Foster:**

We are developing a border and immigration system which is "digital by default" for all migrants, 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 already have a call centre which can assist them to use the service, and where necessary, enable individuals' status to be verified through alternative means.



**Drew Hendry:**

[19622]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will make an assessment of the effect of the EU Settlement Scheme on the rights of (a) refugee children and (b) children in care under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office is committed to continuing to engage with local authorities as they undertake their responsibilities to ensure all eligible looked after children and care leavers are supported to make an application to the EUSS. The Home Office will ensure caseworkers liaise with and support applicants to get the status they require.

The Home Office remains focused on ensuring all eligible children in care apply in time. It's recognised however, this vulnerable cohort can change over time, with new children coming into care.

We are committed to working with Local Authorities to ensure this work continues after the deadline.

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[19640]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications to the EU Settlement Scheme from residents in (a) Lewisham Deptford constituency, (b) London and (c) the UK are awaiting a decision from her Department.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office publishes data on the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) in the '[EU Settlement Scheme statistics](#)'.

Data on the number of applications and concluded applications by UK local authority to 31 March 2021 are published in Tables EUSS\_LA\_01, EUSS\_LA\_02 and EUSS\_LA\_03 of the quarterly EUSS statistics local authority tables, which can be found at:

EU Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics, March 2021 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Total applications made and concluded are available from tables EUSS\_01 and EUSS\_03\_UK which are published for the same period at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/989239/eu-settlement-scheme-quarterly-tables-28-august-2018-to-31-march-2021.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/989239/eu-settlement-scheme-quarterly-tables-28-august-2018-to-31-march-2021.ods)

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[19641]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of EU citizens in receipt of benefits and who have yet to apply for Settled Status live in (a) Lewisham, Deptford constituency and (b) London.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Government is using every possible channel to encourage everyone who is eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) to apply.

The Home Office is currently working with HMRC and DWP to send letters to EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who receive benefits, but it appears are yet to apply to the EUSS. These letters seek to encourage recipients to apply to the EUSS to protect their existing rights in the UK before the deadline of 30 June 2021.

Our work is looking at benefits claimants across the UK and we will write out again to those people who have still not made an application after the deadline passes next week.

As of 31 May, there have been more than 5.6 million applications and more than 5 million grants of status. The Home Office urges anyone eligible for the EUSS to apply before the 30 June deadline to ensure their rights are protected following the end of the grace period.

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[19654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU citizens settled in (a) Birmingham, Edgbaston, (b) Birmingham and (c) the West Midlands have (i) applied for, (ii) been granted, and (iii) not applied for settled or pre-settled status.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office publishes data on the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) in the 'EU Settlement Scheme statistics'.

Data on the number of applications and concluded applications by UK local authority to 31 March 2021 are published in Tables EUSS\_LA\_01, EUSS\_LA\_02 and EUSS\_LA\_03 of the quarterly EUSS statistics local authority tables, which can be found at:

EU Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics, March 2021 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)).

The published figures refer specifically to applications made to the EUSS and cannot be directly compared with estimates of the resident population of EU citizens in the UK.

The published figures include non-EEA citizen family members, Irish citizens and eligible EU citizens not resident in the UK, none of whom are usually included in estimates of the resident EU citizen population.

Furthermore, the population estimates do not take account of people's migration intentions and will include people who have come to the UK for a range of purposes, including some who have no intention to settle in the UK.

**Fleur Anderson:**

[\[19716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU citizens have not yet applied for the EU Settlement Scheme.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Home Office publishes data on the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) in the [EU Settlement Scheme statistics](#)'.

The published figures refer specifically to applications made to the EUSS and cannot be directly compared with estimates of the resident population of EU citizens in the UK.

The published figures include non-EEA citizen family members, Irish citizens and eligible EU citizens not resident in the UK, none of whom are usually included in estimates of the resident EU citizen population.

Furthermore, the population estimates do not take account of people's migration intentions and will include people who have come to the UK for a range of purposes, including some who have no intention to settle in the UK.

**Fleur Anderson:** [\[19717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will extend the EU Settlement Scheme deadline beyond 30 June 2021.

**Kevin Foster:**

There are no plans to extend the 30 June 2021 deadline for applications to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) by those EU citizens and their family members resident in the UK by the end of the transition period.

The Home Office has invested nearly £8 million in marketing campaigns to encourage EU citizens and their family members to apply to the EUSS. We recently launched a new wave of UK advertising to ensure EU citizens and their family members are aware of the deadline and know they need to apply. We are also working closely with employers, local authorities and charities to raise awareness.

We have continued to receive and process thousands of applications a day to the EUSS throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with more than 5.2 million applications concluded by 31 May 2021. We are committed to making sure everybody eligible for the scheme can apply, including those who are vulnerable or need extra support. There is significant help available from a network of 72 organisations across the UK grant funded by the Home Office with £22 million to help vulnerable people apply to the EUSS, including after the 30 June 2021 deadline.

In line with the Citizens' Rights Agreements, we have made clear where a person eligible for status under the scheme has reasonable grounds for missing the 30 June 2021 deadline, they will be given a further opportunity to apply. Non-exhaustive guidance on reasonable grounds for submitting a late application was published on 1 April 2021 and will underpin a flexible and pragmatic approach to dealing with such applications.

## ■ Migrant Workers: Large Goods Vehicle Drivers

**Mark Tami:** [\[16798\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of adding licensed drivers of Heavy Goods Vehicles to the shortage occupation list for immigration purposes.

**Kevin Foster:**

The UK Government is working with the haulage sector to promote jobs, training and a range of other initiatives to get more people into HGV driving.

Like other sectors the focus should be on training and recruiting from the UK based workforce in the first instance, especially given the impact of the pandemic resulting in more looking for secure new employment. Immigration policy will be considered alongside strategies to do this, not separately or as an alternative to doing so.

The job of HGV driver is not eligible to be sponsored for a Skilled Worker visa so cannot be added to the Shortage Occupation List.

The Home Office has though amended the Immigration Rules to enable drivers who come to the UK on an international journey to transport goods or people on journeys within the UK and undertake cabotage operations in line with Department for Transport rules.

**■ Migrants: National Insurance****Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[17704\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of people who have the right to work residency in the UK but do not have a National Insurance Number.

**Kevin Foster:**

We do not hold this information.

A National Insurance number is an administrative reference number used by employers to record national insurance (NINo) contributions for their employees.

**Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[17705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to help ensure that (a) employers, (b) financial institutions and (c) the Student Loans Company are aware that a National Insurance number is not required for a person to have the right to (i) work and (ii) access relevant services in the UK.

**Chris Philp:**

The Home Office has published extensive guidance for employers on how to conduct a check to establish whether an individual has a right to work. A list of acceptable documents which enable an individual to demonstrate they have the right work is set out in the Employers Guide to Right to Work Checks:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide>.

We keep our guidance under regular review and will consider whether there is more we can do to provide advice to employers on this matter.

My officials are also in regular dialogue with their counterparts in the Department for Work and Pensions, which has the lead on National Insurance Number policy.

## ■ Offences against Children

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[16108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle the exploitation of children through domestic servitude, sex trading and drug trading; and what plans her Department has to bring forward proposals to strengthen protections for children.

**Victoria Atkins:**

*[Holding answer 23 June 2021]:* The Government recognises the devastating impact of exploitation on children. There are a number of ways that we are tackling these types of exploitation. The Modern Slavery Act 2015, gives law enforcement agencies the tools to tackle modern slavery, such as sex trafficking and domestic servitude, including maximum life sentences for perpetrators and enhanced protection for victims, including children.

Where children are found to be potential victims of human trafficking or modern slavery their safety and welfare are addressed as a priority. Local authorities are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in their area, including child victims of modern slavery.

In addition to this statutory support, the Government has rolled out Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTGs) who provide an additional source of advice and support for all potentially trafficked children, irrespective of nationality. As of May 2021, ICTGs are available in two thirds of all local authorities across England and Wales.

The Government has announced its intention to review the 2014 Modern Slavery Strategy to consider how we can strengthen our approach. This will include considering what further measures can be put in place to reduce the risks of modern slavery exploitation to children.

On 20 January the Government announced £40m of dedicated investment for 2021/22 to tackle drugs supply and county lines, doubling our investment from last year. This includes funding for the Metropolitan Police's Operation Orochi, which provides a dedicated taskforce to tackle county lines activity.

Since it was launched in November 2019, our County Lines Programme has already seen more than 780 lines closed, over 5,100 arrests, £2.9 million in cash and significant quantities of drugs seized, and more than 1,200 vulnerable people safeguarded.

## ■ Overseas Aid: Asylum and Migrants

**John Redwood:**

[\[17671\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Home Department, what proportion of costs to assist asylum seekers and economic migrants to settle in the UK in their first year is included in overseas aid figures.

**John Redwood:**

[\[17672\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Home Department, whether the costs of providing additional housing for recently arrived migrants is included in overseas aid totals.

**Chris Philp:**

In 2021/22 40% of the budget that provides support for destitute asylum seekers of all ages is classified as Official Development Assistance expenditure.

The costs of additional housing used to provide shelter to accommodate recently arrived migrants who claim asylum can be treated as Official Development Assistance for the first 12 months from arrival and where that migrant is shown to be from an eligible country.

#### ■ **Undocumented Migrants: English Channel**

**John Redwood:**

[\[18456\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many vessels are on patrol in UK waters at any time to tackle migrant boats crossing the English Channel.

**Chris Philp:**

Border Force uses a combination of cutters and Coastal Patrol Vessels to patrol UK maritime borders and respond to maritime border security threats. The total fleet comprises five cutters and six Coastal Patrol Vessels (CPVs). Border Force's deployment of maritime capabilities in the Channel is under constant review to meet operational demands.

#### ■ **Unexplained Wealth Orders**

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[19705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Unexplained Wealth Orders have been issued (a) in total and (b) in relation to wealth derived from (i) Saudi Arabia, (ii) the UAE, (iii) Qatar, (iv) Oman and (v) Bahrain in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Kevin Foster:**

Unexplained Wealth Orders have been granted in four cases to date.

No Unexplained Wealth Orders have been issued in relation to wealth derived from (i) Saudi Arabia, (ii) the UAE, (iii) Qatar, (iv) Oman and (v) Bahrain.

### HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

#### ■ **Building Safety Fund**

**Zarah Sultana:**

[\[19713\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to make the Building Safety Fund available to leaseholders in buildings less than 18 metres in height.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The Government is focusing the Building Safety Fund on remediating high-rise buildings. This reflects the exceptional fire risk that certain cladding products pose at that height, as previously noted by Dame Judith Hackitt. Under 18 metres, the risk profile of buildings is different and will not always require the same level of remediation when risks are identified. We will provide leaseholders in lower-rise residential buildings between 11 and 18 metres (four to six storeys), with a generous new scheme to provide access to finance for cladding remediation. No leaseholder in residential buildings of 11-18 metres will need to pay more than £50 a month to remediate unsafe cladding.

Government support does not absolve building owners of their responsibility to ensure their buildings are safe, and they should consider all routes to meet costs, protecting leaseholders where they can - for example through warranties and recovering costs from contractors for incorrect or poor work. We have provided expert advice on the measures building owners should take to ensure their buildings are safe.

**■ Collective Worship: Coronavirus****Tim Farron:**[\[19561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether covid-19 guidance for places of worship will be updated to allow congregations to sing with masks on, similar to those provisions made in the Welsh Government's new covid-19 guidance, from 21 June 2021 as covid-19 restrictions are eased.

**Eddie Hughes:**

Places of worship play an important role in providing spiritual leadership and bringing communities together, however their communal nature makes them particularly vulnerable to the spread of coronavirus.

Congregational singing is under restrictions due to the increased risk of transmission through small droplets and aerosols. This means that those partaking in these activities are at higher risk of transmitting the virus and thus, spreading infection even if the individual is vaccinated.

On 17 May we entered step 3 on the Prime Minister's roadmap, reintroducing indoor singing in a place of worship for a performance or rehearsal, for a group up to 6 amateur signers. This is in line with all amateur choirs and singing groups. Outdoors, the congregation may join in with singing in multiple groups of up to 30. Congregation members should continue to follow social distancing rules.

Public health is a devolved matter in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and so many of the health measures implemented across the UK in response to Covid-19 fall within the competence of the devolved administrations. There are currently no plans to allow congregational singing with masks on to resume before Step 4 of the roadmap in England, which would be no earlier than 19 July.

## ■ Derelict Land: Planning

**Stuart Anderson:**

[\[16959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to support a brownfield first policy in planning.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The National Planning Policy Framework expects local authorities to make the most of brownfield land for development. Local authorities are best placed to assess potential sites, and each authority now publishes a register of brownfield suitable for new homes. We have introduced Permission in Principle, an extra route to planning permission for land on these registers, giving certainty from the outset that the principles of a redevelopment scheme are acceptable.

This Government is putting significant investment into brownfield redevelopment through the £4.1 billion Housing Infrastructure Fund, the £4.95 billion Home Building Fund, and the £400 million Brownfield Housing Fund. Local authorities not eligible for support from the latter have been able to bid for assistance from the Brownfield Land Release Fund. This is designed to unlock brownfield sites and release serviced plots on local authority owned land. There is tax relief on work to decontaminate land, and we have reformed permitted development and Use Class rules so yet more homes can be created on previously developed land.

I am delighted that the University of Wolverhampton is the location of the National Brownfield Institute, which I was pleased to visit and which received support from our Getting Building Fund. This new policy institute will inform and guide brownfield regeneration, carry out research and testing, and give specialist advice on contaminated land, re-purposing sites, and innovative construction such as modular homes.

## ■ Housing: Construction

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[16849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will make it his policy to hold discussions with residents from rural communities before encouraging a mass building of properties.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The Planning for the Future White Paper proposed to make the planning system simpler, quicker and more accessible for local people to engage with. Our consultation received more than 40,000 responses which we are carefully considering.

Our proposed planning reforms will give communities, both rural and urban, a greater voice from the start of the planning process and will make it quicker and easier for local people to engage with the system, particularly at the local plan stage where the use of land is considered. This will give communities real influence over both the



location and design of development, rather than having to react to unexpected and ad hoc planning applications

Local communities will also be empowered to create local design codes, ensuring planning rules reflect local priorities for character and design, and will continue to be able to have their say on specific proposals that come through the system.

## ■ Housing: Standards

**Navendu Mishra:**

[\[16975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what evidence the Government plans to review to determine whether the Decent Homes Standard requires updating in the first stage of the review of the housing standards white paper.

**Eddie Hughes:**

The Social Housing White Paper announced a review of the Decent Homes Standard. The aim of the first stage of the review is to understand whether the Standard is the right ask of the social housing sector today.

Primarily, my department will consider evidence relating to the case for change provided by the expert Decent Homes Review Sounding Board set up to support Part 1 of the review, and the other stakeholders who have registered an interest. We will also consider evidence heard during consultation events held prior to the publication of the Social Housing Green Paper, and the responses received following publication.

## ■ Immigration: Hong Kong

**Bambos Charalambous:**

[\[16921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government plans to take to ensure that people from Hong Kong arriving with BNO visas will be effectively integrated into UK society.

**Eddie Hughes:**

On 31 January, the UK launched a new immigration route for British National (Overseas) [BN(O)] status holders and their dependents.

On 8 April, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced a new UK-wide Welcome Programme to support Hong Kong BN(O) status holders with a package worth £43.1 million. Alongside this announcement, a comprehensive Welcome Guide was published on Gov.uk

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/welcome-a-guide-for-hong-kong-british-national-overseas-visa-holders-in-the-uk>) for Hong Kong BN(O)s settling in the UK, in both English and Cantonese. To co-ordinate support and offer practical advice to BN(O)s, MHCLG is working to establish a network of Welcome Hubs across the UK.

**■ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Freedom of Information****Steve Reed:** [\[19598\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 17 June 2021, to Question 15251, on Freedom of Information, how many freedom of information requests received by his Department have been referred to the central Cabinet Office Clearing House on Freedom of Information requests for advice on handling in each of the last five years.

**Eddie Hughes:**

FOI requests are referred to the Clearing House in line with the published criteria available on Gov.uk. The Clearing House, which has been in existence since 2004, provides advice to ensure a consistent approach across government to requests for information.

To find the exact number of requests referred would involve a disproportionate cost to the department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government consistently receives around 1,000 Freedom of Information each year and has sustained performance well above the Information Commissioner's timeliness target of 90% for the last two years.

**■ National House Building Council: Standards****Mark Logan:** [\[16980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if his Department will take steps to begin an investigation into the statutory oversight by National House Building Council in respect of managing building defects in the Cotton Works conversion in Bolton North East constituency.

**Christopher Pincher:**

It is the responsibility of the Financial Conduct Authority to regulate new build warranties and protect consumers. If a consumer is unhappy with the warranty provider's action, they can contact the Financial Ombudsman Services and raise a complaint for free. The Government is committed to improving redress for new build homebuyers when things go wrong. The Building Safety Bill, announced in the Queen's Speech, includes provision for the New Homes Ombudsman, which will improve redress for new build homebuyers.

**■ Planning Permission: Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea****Dr Matthew Offord:** [\[16841\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Court of Appeal case of R (Khodari) v Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council and another [2017] EWCA Civ 333 (Khodari), whether he has made a recent assessment of the effectiveness of (a) section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and (b) section 16 of the Greater London Council General Powers Act 1974.

**Christopher Pincher:**

The legal provisions described are intended to provide authorities with the power to mitigate, where appropriate, adverse effects arising from development and other actions.

A local planning authority makes planning decisions based on policies in their Local Plan and other material considerations. The authority is able to seek a planning obligation under section 106 of the Town and Country Act 1990 to mitigate the implications of a specific development, to make it acceptable in planning terms. The authority must meet three legal tests in seeking to apply the section 106 planning obligation: the obligation must be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; it must be directly related to the proposed development; and it must be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development.

A section 106 agreement attached to a planning permission can restrict the development or use of the land in any specified way; require specified operations or activities to be carried out in, on, under or over the land; require the land to be used in any specified way; or require a sum or sums to be paid to the authority on a specified date.

The Greater London Council (General Powers) Act 1974 provides authorities in London with various powers, including regarding traffic management. Section 16 of the Act allows a local authority to enter into an agreement with the owner of land where the agreement is 'given or made under seal in connection with the land'.

In our White Paper 'Planning for the Future', published in August last year, we set out a proposal to reform the system of developer contributions, including s106 planning obligations. We are analysing consultation responses thoroughly, and engaging further with authorities and developer organisations, and will be announcing our intentions shortly.

**■ Planning: Urban Areas****Navendu Mishra:**[\[19720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what legislation ensures the legal requirement within urban planning to preserve the view of a specific place or historic building from another location, known as protected views.

**Christopher Pincher:**

Protected views are principally protected in the planning system through policies in local plans, and decision makers are legally required to make decisions on planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In London, policies on protected views are set out in London Plan, and the Secretary of State has issued Directions under Articles 16(4) and 39 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010 to require local authorities to consult Historic England, the Mayor and certain named local authorities on relevant planning applications.

## ■ Water Supply

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[17833\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the building regulations review, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of lowering the water requirement to 100 litres per day on water efficiency.

**Christopher Pincher:**

In 2019 DEFRA launched a consultation and call for evidence on measures to reduce personal water use. The consultation sought views on labelling water-using products, building regulations for water efficiency, metering and smart metering and behaviour change. DEFRA will be publishing a response shortly which will lay out proposals including those relating to building regulations.

## ■ Water Supply: Planning

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[17834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential merits including of a water neutral planning policy requirement within the OxCam development.

**Christopher Pincher:**

On 18 February the Government published 'Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc' which sets out the principles for how we will develop a Spatial Framework for the Arc. The Spatial Framework will support a long-term, coordinated approach to planning, to ensure economic, social and environmental (both built and natural) opportunities are realised, and improve the Arc as a place to live and work.

The Policy Paper outlines that we will set high standards for new development and support an integrated approach to water management. This integrated approach will take into account sustainable water abstraction, drought and flood resilience, water quality and the risk of flooding, and will consider how and where new water related infrastructure should be developed. As part of the Policy Paper, we have also committed to identifying environmental Opportunity Areas, which will include water services infrastructure, and incorporate nature-based solutions.

The Spatial Framework will be supported by a robust and comprehensive evidence base, developed in conjunction with key stakeholders. The evidence base will include an extensive range of environmental technical assessments, to inform policy development. The evidence base will be underpinned by a fully integrated Sustainability Appraisal (SA), to ensure we understand the likely environmental, social and economic implications of the implementation of proposed policies. This process will present the opportunity for further refinement of the proposed policies, ensuring sustainability aspirations are realised as far as is practicable, before we finalise, adopt and implement them. The SA will include a full assessment of the implications of policies on the water environment.

The content and nature of the environmental policies within the Spatial Framework will emerge once the evidence base has been consolidated, and SA assessments have been undertaken.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Department for International Trade: Freedom of Information

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[15188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many Freedom of Information requests have been referred by her Department for advice on handling to the Cabinet Office's clearing house for Freedom of Information requests in each year since 2016.

**Greg Hands:**

The Department may seek advice from Clearing House experts on an ad hoc basis. As this is an informal process, these interactions are not recorded.

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[15190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what colour-coded ratings for presentational risks were given to the Freedom of Information requests (a) FOI2020/04220, (b) FOI2020/05327 and (c) FOI2020/06174 from the office of the hon. Member for Islington South and Finsbury and processed by her Department since April 2020.

**Greg Hands:**

The colour-coded ratings used in the case management system are dependent on several factors, including timeliness of the response and the sensitivity of the information we hold. The colour-coded status can change during the processing of the request, so no individual Freedom of Information request has a fixed colour-coded identifier.

### ■ Trade Agreements

**Tim Farron:** [\[17720\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what her policy is on the UK seeking trade deals with other countries similar to those terms negotiated with Australia.

**Greg Hands:**

Building on the success of the UK's recent Agreement in Principle with Australia, the Government will continue to pursue deals with the New Zealand and the US. The Government is progressing plans to accede to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and has recently launched public consultations for Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with India, Canada and Mexico.

The Government will continue to use a range of trade policy tools to strengthen bilateral trading relations with economic and strategic partners across the world. This includes exploring the options for new FTAs.

## JUSTICE

■ **HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Staff****Grahame Morris:**[\[19569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many HM Courts & Tribunals Service staff are in post at each workplace on the HMCTS estate.

**Chris Philp:**

HMCTS Building Staffing Data correct as of 31st May 2021

Includes all staff directly employed by HMCTS (incl. fixed term contracts)

Where more than one court is listed at a postcode, staff has been amalgamated into the largest function.

Excludes: Agency Staff or Staff listed as being at closed sites; details of PO boxes or accounts as bases.

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
10 South Colonnade	14
102 PETTY FRANCE (MOJ) LONDON	639
185 MARYLEBONE LONDON	3
48-49 CHANCERY LANE LONDON	1
5 Wellington Place	16
ABERDEEN EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL ABERDEEN	5
ABERYSTWYTH COUNTY COURT ABERYSTWYTH	1
ABERYSTWYTH JUSTICE CENTRE ABERYSTWYTH	8
ABERYSTWYTH MAGISTRATES COURT ABERYSTWYTH	1
AIT HARMONDSWORTH	5
ALDERSHOT COUNTY COURT ALDERSHOT	21
ALDERSHOT MAGISTRATES ALDERSHOT	12
ANCHORAGE HOUSE LONDON	52
ARCHWAY TOWER LONDON	3

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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
AREA ENFORCEMENT OFFICE LONDON	1
ASHFORD EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL ASHFORD	7
ASHFORD MAGISTRATES' COURT ASHFORD	1
ASHLEY HOUSE, 2ND FLOOR, IMB SECRETARIAT LONDON	1
AVON & SOMERSET ADO WESTON- SUPER-MARE	24
AYLESBURY COUNTY COURT AYLESBURY	1
AYLESBURY CROWN AYLESBURY	14
AYLESBURY MAGISTRATES AYLESBURY	1
BARNET COUNTY COURT LONDON	40
BARNSELY COUNTY COURT BARNSELY	11
BARNSELY MAGISTRATES BARNSELY	16
BARNSTAPLE COUNTY COURT BARNSTAPLE	5
BARNSTAPLE MAGISTRATES BARNSTAPLE	6
BARROW-IN-FURNESS MAGISTRATES BARROW-IN-FURNESS	19
BASILDON COMBINED BASILDON	44
BASILDON MAGISTRATES BASILDON	20
BASINGSTOKE COUNTY COURT BASINGSTOKE	13
BASINGSTOKE LAW COURTS BASINGSTOKE	21
BATH COUNTY COURT BATH	9
BATH MAGISTRATES BATH	15
BEDFORD COUNTY COURT BEDFORD	4

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
BEDFORD MAGISTRATES BEDFORD	21
BENNET HOUSE STOKE-ON-TRENT	324
BEVERLEY MAGISTRATES BEVERLEY	12
BEXLEY MAGISTRATES BEXLEYHEATH	6
BIRKENHEAD COUNTY COURT BIRKENHEAD	37
BIRKENHEAD WIRRAL MAGISTRATES BIRKENHEAD	21
BIRMINGHAM AIT BIRMINGHAM	32
BIRMINGHAM CANNON HOUSE LAA BIRMINGHAM	1
BIRMINGHAM CIVIL JUSTICE CENTRE BIRMINGHAM	216
BIRMINGHAM CROWN COURT BIRMINGHAM	77
BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT PROBATE REGISTRY BIRMINGHAM	3
BIRMINGHAM EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL BIRMINGHAM	48
BIRMINGHAM MAGISTRATES BIRMINGHAM	163
BIRMINGHAM PRIORY COURTS 6DW BIRMINGHAM	17
BLACKBURN COUNTY COURT BLACKBURN	16
BLACKBURN MAGISTRATES BLACKBURN	26
BLACKPOOL COUNTY COURT BLACKPOOL	46
BLACKWOOD CIVIL & FAMILY COURT BLACKWOOD	12
BODMIN COUNTY COURT BODMIN	7
BOLTON COMBINED BOLTON	34



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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
BOLTON MAGISTRATES BOLTON	23
BOSTON COUNTY COURT BOSTON	3
BOSTON MAGISTRATES BOSTON	3
BOURNEMOUTH COMBINED BOURNEMOUTH	61
BOURNEMOUTH MAGISTRATES BOURNEMOUTH	12
BRADFORD COMBINED BRADFORD	82
BRADFORD MAGISTRATES BRADFORD	47
BRENT MAGISTRATES LONDON	101
BRENTFORD COUNTY COURT BRENTFORD	24
BRIDGEND MAGISTRATES BRIDGEND	1
BRIDGWATER MAGISTRATES' COURT BRIDGWATER	1
BRIGHTON COUNTY COURT BRIGHTON	41
BRIGHTON DISTRICT PROBATE REGISTRY 6 BRIGHTON	
BRIGHTON FAMILY HEARING CENTRE BRIGHTON	17
BRIGHTON MAGISTRATES BRIGHTON	43
BRISTOL CIVIL JUSTICE CENTRE BRISTOL	91
BRISTOL CROWN BRISTOL	50
BRISTOL DISTRICT PROBATE REGISTRY BRISTOL	1
BRISTOL EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL BRISTOL	15
BRISTOL FLOWERS HILL BRISTOL	18
BRISTOL GREYFRIARS COUNTY COURT BRISTOL	5

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
BRISTOL MAGISTRATES BRISTOL	52
BROMLEY COUNTY COURT BROMLEY	63
BROMLEY MAGISTRATES COURT	82
BURNLEY COMBINED BURNLEY	24
BURNLEY MAGISTRATES BURNLEY	6
BURNLEY REEDLEY MAGISTRATES BURNLEY	20
BURY ST EDMUNDS COUNTY COURT BURY ST EDMUNDS	111
BURY ST EDMUNDS MAGISTRATES BURY ST EDMUNDS	1
CAERNARFON CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTRE CAERNARFON	33
CAERNARFON MAGISTRATES CAERNARFON	4
CAMBERWELL GREEN MAGISTRATES LONDON	19
CAMBRIDGE COUNTY COURT CAMBRIDGE	25
CAMBRIDGE CROWN CAMBRIDGE	15
CAMBRIDGE MAGISTRATES CAMBRIDGE	11
CANNOCK MAGISTRATES CANNOCK	1
CANTERBURY COMBINED CANTERBURY	54
CANTERBURY MAGISTRATES CANTERBURY	5
CARDIFF CIVIL JUSTICE CENTRE CARDIFF	81
CARDIFF CROWN CARDIFF	55
CARDIFF DISTRICT PROBATE REGISTRY CARDIFF	2
CARDIFF EASTGATE HOUSE CARDIFF	21

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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
CARDIFF EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL CARDIFF	14
CARDIFF MAGISTRATES CARDIFF	110
CARDIFF SSCSA CARDIFF	32
CARLISLE COMBINED CARLISLE	31
CARLISLE MAGISTRATES CARLISLE	25
CHATHAM MAGISTRATES CHATHAM	45
CHELMSFORD COUNTY COURT CHELMSFORD	18
CHELMSFORD CROWN CHELMSFORD	26
CHELMSFORD OSPREY HOUSE MAGISTRATES CHELMSFORD	60
CHELMSFORD PRIORY PLACE CHELMSFORD	28
CHELMSFORD SHIRE HALL MAGISTRATES CHELMSFORD	11
CHELTENHAM MAGISTRATES CHELTENHAM	5
CHESHIRE MAGISTRATES COURT	1
CHESTER COUNTY COURT CHESTER	26
CHESTER CROWN CHESTER	18
CHESTER MAGISTRATES CHESTER	13
CHESTERFIELD COUNTY COURT	7
CHESTERFIELD MAGISTRATES CHESTERFIELD	9
CHICHESTER COMBINED CHICHESTER	7
CHIEF MAGISTRATES OFFICE LONDON	3
CITY OF LONDON MAGISTRATES LONDON	11
COLCHESTER MAGISTRATES COURT	13

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
COLCHESTER	
COUNTY COURT AT CENTRAL LONDON	32
COVENTRY COMBINED COVENTRY	44
COVENTRY MAGISTRATES COVENTRY	17
CRAWLEY MAGISTRATES CRAWLEY	9
CREWE COUNTY COURT CREWE	10
CREWE MAGISTRATES CREWE	16
CROYDON COMBINED CROYDON	105
CROYDON EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL CROYDON	42
Croydon Magistrates Court	29
CTS Aldgate Tower 3	6
CTS Luton (Arndale) - County	1
CTS Salford Courts & Tribunals Service Centre	43
DARLINGTON COUNTY COURT DARLINGTON	10
DARLINGTON MAGISTRATES DARLINGTON	44
DARTFORD COUNTY COURT DARTFORD	29
DARTFORD MAGISTRATES DARTFORD	1
DERBY COMBINED DERBY	78
DERBY MAGISTRATES DERBY	57
DISTRICT PROBATE REGISTRY OXFORD	3
DONCASTER COUNTY COURT DONCASTER	18
DONCASTER CROWN DONCASTER	3
DONCASTER MAGISTRATES DONCASTER	37

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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
DUDLEY COUNTY COURT DUDLEY	7
DUDLEY MAGISTRATES DUDLEY	27
DUNDEE TRIBUNAL SERVICE DUNDEE	6
DURHAM COUNTY COURT DURHAM	27
DURHAM CROWN DURHAM	13
DURHAM MAGISTRATES DURHAM	2
EALING MAGISTRATES LONDON	1
EAST LONDON FAMILY COURT LONDON	57
EASTBOURNE MAGISTRATES EASTBOURNE	1
EDINBURGH COF 1 MELVILLE STREET	1
EDINBURGH EAT (SCOTLAND) EDINBURGH	2
EDINBURGH EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL EDINBURGH	3
EDMONTON COUNTY & CROWN COURT LONDON	34
EXETER CROWN & COUNTY COURT EXETER	85
EXETER EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL EXETER	1
FELTHAM MAGISTRATES FELTHAM	2
FIELD HOUSE AIT LONDON	103
FIRST AVENUE HOUSE LONDON	290
FLEETBANK HOUSE EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL LONDON	21
FLEETWOOD MAGISTRATES FLEETWOOD	1
FOLKESTONE MAGISTRATES FOLKESTONE	35
FOX COURT SSCSA LONDON	53

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
GATESHEAD MAGISTRATES GATESHEAD	55
GEORGE HOUSE EDINBURGH	11
GLASGOW AIT GLASGOW	18
GLASGOW BLYTHSWOOD HOUSE AS GLASGOW	1
GLASGOW CICAP/SSCSA GLASGOW	139
GLASGOW EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL GLASGOW	46
GLOUCESTER CROWN & COUNTY COURT (AND CHELTENHAM) GLOUCESTER	45
GLOUCESTER MAGISTRATES GLOUCESTER	3
GREAT GRIMSBY COMBINED GREAT GRIMSBY	26
GREAT YARMOUTH MAGISTRATES GREAT YARMOUTH	19
Greater Manchester Accounts and Enforcement Unit	1
GREENWICH MAGISTRATES LONDON	11
GRIMSBY MAGISTRATES GRIMSBY	13
GUILDFORD COUNTY COURT GUILDFORD	69
GUILDFORD CROWN GUILDFORD	20
GWENT HOUSE - CWMBRAN CWMBRAN	61
GWENT MAGISTRATES' COURT NEWPORT	34
HAGLEY ROAD BIRMINGHAM	316
HAMILTON BRANDON GATE HAMILTON	2
HARROGATE COUNTY COURT HARROGATE	5
HARROGATE MAGISTRATES HARROGATE	12

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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
HARROW CROWN HARROW	39
HASTINGS COUNTY COURT HASTINGS	30
HATTON CROSS AIT FELTHAM	76
HAVANT MAGISTRATES & ADO HAVANT	15
HAVERFORDWEST COUNTY COURT HAVERFORDWEST	10
HEREFORD COUNTY COURT HEREFORD	4
HEREFORD MAGISTRATES HEREFORD	7
HERTFORD ADO HERTFORD	1
HERTFORD COUNTY COURT HERTFORD	7
HERTFORD MAGISTRATES HERTFORD	2
HIGHBURY CORNER MAGISTRATES LONDON	70
HM COURTS & TRIBUNAL SERVICE STOCKPORT	2
HMCTS - TRIBUNALS BRIGHTON	2
HMCTS GLOUCESTERSHIRE GLOUCESTER	34
HMCTS WALES ENFORCEMENT OFFICE PORT TALBOT	65
HORSHAM COUNTY COURT HORSHAM	11
HORSHAM MAGISTRATES HORSHAM	1
HOVE TRIAL CENTRE HOVE	15
HUDDERSFIELD COUNTY COURT HUDDERSFIELD	29
HUDDERSFIELD MAGISTRATES HUDDERSFIELD	24
HULL & HOLDNESS MAGISTRATES HULL	41
HUNTINGDON COMBINED HUNTINGDON	4

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
HUNTINGDON COUNTY COURT HUNTINGDON	1
HUNTINGDON MAGISTRATES HUNTINGDON	1
ILFORD REDBRIDGE MAGISTRATES ILFORD	15
INNER LONDON & CITY FAMILY MAGISTRATES LONDON	7
INNER LONDON CROWN LONDON	57
INVERNESS EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL INVERNESS	1
IPSWICH COUNTY COURT IPSWICH	23
IPSWICH CROWN IPSWICH	20
IPSWICH MAGISTRATES IPSWICH	37
ISLEWORTH CROWN ISLEWORTH	60
KENDAL MAGISTRATES KENDAL	1
KIDDERMINSTER MAGISTRATES KIDDERMINSTER	56
KING'S LYNN COUNTY COURT KINGS LYNN	1
KING'S LYNN MAGISTRATES KINGS LYNN	30
KINGSTON UPON THAMES MAGISTRATES' COURT KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES	3
KINGSTON-UPON-HULL COMBINED KINGSTON UPON HULL	52
KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES COUNTY COURT KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES	23
KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES CROWN KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES	45
LAA Temple Quay House, 2 The Square	1
LANCASTER COUNTY COURT LANCASTER	15



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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
LEEDS AILSA HOUSE LEEDS	70
LEEDS CIVIL HEARING CENTRE (CCC) LEEDS	2
LEEDS COMBINED LEEDS	150
LEEDS DISTRICT PROBATE REGISTRY LEEDS	5
LEEDS EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL LEEDS	31
LEEDS HMCS LEEDS	2
LEEDS MAGISTRATES LEEDS	96
LEEDS WEST RIDING HOUSE 17TH FL LEEDS	2
LEICESTER ARNHEM HOUSE AIT LEICESTER	217
LEICESTER COUNTY COURT LEICESTER	94
LEICESTER MAGISTRATES LEICESTER	63
LEWES COMBINED LEWES	32
LEYLAND SOUTH RIBBLE MAGISTRATES PRESTON	2
LINCOLN COMBINED LINCOLN	41
LINCOLN MAGISTRATES LINCOLN	49
LINCOLN PSR LINCOLN	2
LISKEARD DEVON & CORNWALL ADO LISKEARD	1
LIVERPOOL CITY MAGISTRATES LIVERPOOL	6
LIVERPOOL CIVIL & FAMILY JUSTICE CENTRE LIVERPOOL	143
LIVERPOOL COMBINED LIVERPOOL	156
LIVERPOOL MAGISTRATES COURT LIVERPOOL	16

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
LIVERPOOL SSCSA LIVERPOOL	66
LLANDUDNO MAGISTRATES LLANDUDNO	13
LLANELLI COUNTY COURT LLANELLI	9
LLANELLI MAGISTRATES LLANELLI	18
LONDON AREA OFFICE LONDON	4
London CTS 10 Alfred Place	75
London CTS Clerkenwell & Shoreditch County & Family Court	68
London CTS Court of Protection	35
LOUGHBOROUGH CASTLE PARK TRIBUNALS LOUGHBOROUGH	12
LOUGHBOROUGH MAGISTRATES LOUGHBOROUGH	19
LOUGHBOROUGH TRIBUNAL SUPPORT CENTRE LOUGHBOROUGH	141
LOUISA HOUSE BIRMINGHAM	16
LUTON COUNTY COURT LUTON	48
LUTON CROWN LUTON	30
LUTON MAGISTRATES LUTON	45
MAIDSTONE COMBINED MAIDSTONE	53
MAIDSTONE GAIL HOUSE MAIDSTONE	26
MAIDSTONE MAGISTRATES MAIDSTONE	19
MANCHESTER AIT MANCHESTER	41
MANCHESTER CIVIL JUSTICE CENTRE MANCHESTER	129
MANCHESTER COUNTY COURT MANCHESTER	172
MANCHESTER CROWN COURT MANCHESTER	68

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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
MANCHESTER DISTRICT PROBATE REGISTRY MANCHESTER	4
MANCHESTER EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL MANCHESTER	54
MANCHESTER MAGISTRATES MANCHESTER	135
MANCHESTER MINSHULL CROWN MANCHESTER	46
MANCHESTER NW REGION MANCHESTER	29
MANCHESTER SSCSA MANCHESTER	1
MANSFIELD MAGISTRATES MANSFIELD	26
MARGATE MAGISTRATES COURT MARGATE	1
MAYOR'S & CITY OF COUNTY LONDON	8
MEDWAY COUNTY COURT	33
MERTHYR TYDFIL COMBINED MERTHYR TYDFIL	22
MERTHYR TYDFIL MAGISTRATES MERTHYR TYDFIL	19
MIDDLESBROUGH TEESSIDE MAGISTRATES MIDDLESBOROUGH	84
MIDDLETON STONEY CPO OXFORDSHIRE MIDDLETON STONEY	19
MILTON KEYNES COUNTY COURT CENTRAL MILTON KEYNES	30
MILTON KEYNES MAGISTRATES MILTON KEYNES	23
MOLD CIVIC CENTRE MOLD	37
NEATH & PORT TALBOT COUNTY COURT NEATH	20
NEWCASTLE COMBINED NEWCASTLE	138

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
UPON TYNE	
NEWCASTLE DISTRICT PROBATE REGISTRY NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	13
NEWCASTLE EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	5
NEWCASTLE MAGISTRATES NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	18
NEWCASTLE SSCSA NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	13
NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME MAGISTRATES NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME	20
NEWPORT (GWENT) CIVIL & FAMILY COURT NEWPORT	35
NEWPORT AIT, COLUMBUS HOUSE NEWPORT	23
NEWPORT GWENT CROWN NEWPORT	10
NEWPORT IOW COMBINED NEWPORT	9
NEWPORT IOW MAGISTRATES NEWPORT	3
NEWTON ABBOT MAGISTRATES NEWTON ABBOT	3
NEWTON AYCLIFFE MAGISTRATES NEWTON AYCLIFFE	22
NORTH SEFTON MAGISTRATES' COURT SOUTHPORT	2
NORTH SHIELDS COUNTY COURT NORTH SHIELDS	57
NORTH SHIELDS NORTH TYNESIDE MAGISTRATES NORTH SHIELDS	23
NORTHAMPTON COMBINED NORTHAMPTON	74
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COURT BULK CENTRE NORTHAMPTON	228

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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
NORTHAMPTON MAGISTRATES NORTHAMPTON	16
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE REGENTS PAVILLION NORTHAMPTON	28
NORTHUMBRIA ENFORCEMENT OFFICE	2
NORWICH COMBINED NORWICH	64
NORWICH MAGISTRATES NORWICH	46
NOTTINGHAM COUNTY COURT NOTTINGHAM	63
NOTTINGHAM CROWN NOTTINGHAM	38
NOTTINGHAM EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL & AIT NOTTINGHAM	15
NOTTINGHAM FOTHERGILL HOUSE LAA NOTTINGHAM	1
NOTTINGHAM MAGISTRATES & AIT NOTTINGHAM	114
NPS 12 MINSHULL STREET MANCHESTER	1
NPS CARDIFF MAGISTRATES COURT CARDIFF	1
NPS KING EDWARD HOUSE BIRMINGHAM	3
NPS LEEDS CROWN COURT LEEDS	2
NPS LEEDS MAGISTRATES COURT LEEDS	1
NPS PORTSMOUTH MAGISTRATES COURT PORTSMOUTH	1
NPS TWYVER HOUSE GLOUCESTER	1
NPS VICTORIA LAW COURTS BIRMINGHAM	1
NUNEATON COUNTY COURT NUNEATON	17
NUNEATON MAGISTRATES NUNEATON	8
Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland EDINBURGH	1

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
OLD BAILEY LONDON	74
OXFORD COMBINED OXFORD	61
OXFORD MAGISTRATES OXFORD	30
OXFORD SSCSA OXFORD	1
PETERBOROUGH COMBINED PETERBOROUGH	40
PLYMOUTH COMBINED PLYMOUTH	49
PLYMOUTH MAGISTRATES PLYMOUTH	29
PONTYPRIDD COUNTY COURT PONTYPRIDD	13
POOLE COUNTY COURT POOLE	5
POOLE MAGISTRATES COURT POOLE	44
PORT TALBOT MAGISTRATES PORT TALBOT	14
PORTSMOUTH COMBINED PORTSMOUTH	80
PORTSMOUTH MAGISTRATES PORTSMOUTH	41
PRESTATYN MAGISTRATES PRESTATYN	3
PRESTON COMBINED PRESTON	85
PRESTON MAGISTRATES PRESTON	48
PRESTON SESSIONS HOUSE PRESTON	24
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON	1
RCJ LONDON	726
RCJ ROLLS BUILDING LONDON	146
READING COUNTY COURT READING	42
READING CROWN READING	26
READING EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL READING	5

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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
READING MAGISTRATES READING	33
REDDITCH MAGISTRATES REDDITCH	4
REDHILL MAGISTRATES REDHILL	1
REGIONAL DIRECTORS OFFICE CARDIFF	1
RHYL COUNTY COURT RHYL	12
ROMFORD COUNTY COURT ROMFORD	49
ROMFORD MAGISTRATES COURT ROMFORD	24
ROSE COURT LONDON	2
RUGELEY MAGISTRATES RUGELEY	39
RUNCORN (HALTON) COUNTY & MAGISTRATES COURT RUNCORN	2
RUNCORN CENTRAL PAYMENTS OFFICE CHESHIRE RUNCORN	43
RUSSELL HOUSE AYR	1
SALFORD BUSINESS CENTRE SALFORD	278
SALFORD COUNTY COURT SALFORD	2
SALISBURY COMBINED SALISBURY	3
SALISBURY LAW COURTS SALISBURY	13
SCARBOROUGH COUNTY COURT SCARBOROUGH	2
SCARBOROUGH MAGISTRATES SCARBOROUGH	11
SHEFFIELD COMBINED SHEFFIELD	135
SHEFFIELD MAGISTRATES SHEFFIELD	85
SHREWSBURY CROWN SHREWSBURY	10
SHREWSBURY MAGISTRATES SHREWSBURY	2
SKIPTON COUNTY COURT SKIPTON	11

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
SLOUGH COUNTY COURT SLOUGH	10
SLOUGH MAGISTRATES SLOUGH	5
SNARESBROOK CROWN LONDON	95
SOUTH EAST NORTHUMBERLAND MAGISTRATES BEDLINGTON	25
SOUTH SEFTON MAGISTRATES BOOTLE	25
SOUTH SHIELDS SOUTH TYNESIDE MAGISTRATES SOUTH SHIELDS	26
SOUTH WESTERN MAGISTRATES LONDON	69
SOUTHAMPTON COMBINED SOUTHAMPTON	65
SOUTHAMPTON EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL SOUTHAMPTON	3
SOUTHAMPTON MAGISTRATES SOUTHAMPTON	64
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA COUNTY COURT SOUTHEND ON SEA	15
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA MAGISTRATES SOUTHEND-ON-SEA	27
SOUTHERN HOUSE CROYDON	22
SOUTHWARK CROWN LONDON	81
SPECTRUM BRISTOL	1
SSCS DIRECT LODGEMENT CENTRE BRADFORD	79
ST ALBANS CROWN ST ALBANS	52
ST HELENS COUNTY COURT ST HELENS	25
STAFFORD COMBINED STAFFORD	33
STAFFORD MAGISTRATES STAFFORD	15
STAFFORDSHIRE ADO STAFFORD	1



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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
STAINES MAGISTRATES STAINES	11
STEVENAGE MAGISTRATES COURT STEVENAGE	32
STOCKPORT MAGISTRATES STOCKPORT	29
STOKE ON TRENT COMBINED STOKE ON TRENT	85
STOKE ON TRENT MAGISTRATES' COURT STOKE ON TRENT	15
STRATFORD MAGISTRATES LONDON	36
SUNDERLAND COUNTY COURT SUNDERLAND	8
SUNDERLAND MAGISTRATES SUNDERLAND	21
SUTTON SSCSA SUTTON	61
SWANSEA COUNTY COURT SWANSEA	42
SWANSEA CROWN SWANSEA	34
SWANSEA MAGISTRATES SWANSEA	40
SWINDON COMBINED SWINDON	45
SWINDON MAGISTRATES SWINDON	40
TAMESIDE MAGISTRATES ASHTON UNDER LYNE	34
TAUNTON COMBINED TAUNTON	32
TAUNTON DEANE MAGISTRATES COURT TAUNTON	25
TAYLOR HOUSE AIT LONDON	112
TEESIDE COMBINED COURT	86
TEESSIDE CROWN COURT MIDDLESBOROUGH	3
TELFORD COUNTY COURT TELFORD	14

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
TELFORD MAGISTRATES TELFORD	14
TEMPLE COURT (RPTS) BIRMINGHAM	14
THAMES MAGISTRATES LONDON	116
THE AXIS BIRMINGHAM	1
THE TRIBUNALS SERVICE CARDIFF	3
TORQUAY COUNTY COURT TORQUAY	26
TRIBUNALS GROUP LONDON	1
TRIBUNALS SERVICE (SSCSA) BEXLEYHEATH	2
TRURO COMBINED TRURO	33
TRURO MAGISTRATES TRURO	4
UXBRIDGE COUNTY COURT HAYES	18
UXBRIDGE MAGISTRATES UXBRIDGE	11
VICTORY HOUSE EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL 108 LONDON	
WAKEFIELD CIVIL JUSTICE CENTRE WAKEFIELD	26
WALES ENFORCEMENT OFFICE	1
WALES OFFICE CARDIFF	2
WALSALL AIT WALSALL	3
WALSALL COUNTY COURT WALSALL	20
WALSALL MAGISTRATES WALSALL	22
WANDSWORTH COUNTY COURT LONDON	18
WARRINGTON COMBINED WARRINGTON	7
WARRINGTON WINMARLEIGH ST MAGISTRATES WARRINGTON	36
WARWICK COMBINED WARWICK	5
WARWICKSHIRE JUSTICE CENTRE	45

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<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>HEADCOUNT</b>
LEAMINGTON SPA	
WATFORD COUNTY COURT WATFORD	44
WATFORD EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL WATFORD	40
WELSHPOOL MAGISTRATES WELSHPOOL	2
WEST LONDON FAMILY COURT FELTHAM	41
WEST LONDON MAGISTRATES LONDON	9
WEST YORKSHIRE COLLECTION AND ENFORCEMENT CENTRE	1
WESTMINSTER MAGISTRATES COURT LONDON	109
WESTON SUPER MARE MAGISTRATES WESTON-SUPER-MARE	10
WESTON-SUPER-MARE COUNTY COURT WESTON-SUPER-MARE	31
WEYMOUTH COMBINED WEYMOUTH	6
WEYMOUTH MAGISTRATES WEYMOUTH	15
WHITEHAVEN COUNTY COURT WHITEHAVEN	1
WIGAN COUNTY COURT	9
WIGAN MAGISTRATES WIGAN	33
WILLESDEN COUNTY COURT LONDON	46
WIMBLEDON MAGISTRATES LONDON	12
WINCHESTER COMBINED WINCHESTER	32
WINCHESTER DISTRICT PROBATE REGISTRY WINCHESTER	7
WOLVERHAMPTON COMBINED WOLVERHAMPTON	96
WOLVERHAMPTON MAGISTRATES WOLVERHAMPTON	25

BUILDING NAME	HEADCOUNT
WOOD GREEN CROWN LONDON	62
WOOLWICH CROWN LONDON	53
WOOLWICH MAGISTRATES' COURT LONDON	1
WORCESTER COMBINED WORCESTER	49
WORCESTER MAGISTRATES WORCESTER	25
WORKINGTON MAGISTRATES WORKINGTON	10
WORTHING COUNTY COURT WORTHING	15
WORTHING MAGISTRATES WORTHING	22
WREXHAM COUNTY COURT WREXHAM	25
WREXHAM MAGISTRATES WREXHAM	4
WYCOMBE MAGISTRATES HIGH WYCOMBE	17
YARL'S WOOD AIT CLAPHAM	6
YEOVIL COUNTY COURT YEOVIL	7
YEOVIL MAGISTRATES YEOVIL	15
YORK COUNTY COURT YORK	19
YORK CROWN YORK	17
YORK HOUSE LEEDS	71
YORK MAGISTRATES YORK	17

### ■ Prisoners: Gender Recognition

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[19709\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether a review is underway on the care of transgender prisoners.

**Alex Chalk:**

The Ministry of Justice and Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service policy framework 'The Care and Management of Individuals who are Transgender' was published in 2019. A routine review of the implementation and effectiveness of this

policy is underway. The review will involve consultation with a range of internal and external stakeholders. We are working towards publishing refreshed policy and guidance in Spring 2022.

We will always ensure that transgender individuals are managed safely with their rights properly respected and in accordance with the law. We continue to consider all known risk factors when managing transgender offenders, including any risk to the person, risk to others and risk of self-harm.

## ■ Social Services: Gender Recognition

**Kenny MacAskill:**

[\[19708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans he has to revise the Policy Framework guidance on The care and management of individuals who are transgender.

**Alex Chalk:**

The Ministry of Justice and Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service policy framework 'The Care and Management of Individuals who are Transgender' was published in 2019. A routine review of the implementation and effectiveness of this policy is underway. The review will involve consultation with a range of internal and external stakeholders. We are working towards publishing refreshed policy and guidance in Spring 2022.

We will always ensure that transgender individuals are managed safely with their rights properly respected and in accordance with the law. We continue to consider all known risk factors when managing transgender offenders, including any risk to the person, risk to others and risk of self-harm.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### ■ Air Pollution: Northern Ireland Executive

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[16953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, when he last had discussions with the Northern Ireland Executive on tackling toxic air.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

Air quality in Northern Ireland is a matter for the Northern Ireland Executive.

The UK Government is committed to delivering action on climate change at a global scale through its leadership at COP26. The UK Government has committed to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels, ahead of achieving Net Zero by 2050. This will deliver cleaner air, as well as jobs, prosperity, and a brighter future.

We will deliver this action across the whole United Kingdom and Northern Ireland has an important role to play in that. Northern Ireland has great potential to become a leader in hydrogen technology, and the UK Government has supported this including providing £11.2m to Wrightbus to develop and manufacture low-cost hydrogen fuel cell technology for buses and create a hydrogen centre of excellence. In addition,

through the New Decade, New Approach agreement the UK Government has provided £50m over two years to support the rollout of ultra-low emission public transport.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland regularly meets with stakeholders across Northern Ireland, including Executive Ministers, and discusses climate change in Northern Ireland. In addition, the COP26 President chairs the COP26 Devolved Administrations Ministerial Group, which meets quarterly.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Aviation

**Dr Philippa Whitford:** [\[901779\]](#)

What recent discussions he has had with representatives of the aerospace industry on the effect of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union Aviation Safety Agency on that sector.

**Robert Courts:**

I met with the Aerospace, Defence, Security and Space Group earlier this year and my officials regularly engage with the aerospace industry on a range of issues through various forums, including discussing items relating to EU Exit.

### ■ Bus Service Operators Grant

**Ms Karen Buck:** [\[18466\]](#)

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 in 200-21.

**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>

### ■ Cycling and Walking

**Dr Kieran Mullan:** [\[17021\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to encourage the uptake of cycling and walking.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

On 28 July 2020 the Prime Minister launched ambitious plans to boost cycling and walking, with the ambition that half of all journeys in towns and cities are cycled or walked by 2030. This includes a £2 billion package of funding for active travel over 5 years, the largest ever boost for cycling and walking.

The first £250 million of the £2 billion was allocated in 2020/21, with much of this going to local authorities enabling them quickly to deliver safe walking and cycling routes in their area. The Department's latest Road Traffic Estimates for Great Britain suggest that the amount of cycling was 46% higher in 2020 than in 2019, with around 5 billion miles cycled. This is the highest level of cycling on the public highway since the 1960s.

The Government is providing over a quarter of a billion pounds for walking and cycling this financial year, and will be making a further announcement shortly on all it is doing to support this important agenda.

**■ Driving Tests: Scotland****Alan Brown:**[\[17763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of theory driving test availability in (a) Ayrshire and (b) Central Scotland; what steps he is taking to provide additional theory test facilities; and if he will make a statement.

**Alan Brown:**[\[17764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the backlog in practical driving test availability in (a) Ayrshire and (b) Central Scotland; and what steps he is taking to clear that backlog.

**Alan Brown:**[\[17768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the expiration dates of theory driving tests in response to the backlog of practical driving test applications, to minimise risks of learners requiring to take a further theory test creating additional backlogs.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is aware that demand for theory tests in Scotland is currently high and it is doing all it can to offer more tests at centres by increasing opening hours and running tests on extra days where possible. The provision of additional testing is dependent upon the availability of venues and agreements with landlords. The DVSA is working with its theory test provider, Pearson VUE, to explore further ways in which it can further increase theory test capacity.

The DVSA is continuing to work with the Scottish Government but as a result of the 2 metre physical distancing restrictions in Scotland, as required by the Scottish Government, it is unable to increase the number of desks used to take tests. This has reduced capacity at most theory test sites by 50%.

The DVSA and its theory test contract provider, Pearson VUE, have explored the possibility of delivering the theory tests outside of existing sites, but this was found to be not suitable as it is dependent upon a physical infrastructure within the Pearson VUE network.

As of 18 June, the waiting time for a car theory test in Ayrshire and Central Scotland is 11 weeks.

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) understands the effect that the pandemic has had on all those involved with driver training and testing. It is inevitable the demand for existing and new learners wanting to book practical driving tests will be higher than usual.

The DVSA has put in place a number of measures to increase practical driving tests. These include offering overtime and annual leave buy back to examiners, asking all those qualified to conduct tests, but who do not do so as part of their current day job, to return to conducting tests, and conducting out of hours testing (such as on public holidays). The DVSA is also running a recruitment campaign to increase the overall number of examiners. The aim is to increase testing capacity and reduce the backlog as quickly as possible, whilst maintaining a COVID-secure service for customers and examiners.

As of 18 June, the waiting time for a car practical test in Ayrshire is: 4 weeks at Ayr and 18 weeks at Irvine, and in Central Scotland is: 14 weeks at Livingston and 13 weeks at Stirling.

The maximum duration of two years between passing the theory test and a subsequent practical test is in place to ensure a candidate's road safety knowledge and ability to identify developing hazards is current. This validity period is set in legislation and the Government has no current plans to lay further legislation to extend it.

It is important road safety knowledge and hazard perception skills are up to date at the critical point a person drives unsupervised for the first time. Those with theory test certificates expiring now will have taken their test in early 2019. Since then, they have been unable to take lessons and practice for long periods of time, and not at all during recent lockdowns. It is difficult to maintain knowledge and understanding of driving theory at the level required during that time without being able to put it into practice. Research suggests that this would be particularly harmful for hazard perception skills, a key factor in road safety.

Ensuring new drivers have current relevant knowledge and skills is a vital part of the preparation of new drivers, who are disproportionately represented in casualty statistics. Learners will therefore need to pass another theory test if their certificate expires.



## ■ Electric Vehicles

**Dr Kieran Mullan:**

[\[17025\]](#)

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

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Government had already committed £1.5 billion to support the early market and remove barriers to zero emission vehicle (ZEV) ownership. We are now going further and faster to decarbonise transport by phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030, and, from 2035, all new cars and vans must be zero emission at the tailpipe. Alongside these new phase out dates we have pledged a further £2.8 billion package of measures to support industry and motorists to make the switch. To underpin our ambitious phase out dates, this year we will publish a delivery plan, an electric vehicle infrastructure strategy and Green Paper on Co2 emission from transport.

## ■ Electric Vehicles: VAT

**Patricia Gibson:**

[\[19615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what impact assessment his Department has conducted on the effect of imposing a VAT levy of 20 per cent on the charging of electric vehicles for private use.

**Rachel Maclean:**

Tax is a matter reserved to HM Treasury and the Chancellor. The Department for Transport has therefore conducted no impact assessment on the vat treatment of electric vehicle charging.

## ■ First Group: Contracts

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[17813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reasons the Government decided to continue the operation by FirstGroup of (a) South Western Railway and (b) TransPennine Express under the new National Rail Contract.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The Department has awarded the new National Rail Contracts to the incumbent operators to replace the temporary Emergency Recovery Measures Agreements, which were introduced September 2020, this will ensure that continuity of service will be maintained in line with the Railways Act 1993.

## ■ Great British Railways: Fares

**Navendu Mishra:**

[\[19721\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the proposed Great British Railways will take steps to reduce the cost of train fares.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

New national rail flexible season tickets have been announced as part of the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, reflecting modern working patterns and saving many passengers hundreds of pounds. Flexible season tickets are available now to passengers on advance sale and will become valid for travel on 28 June. Great British Railways will use its leadership to simplify the current mass of complicated fares and tickets. Passengers will have simpler digital ticketing, be able to purchase tickets through a single industry website and app. There will be greater convenience for passengers through contactless travel in urban areas using contactless bankcards and smartphones.

**Large Goods Vehicles**

**Martyn Day:** [\[901762\]](#)

What recent discussions he has had with truck hauliers on the challenges facing that sector.

**Robert Courts:**

Transport Minister Baroness Vere and Employment Minister Mims Davies, Member for Mid Sussex, hosted a haulage industry roundtable on the driver shortage on 16 June.

This event follows a series of meetings between Government and industry regarding driver shortages, its impact on supply chains, and the work each can do to address this issue.

**Martin Docherty-Hughes:** [\[901778\]](#)

What recent discussions he has had with truck hauliers on the challenges facing that sector.

**Robert Courts:**

Transport Minister Baroness Vere and Employment Minister Mims Davies, Member for Mid Sussex, hosted a haulage industry roundtable on the driver shortage on 16 June.

This event follows a series of meetings between Government and industry regarding driver shortages, its impact on supply chains, and the work each can do to address this issue.

**Motor Vehicles: Biofuels**

**Dr Kieran Mullan:** [\[17026\]](#)

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 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**

**Dr Rupa Huq:**

[\[19642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what his timetable is for publishing the results of his Department's 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.

### ■ **Public Transport: Environment Protection**

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[\[16869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps the Government plans to take to promote the climate advantages of public transport during COP26.

**Rachel Maclean:**

A multifaceted transport plan is being developed to support the delegate experience at COP26 with public transport being a key element of the plan. The plan will encourage delegates, media, and civil society travelling to COP26 to consider low-carbon travel options such as rail as a way of entering the UK.

### ■ **Railways**

**Dr Kieran Mullan:**

[\[17018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to implement the policies set out in the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail.

**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.

**■ South West Railway Line: Rolling Stock****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[17810\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 2 June 2021 to Questions 7247 and 7248 on South Western Main Line: Rolling Stock, for what reasons the class 442 fleet were reintroduced and refurbished when they were not DDA compliant for people with reduced mobility.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

The Class 442s were originally conceived to be the best solution in increasing capacity at the beginning of the South Western Railway (SWR) franchise. The units were exempt from the rules on Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM) compliance until August 2024. They were removed from service following COVID-19 in March 2020 and they have not been reintroduced since. SWR decided to withdraw the fleet and cease the programme of modifications that were underway to avoid incurring further costs.

**■ Transport: North of England****Dr Kieran Mullan:** [\[17020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve transport connections in the north of England.

**Andrew Stephenson:**

Since 2010, over £29 billion has been invested in transport infrastructure in the North to unlock the economic potential of the Northern Powerhouse.

In addition, we are committing over £22bn to fund HS2 Phases One, 2a and 2b Western Leg to deliver North-South connectivity, of great benefit to the Hon. Member's constituency, and £75m for developing Northern Powerhouse Rail in 2021/22. This comes on top of the billions we expect to spend on improving the Transpennine route between Manchester, Leeds and York, and the £12bn invested in roads in the North over the last 5 years.

**■ Transport: Rural Areas****Dr Kieran Mullan:** [\[17022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve transport connections in rural areas.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Government recognises the importance of transport for rural areas and is committed to improving access to services that provide vital connectivity. To improve current bus services, or restore lost services where needed, the Government has paid an extra £30 million to local authorities in 2020/21, local authorities have been able to use this to retain or restore services affected by the coronavirus outbreak.

Additionally, in March 2021 we awarded funding to 17 pilot projects through the £20m Rural Mobility Fund scheme to trial innovative, demand-responsive solutions to

transport challenges that rural and suburban areas often face. Demand responsive transport has the potential to transform the local transport offer in areas where demand is more dispersed, and the distances involved make it more challenging to maintain or provide services which meet residents' diverse needs.

The Government wants to ensure that the needs of rural transport users are given equal consideration to those in urban areas. We are committed to improving the connectivity of isolated rural communities and those with infrequent and unreliable services.

In 2019, we published the 'Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy', setting out our approach to maximising the benefits and managing the risks of new technology in urban areas. We now want to explore the challenges and opportunities for rural areas. Transport innovation has the potential to revolutionise travel within our towns, villages and more remote areas; making it easier for people to access jobs, education or healthcare. It could also provide a boost to rural communities, where people without cars often miss out on opportunities. We are determined to seize these benefits as we begin to explore how future transport solutions and interventions can tackle rural mobility issues, improve connectivity and accessibility, increase low carbon travel options and deliver more integrated transport services.

## ■ Transport: Urban Areas

**Ms Karen Buck:**

[\[18465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the amounts paid out under the Transforming Cities programme by (a) region and (b) nation of the UK in 2020-21.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The total amount of Transforming Cities Fund awarded to the six original Mayoral Combined Authorities and the remaining twelve Competitively Funded Authorities, including West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Sheffield City Region Combined Authority have been published. Details about the total funded awarded to each city is available on Gov.UK.

The Transforming Cities Fund is available to selected cities within England only, not the other devolved nations. By completion of the Transforming Cities Programme, a total of £2.36 billion will have been invested in these 18 cities across England.

## ■ Travel: Coronavirus

**Mr David Davis:**

[\[17678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the Government has had discussions with (a) the travel industry and (b) private covid-19 testing providers on proposals for reducing the cost of covid-19 tests required for travel abroad.

**Robert Courts:**

The government continues to work with the travel industry and private testing providers to further reduce testing costs, while ensuring travel is as safe as possible.

The price of tests has reduced significantly over recent weeks, and several providers are offering Day 2 tests for green arrivals for under £50.

**Mr David Davis:** [\[17679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions officials in his Department have had with (a) representatives of the travel industry, (b) representatives of covid-19 test providers and (c) officials in the Her Majesty's Treasury on reducing the cost of covid-19 tests to the public when travelling abroad; and if he will make a statement.

**Robert Courts:**

The Department for Transport continues to work with other government departments, the travel industry and private testing providers to further reduce testing costs, while ensuring travel is as safe as possible.

The price of tests has reduced significantly over recent weeks, and several providers are offering Day 2 tests for green arrivals for under £50.

**Mr David Davis:** [\[17680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of British holidaymakers that are aware of the cost of covid-19 tests when travelling abroad; and if he will make a statement.

**Robert Courts:**

It is a matter for each country to decide on appropriate health measures.

It is therefore important for travellers to check the relevant Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Travel Advice for their destination in advance of travel.

**Mr David Davis:** [\[17681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate his Department has made of the financial impact of the UK tourism sector of the additional costs of covid-19 tests for holidaymakers travelling abroad; and if he will make a statement.

**Robert Courts:**

The government recognises that the tourism sector has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. That is why we have provided the tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors with £25 billion in support since the start of the pandemic. The Government has also recently published a Tourism Recovery Plan.

The price of tests has reduced significantly over recent weeks, with several providers offering Day 2 tests for green arrivals for under £50. The government continue to work with the travel industry and private testing providers to further reduce testing costs, while ensuring international travel is as safe as possible.

**TREASURY****■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme**

**Dr Kieran Mullan:** [\[17010\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of furloughed employees during the covid-19 outbreak moving back into work.

**Jesse Norman:**

Between the end of January and end of April 2021, 1.5 million left the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). The most recent ONS Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) estimates the number of employees furloughed continued to decline to approximately 1.7 million in late May, the lowest level reported by the Survey since June 2020. At the same time, the number of payrolled employees has increased for six consecutive months.

The CJRS is therefore striking the right 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 as demand returns.

**■ Coronavirus: Government Assistance**

**Abena Oppong-Asare:** [\[19724\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish the details of meetings (a) he and (b) other Treasury Ministers have had with groups representing people excluded from covid-19 support schemes in 2021.

**Abena Oppong-Asare:** [\[19725\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury's answer to the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green on 16 June 2021, Official Report, column 318, which groups the Financial Secretary has met to discuss support for freelancers in the (a) creative and (b) other sectors.

**Jesse Norman:**

Treasury ministers and officials have had meetings with a wide variety of organisations and individuals in the public and private sectors, including MPs, businesses, professional representative bodies, and the unions, throughout the development of the COVID-19 support package including both the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

This proactive engagement has been widely praised, and the Institute for Government has said: "The Government's approach to consultation compensated for some of the difficulties of accelerated policy development, because it gave it fast access to information, and an early sense of whether the measures would work and how they would be received by businesses and workers. This contributed to both positive reception on announcement and successful roll-out."

Details of ministerial and permanent secretary meetings with external organisations on departmental business are published on a quarterly basis and are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>.

## ■ **Coronavirus: Screening**

**Mr David Davis:** [17676]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of the cost to the Exchequer of removing VAT from the price of covid-19 test services in each quarter in 2021-22.

**Mr David Davis:** [17677]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has consulted representatives of (a) the travel industry and b) representatives of covid-19 test providers on the potential merits of removing VAT from the cost of covid-19 test services required for travel abroad; and if he will make a statement.

**Jesse Norman:**

VAT is a broad-based tax on consumption and the standard rate of 20 per cent normally applies to most goods and services, including PCR tests. VAT makes a significant contribution towards the public finances, raising about £130 billion in 2019/20. This helped to fund the Government's priorities in key areas such as health, schools, and defence. Any loss in tax revenue would have to be balanced by a reduction in public spending, increased borrowing or increased taxation elsewhere.

Medical testing, where it is administered by registered health professionals, is exempt from VAT. The Government also continues to offer free COVID-19 testing for those with COVID-19 symptoms.

Competition among private providers in the market for COVID-19 tests has already worked to reduce the cost of PCR tests significantly, without Government intervention, and the Government expects these prices to continue to decrease over time. In order to reflect the recent reduction in the price of PCR tests that are available privately, NHS Test and Trace has already decreased the cost of the tests that they provide for international arrivals.

## ■ **Digital Technology: Taxation**

**Zarah Sultana:** [17862]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he has made an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the Digital Services Tax from 2 per cent to 10 per cent to help rebuild the economy following Covid-19' and if he will make it his policy to implement that change.

**Jesse Norman:**

It is right that profitable companies share in the burden of restoring the public finances to a sustainable footing following the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to



support this goal, the Chancellor announced at the Budget that Corporation Tax would increase to 25% from April 2023, raising over £45 billion over the next five years.

The Government supports the G7 agreement on global tax reform that would lead to large digital businesses paying more tax here in the UK and UK HQ multinationals paying more tax on their global profits, helping to fund public services and level the playing field for UK firms.

The DST is intended to serve as a temporary solution before a global digital tax solution is reached. It is the Government's strong preference to secure a comprehensive global solution on digital tax and remove the DST once this is implemented.

### ■ **Electric Vehicles: VAT**

**Patricia Gibson:** [\[19614\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what impact assessment his Department has undertaken on the potential effect on electric car take-up of imposing a VAT levy on the charging of electric vehicles for private use.

**Jesse Norman:**

In order to keep costs down for families, the supply of electricity for domestic use, including charging electric vehicles at home, attracts the reduced rate of VAT (5 per cent).

Electricity supplied at EV charging points in public places is subject to the standard rate of VAT (20 per cent). There has been no change to this policy and the Government has no plans to review these provisions.

### ■ **Free Zones**

**Mr Gregory Campbell:** [\[19496\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what progress the Government has made on establishing freeports in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales since 1 January 2021.

**Steve Barclay:**

Freeports will be national hubs for international trade, innovation and commerce, regenerating communities across the UK by attracting new businesses, spreading jobs, investment and opportunity to towns and cities up and down the country.

We want to ensure that the whole of the UK can benefit. We remain committed to establishing at least one Freeport in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as soon as possible.

### ■ **Inflation**

**Jim Shannon:** [\[19587\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the rate of inflation will be in (a) 2022-23 and (b) 2023-24.

**John Glen:**

In its latest published Economic and Fiscal Outlook, from March 2021, the independent Office for Budget Responsibility forecast CPI inflation to be 1.8% in 2022, 1.9% in 2023 and 1.9% in 2024.

**■ Multinational Companies: Taxation**

**Dr Kieran Mullan:** [\[17007\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure multinational companies pay tax in the countries they operate in.

**Dr Kieran Mullan:** [\[17008\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what progress he has made with his G7 counterparts on establishing a global minimum corporation tax rate.

**Jesse Norman:**

OECD proposals to update the international tax framework have been under negotiation for a number of years and the UK has an established record of being at the forefront of these talks.

The package being developed by the OECD includes two pillars; a change in the allocation of taxing rights over business profit, and a global minimum tax. That is something the UK strongly supports; the UK's consistent position has been that it matters where tax is paid as well as the rate at which it is paid.

On 5 June the G7 finance ministers, meeting in London as part of the UK's G7 Presidency, confirmed their commitment to a solution containing both pillars. The Government is delighted the G7 has come together to back the proposals developed by the OECD to reform the international tax framework.

Reaching final agreement on a two-pillar solution with the G20 and 139 members of the OECD Inclusive Framework would be a major multilateral achievement that introduces stability into the international tax landscape.

**■ National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: Life Sciences**

**Anne Marie Morris:** [\[19594\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions officials in his Department have had with (a) NICE and (b) NHS England on the changes needed in the NICE methods and process review to deliver on the Government's ambition to be a global life sciences hub.

**Anne Marie Morris:** [\[19595\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions officials in his Department have had with (a) NICE and (b) NHS England and NHS Improvement on setting levels of ambition in the NICE Methods Review.

**Steve Barclay:**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)'s review into its methods and processes for assessing new medicines is currently live. The review has sought input from a wide range of stakeholders, and officials from across Government – including those in HM Treasury – have been engaged as appropriate. NICE is an independent body, and I look forward to seeing the outcome of the Review in due course.

**■ National Savings Bonds: Environment Protection****Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[19573\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the timetable is for the proposed green savings bond announced in the Budget of 3 March 2021 to be released for sale to the public.

**John Glen:**

Since the Chancellor's announcement at Spring Budget 2021 that a Green Savings Bond will be offered through NS&I, work has continued at pace on the development of this product. The Green Savings Bond will be linked to the UK's sovereign Green Bond framework, due to be published later this month, and will give UK savers the opportunity to take part in the collective effort to tackle climate change. Further details on the Green Savings Bond will be published in due course, prior to the product going on sale later this year.

**■ Owner Occupation****Dr Kieran Mullan:**[\[17014\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking to encourage home ownership.

**John Glen:**

The Government is committed to helping people own their own home and has introduced a range of measures to help first time buyers, including those announced at Budget 2021.

The mortgage guarantee scheme announced at Budget 2021 and launched on 19 April 2021 is increasing the availability of mortgages for credit-worthy households who only have a 5 percent deposit, helping them realise their dream of homeownership. The scheme follows on from the successful 2013 Help to Buy: Mortgage Guarantee Scheme, and as of 8 June there are 192 mortgage products available for buyers with a 5% deposit, compared to only 5 in February 2021.

At Budget 2015, the Government announced the Help to Buy: ISA to support people saving up for their first home. Savers who opened an account before December 2019 are eligible to claim for a government bonus of up to £3000 towards the purchase of their first home. Since it launched in 2015, 508,492 bonuses have been paid through the scheme supporting 386,728 property completions across the UK.

Similarly, the Lifetime ISA (LISA) allows those under 40 to save either towards buying a home or for the long term. Like the Help to Buy: ISA, the Government provides a 25% bonus month on month, meaning that people who save the maximum will receive a £1,000 bonus each year. First-time buyers saving into a LISA can use their tax-free savings, including the government bonus, to buy a home up to the value of £450,000 anywhere in the UK, at any point after the account has been open for 12 months.

The nil rate band for Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) has been temporarily increased to £500,000 and will reduce to £250,000 from 1 July 2021. However, from 1 July 2021, first time buyers purchasing properties up to £500,000 in value will get an additional relief, meaning they will pay no Stamp Duty on the first £300,000 and then only pay Stamp Duty at a rate of 5% on the remaining amount.

## ■ Performing Arts and Weddings: Coronavirus

**Drew Hendry:**

[\[17759\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of providing additional long term sectoral support to the (a) live performance and (b) wedding industries through a further extension of the (i) 5 per cent VAT reduced rate for the tourism and hospitality sector, (ii) Self-Employment Income Support Scheme and (iii) Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government recognises the extreme disruption the actions needed to combat COVID-19 are having on sectors like live events and weddings.

Eligible events and businesses may already benefit from available employment schemes, Government grant and loan schemes, a reduction in VAT and business rates relief; as well as the Culture Recovery Fund which has already supported thousands of organisations including theatres, music venues, comedy clubs and festivals. At Budget, the Chancellor extended many of these economic support schemes beyond the end of the Roadmap to accommodate even the most cautious view about the time it might take to exit restrictions.

As announced at Budget, the Government has extended the temporary reduced rate of VAT for the tourism and hospitality sector. The 5% rate will now end on 30 September 2021. On 1 October 2021, a new reduced rate of 12.5% will be introduced for these goods and services to help businesses manage the transition back to the standard rate. The new rate will end on 31 March 2022. While the Government keeps all taxes under review, this relief comes at a significant cost to the Exchequer, and there are no plans to extend the scope of the reduced rate. This policy will cost over £7 billion, and while some businesses in some sectors are disappointed, a boundary for eligibility had to be drawn.

At Budget, the Government also extended the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) for a further five months from May until the end of September 2021. Furloughed workers in the UK will continue to receive more generous support than

those in many other countries, as the CJRS ensures employees receive 80% of their current salary for hours not worked, up to £2,500 per month, until the end of September.

The Government also announced at Budget 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.

## ■ Premium Bonds

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[19574\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if will make an assessment of the potential merits of raising the limit of the number of Premium Bonds that a person may purchase.

**John Glen:**

The current Premium Bonds investment limit is £50,000, which is set out in UK legislation. When setting the investment limit, HM Treasury and NS&I must strike a balance between the differing needs of savers, taxpayers and the wider financial sector. While some customers would wish to invest more than the current limit in Premium Bonds, raising the limit could lead to the scheme becoming dominated by a small number of people with large investments. NS&I has found from experience that customers are sensitive to taking part in a prize draw in which some people hold a very large number of bonds. In addition, NS&I is sensitive to changing the investment limit in a way that disadvantages other banks and firms that offer rates of interest with similar returns to Premium Bonds.

## WALES

### ■ Air Pollution: Wales

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[17839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on their Clean Air Plan.

**Simon Hart:**

I have regular discussions with Welsh Ministers on a wide range of subjects pertaining to the environment, like air quality.

As air quality is a largely devolved policy area, the UK Government, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive (NIE) have provisionally agreed a UK-wide 'Air Quality Common Framework'. This framework outlines how the four administrations will work together to improve air quality, in line with our current and future obligations, following the UK's exit from the EU. The governance arrangements under the framework set a commitment for all administrations to engage with each other on any development in AQ policy, including the Welsh Government's Clean Air Plan.

## ■ Air Pollution: Welsh Government

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[16949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on its approach to tackling toxic air.

**Simon Hart:**

I have regular discussions with Welsh Ministers on a wide range of subjects pertaining to the environment, like air quality.

Air quality is a largely devolved policy area. The UK Government, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive have provisionally agreed a UK-wide 'Air Quality Common Framework'. This framework outlines how the four administrations will effectively work together to improve air quality, in line with our current and future obligations, following the UK's exit from the EU. The framework sets out governance arrangements including mechanisms for joint decision-making, dispute resolution and strategic direction. The 'common framework working group', meets regularly in line with the commitment for all four administrations to engage with each other at the earliest opportunity on any development in AQ policy, including the Welsh Government's Clean Air Plan.

The UK-wide National Air Pollution Control Programme (NAPCP) sets out the proposed measures and technical analysis, which demonstrate how the legally binding 2020 and 2030 emission reduction commitments for five damaging pollutants can be met across the UK. The UK government and the devolved administrations work collaboratively and consult at UK level on actions needed to improve air quality under the NAPCP.

## WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

### ■ Gender Recognition

**Dawn Butler:**

[\[18501\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps the Government is taking to give full recognition to people in the UK who identify as non-binary.

**Kemi Badenoch:**

This Government is committed to supporting all LGBT people, tackling discrimination and improving the lives of all citizens.

We have been clear in the response to the Gender Recognition Act consultation in September 2020 that there are no plans to make changes to the 2004 Act.

Following a considerable amount of consultation with the public, the Government decided that the current provisions within the GRA allow for those that wish to legally change their sex to do so safely and fairly. The consultation did not bring forward any proposals to extend the GRA to provide legal recognition to a third, or non-binary, gender.

**WORK AND PENSIONS****■ Bereavement Support Payment**

**Dan Jarvis:** [\[19588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of extending the Bereavement Support Payment to include unmarried partners.

**Guy Opperman:**

It is our intention to take forward a Remedial Order that will extend eligibility for Bereavement Support Payment to cohabitees with children. We are currently considering the detail and implementation of the draft Remedial Order, which will be laid shortly before the House.

**■ Employment and Support Allowance**

**Wendy Chamberlain:** [\[19699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of employment support available to people who (a) claim Employment and Support Allowance and (b) want to move into employment.

**Mims Davies:**

No recent assessment has been made. We have recently restarted our employment support for people claiming ESA following a pause due to Covid-19. We adopt a personalised approach for every claimant, supporting them to undertake tailored activities designed to move them towards and into employment, if and when they are able.

**■ Personal Income**

**Jonathan Reynolds:** [\[16101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the impact on claimants of suspending the minimum income floor during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Mims Davies:**

In response to the pandemic, the Government acted quickly to implement an unprecedented package of support package to protect millions of jobs and incomes. This included the temporary suspension of the Minimum Income Floor (MIF) for all self-employed Universal Credit (UC) claimants. No assessment of the suspension of the MIF has been made.

**■ Restart Scheme: Disability**

**Wendy Chamberlain:** [\[19698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of extending the eligibility criteria for the (a) Kickstart and (b) Restart schemes to include people claiming Employment and Support Allowance.

**Wendy Chamberlain:** [\[19700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans her Department has to record the number of disabled people who participate in the Restart scheme.

**Wendy Chamberlain:** [\[19701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to promote the Restart scheme to disabled people.

**Mims Davies:**

There are no current plans to extend the eligibility criteria of the Kickstart Scheme or the Restart Scheme beyond Universal Credit claimants.

Disabled people, including those on Employment Support Allowance, who require more intensive employment support would also have access to both the Work and Health Programme (WHP) and Intensive Personalised Employment Support (IPES) and can volunteer for this support at any time irrespective of benefit claimed or no benefit. The WHP predominantly helps people with a wide range of disabilities and health conditions to enter into and stay in work, and is suited to those who expect to find work within 12 months. IPES is an intensive, highly personalised voluntary support package that is flexible to participants' needs. It supports disabled people with complex barriers to work who are more than 12 months from the labour market without the benefit of IPES support.

The department will be monitoring the characteristics of people who participate in employment programmes, including which benefit conditionality group they are from. We will be evaluating the Kickstart Scheme and Restart Scheme to explore the delivery and outcomes from the programmes. This will include capturing the experiences of a range of participants, including disabled participants.

Universal Credit claimants are supported by a Work Coach who will seek to recommend and refer to the most appropriate provision for the individual.

**■ Social Security Benefits: EU Nationals**

**Fleur Anderson:** [\[19715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make it her policy to allow EU citizens who miss the deadline to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme to continue to claim benefits.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Access to benefits for non-UK nationals depends on their immigration status. EEA and Swiss nationals, and their family members, resident in the UK at the end of the



transition period need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to maintain entitlement to taxpayer funded benefits.

Those currently receiving benefits will not see their payments stop automatically from 1 July. It is, however, important that anyone who hasn't applied to the EUSS does so quickly, including if the HO contacts them following the deadline, to ensure that benefit payments don't stop.

The Government has been running a national communication campaign to make sure individuals are aware of the need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme ahead of the 30 June deadline. In addition to the national campaign, HM Government has been contacting DWP claimants to make sure that they are aware of the need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme ahead of the deadline to protect their rights.

## ■ Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[20465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 24 February 2021 to Question 155228 on Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations, whether the first test site in the Departmental Transformation Area went ahead in April 2021 as planned.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

The first site in the Departmental Transformation Area went live on 21 April 2021 as planned.

## ■ Unemployment

**Feryal Clark:**

[\[16246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent comparative assessment her Department has made of the (a) unemployment and (b) youth unemployment rates in (i) Enfield North constituency and (ii) the UK; and what steps her Department is taking to reduce unemployment in Enfield North constituency.

**Mims Davies:**

The information on youth unemployment available is in the table below. No assessment has been made of changes in the levels of unemployment. Links to the data can be found below the table.

Alternative Claimant Count: Enfield North

	FEB 18	FEB 19	FEB 20	FEB 21
a (i) All Aged 16+ (Levels)	2,866	2,876	2,987	6,258
c (iii) Aged 16-24 (Levels)	371	380	420	1,085

Source: DWP, Stat X-plore

The Nomis data available for Enfield can be found [here](#).

### ■ Universal Credit: Internet

**Dr Lisa Cameron:**

**[19612]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if the Government will take urgent steps to remove barriers within the universal credit online system to ensure that people who need help to maintain their universal credit account are able to receive it.

**Will Quince:**

There are no barriers to claiming Universal Credit, as there is already assistance available to make and maintain their Universal Credit claim using the Freephone Universal Credit helpline.

Throughout the pandemic, Jobcentres have remained open for anyone who needed face-to-face support and could not be helped in any other way. Since 12 April 2021, Jobcentres in England and Wales have resumed full face to face services, returning to normal opening hours from 9am to 5pm. Jobcentres in Scotland have restarted the same full face to face service since 26 April 2021. All Jobcentre Plus offices across the country have Wi-Fi and computers available for claimants to access the internet. Work Coaches will continue to support those maintain their Universal Credit claim. To support our ongoing commitment in helping claimants, we have recruited an additional 13,500 Work Coaches in our Jobcentres.

The Department is committed to providing the best possible support for all our claimants, including the most vulnerable in society, in both making and maintaining their claim. Help to Claim delivered through Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland offers tailored, practical support to help people make a Universal Credit claim up to receiving their first full correct payment on time. This support has been bolstered by the announcement of a further 12 months of funding this year for Help to Claim.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### DEFENCE

#### ■ Exercises in the Black Sea

**Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Ben Wallace):**

[\[HCWS122\]](#)

On Wednesday 23 June 2021, HMS DEFENDER (a Type 45 Destroyer), left the Ukrainian port of Odesa en route to the Georgian port of Batumi in the Black Sea. HMS DEFENDER conducted innocent passage through Ukrainian territorial waters via a direct route using a traffic separation scheme (TSS), as is the right of the United Kingdom (and all nations) under international maritime law. This TSS is governed by the International Maritime Organisation and is designed to assist vessels in safely transiting congested waterways. The United Kingdom does not recognise any Russian claim to these waters, nor do we recognise the assertion from the Russian Ministry of Defence that HMS DEFENDER was in violation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

At 0950 BST, HMS DEFENDER entered the TSS, inside Ukrainian territorial waters. At 1000 BST, a Russian coastguard vessel warned that Russian units would shortly commence a live fire gunnery exercise. At 1008 BST, HMS DEFENDER noted gunnery astern and out of range of her position. This posed no danger to HMS DEFENDER. During her transit, HMS DEFENDER was overflown by Russian combat aircraft at varying heights, the lowest of which was approximately 500 feet. These aircraft posed no immediate threat to HMS DEFENDER, but some of these manoeuvres were neither safe nor professional. HMS DEFENDER responded by VHF radio to the Russian units on several occasions and was, at all times, courteous and professional.

HMS DEFENDER maintained a safe course throughout her innocent passage, on one occasion manoeuvring to avoid a hazard presented by a Russian coastguard vessel before re-assuming her intended course. HMS DEFENDER completed the passage safely and in accordance with her intended route, departed Ukrainian territorial waters at 1026 BST. At no point were warning shots fired at HMS DEFENDER, nor bombs dropped in her path as has been asserted by the Russian authorities.

Later on Wednesday 23 June 2021, the United Kingdom's Defence Attaché was invited to a meeting in the Russian Ministry of Defence at which he received a note verbale. This will be considered and addressed in due course.

Under Article 19 of UNCLOS, HMS DEFENDER had the right to exercise innocent passage through Ukrainian territorial waters in the manner she did without giving any notice of her intention to do so. This is a right the United Kingdom affords to Russia and other states in the context of the UK's territorial waters, including the Dover TSS in the English Channel.

The Royal Navy, as well as other NATO and partner nations, have enjoyed a routine maritime presence in the Black Sea for many years. At the time of this interaction, there were both Dutch and US warships operating elsewhere within the Black Sea. The Royal

Navy's presence is about cooperating with our partners and Allies to advance regional security, stability and freedom of navigation.

HMS DEFENDER continues with her planned deployment and programme of visits. The Royal Navy will always uphold international law and will not accept unlawful interference with innocent passage.

## ■ UK MINUSMA Deployment

**The Minister for the Armed Forces (James Heapey):** [\[HCWS121\]](#)

I would like to update the House on my previous statement (HCWS622), announcing the start of the UK's Long-Range Reconnaissance Group (LRRG) deployment to the United Nations' Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali, MINUSMA.

The UK's first rotation to MINUSMA, led by the Light Dragoons, began in December 2020 and I am pleased to report that they have now completed their handover to their successors, following a successful six-month deployment.

Our troops have so far delivered on their objectives - to contribute to improving the UN mission's performance and to help reduce the spread of insecurity across Mali and the wider Sahel.

Our forces have engaged with Malian communities who had never before met UN forces to understand their needs and concerns. They have gathered intelligence to support mission planning and improve overall mission performance, including the protection of civilians. They also led MINUSMA's first Cordon and Search operation for some time, seizing weapons and equipment hidden by terrorists threatening local communities, and demonstrating how UK personnel can make an innovative and effective contribution to the mission.

Their high performance and professionalism have been acknowledged by international partners on the ground, and the UN Force Commander.

The Light Dragoon-led task group has been replaced by a contingent led by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, with personnel drawn from The Queen's Dragoon Guards and other units from across the Armed Forces.

I congratulate our returning troops on completion of a successful tour in a challenging and dangerous environment, and I am confident that the second rotation is well placed to build on the solid foundations laid by those preceding them. The new UK Task Group will be under the command of Lt Col Will Meddings, of the Royal Anglian Regiment, and will continue to form a crucial component of the Mission and Force, working alongside over 60 other nations.

Despite the successes of our Armed Forces, we are conscious that the ongoing situation in Mali remains complex and needs a whole of government approach to achieve our desired results. The coup in Mali last month reinforces the important role the international community plays in supporting stability in the country. The UK remains committed to the transition process towards democratic, constitutional rule in Mali. We will also maintain a

close relationship with our allies, ensuring our activity aligns with planned adjustments to France's footprint in the Sahel.

Our peacekeeping deployment to Mali is part of a broader HMG contribution seeking to help tackle the root causes of conflict. This includes a number of UK funded programmes across Mali that intend to not only improve the lives of the civilian population, but also complement the tasks conducted by our Armed Forces. Programmes include helping communities resolve conflicts over land and resources; supporting women in taking a stronger role in conflict resolution; and helping civilian and military actors to better coordinate work.

While I am pleased to report that the troops in our first rotation will arrive home safe and well, we remain clear that this mission does not come without risk to those deployed. We regularly assess risks and will continue to make adjustments to ensure our forces can conduct operations safely.

Lessons identified from our first rotation will be applied to future MINUSMA deployments. We will also continue to draw on insight provided by the LRRG to support our efforts within the UN in New York to drive policy reform. They will feed into a review of our future commitment at the end of the year.

As outlined in the Integrated Review, the UK deployment to MINUSMA is a clear demonstration of this government's commitment to play a leading international role in multilateralism, collective security and conflict resolution. I am pleased to report on the successes of this first rotation, and will provide further updates to the House as the deployment progresses.

## DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Media Matters

**Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Oliver Dowden):**  
[\[HCWS120\]](#)

On 1 February 2021, News UK submitted an application to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport requesting that I release in full the Undertakings that were accepted by the then Secretary of State (The Rt Hon Jeremy Wright QC MP) in 2019, to replace Conditions put in place by the then Secretary of State for Trade (the Rt Hon. John Biffin MP) in 1981.

News UK has submitted that the changes in the newspaper industry and the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic mean that the Undertakings are no longer necessary.

They note that the Undertakings place them at a competitive disadvantage to other newspapers, and that the release is necessary to allow the continued provision of quality news by The Times and The Sunday Times.

Copies of the invitation to comment and the application documents will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The deadline for comments is 5pm on 15 July. This application will be considered in a quasi-judicial manner through a fair and transparent process.

If, after considering the responses, I am minded to release, or vary the Undertakings, there will be a further consultation on my decision as required by legislation.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Government response to the Landscapes Review

**Secretary of State (George Eustice):**

[\[HCWS119\]](#)

In May 2018, Defra commissioned Julian Glover and an independent panel to consider how we might improve the management of our National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

Their report, the Landscapes Review, was published in September 2019. It set out a series of recommendations, including that more should be done to support nature's recovery in these landscapes; that the status of AONBs should be strengthened; that there was a need to bring the family of protected landscapes closer together with more strategic oversight and greater opportunities for career progression; and that more funding should support public access to protected landscapes.

The government agrees that more funding should be directed towards making space for nature and supporting nature's recovery in our protected landscapes. Since the review was published, we have been supporting important projects in our protected landscapes through our Nature for Climate Fund and Green Recovery Challenge Fund. Our future Local Nature Recovery scheme, part of the future agriculture policy, will also support the objective of nature's recovery in our protected landscapes and beyond. I have also asked Natural England to prepare proposals for the possible designation of additional National Nature Reserves, where there is landowner support, and to consider how nature's recovery within such designations might be supported financially through our new Landscape Recovery scheme (also part of our future agriculture policy).

The government also agrees that we should do more to support public access to protected landscapes. Today, I am announcing the new Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, which will provide additional investment to allow farmers and other land managers to work in partnership with our National Park Authorities and AONB teams to improve public access, and deliver bigger and better outcomes for the environment, for people and for places.

Natural England also will be taking forward the government's commitment to designate additional protected landscapes and is currently considering the designation of four new areas.

- Yorkshire Wolds AONB
- Cheshire Sandstone Ridge AONB
- An extension to the Surrey Hills AONB
- An extension to the Chilterns AONB

This work will contribute to the government's commitment of protecting 30% of our land by 2030, and boosting biodiversity, while taking forward the review's recommendation to designate more areas of the country for their natural beauty.

Each of our protected landscapes has its own identity, and many of their functions require local accountability. However, we are also considering how their structures might be changed so that we can bring the family of protected landscapes closer together, and ensure there is more strategic direction nationally, while retaining their local functions. We will also be exploring opportunities to increase private investment, particularly by diversifying funding sources to include emerging markets in natural capital and other commercial opportunities. We are also considering options to strengthen the status and support given to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the recommendation to possibly change their name. The Government will be working closely with our partners over the coming months including local authorities and National Park Authorities, to address the review's recommendations in full and consult on draft proposals later this year.

## FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

### ■ FCDO Services Ministerial Targets 21/22

**Minister for Asia (Nigel Adams):**

[\[HCWS118\]](#)

My Honourable Friend, the Minister for South Asia and the Commonwealth (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon), has made the following written Ministerial statement:

FCDO Services operates as a trading fund of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). I have set the following ambitious performance targets for 2021-2022:

1. An in-year surplus in excess of 0.0% before interest, tax and dividend;
2. Achievement of the return on capital employed (ROCE) of at least 6.5% (weighted average);
3. A productivity ratio of at least 82%, measuring actual billable hours versus available billable hours;
4. An in-year customer satisfaction rating average at least of 82%;
5. An average Civil Service People Survey "Your Say" score for 'Employee Engagement' of at least 61%; and
6. An average Civil Service People Survey "Your Say" score for 'My Manager' of at least 65%.

FCDO Services will report to Parliament on its success against these targets through its Annual Report and Accounts for 2021-2022.

FCDO Services is a Trading Fund of the FCDO. It provides a range of integrated, secure services worldwide to the FCDO and other UK Government departments, supporting the delivery of government agendas. Services include protective security, estates and

construction, cloud computing, communications and monitoring, logistics, translation and interpreting. This is combined with a portfolio of global maintenance work. FCDO Services also manages the UK National Authority for Counter Eavesdropping (UK NACE), helping protect UK assets from physical, electronic and cyber-attack.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### ■ High Fat, Sugar and Salt Advertising Consultation Response

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Prevention, Public Health and Primary Care) (Jo Churchill):** [\[HCWS123\]](#)

Today, I am pleased to announce that Government is publishing the consultation response to both the 2019 and 2020 consultations. This outlines the final UK wide policy on restricting High Fat, Salt and Sugar (HFSS) advertising which we intend to legislate for in the upcoming Health and Care Bill.

Covid-19 has brought the dangers of obesity into sharp focus and highlighted that as a country we need to address the risks obesity presents. The Prime Minister has been clear that helping the nation get fitter and healthier must be a national priority and will make us more resilient to diseases in the future.

In 2018 Government set the ambition to halve childhood obesity by 2030 and help adults reach a healthier weight. As part of a suite of measures to meet this ambition, is it important that we reduce children's exposure to advertising for products high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) on TV and online. We want to ensure that the media our children engage with mostly promotes a healthy diet. Evidence suggests that exposure to HFSS advertising can affect what and when children eat, shaping children's food preferences from a young age. Over time, excess consumption can lead to children becoming overweight or obese, all of which puts their future health at risk, already 1 in 3 children leaving primary school is overweight or living with obesity.

In July 2020, as part of the 'Tackling Obesity' strategy, Government announced its intention to implement a 9pm watershed on TV for advertising high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS). This followed on from a consultation held by DCMS and DHSC in 2019. Government also announced it wanted to go further online and from November to December 2020 held a public consultation on introducing a total HFSS restriction online.

#### **Shaping the marketing to our children**

We will be introducing a 9pm watershed on TV and UK On-Demand Programme Services (ODPS) alongside a restriction of paid-for advertising online.

The product categories in scope of the restriction have been revised since consultation to focus on those that are of most concern to childhood obesity. The healthiest products within a specific category can still be advertised and products such as butter, olive oil, and condiments are out of scope. This is consistent with the approach used for the promotion restrictions on volume and location which is also part of the strategy.



The online restriction is limited to paid-for advertising and will not apply to 'owned media' – those spaces online where full editorial control and ownership applies, such as a brand's own blog, website or social media page.

The policy will have a number of exemptions to balance health benefits and impacts on business. These are as follows:

- Brand advertising (online & 9pm watershed): Provided there are no identifiable HFSS products, food and drink brands can continue to advertise. This is to ensure that brands are not pigeonholed as synonymous with HFSS products and have the freedom to reformulate and move towards offering healthier products.
- Small Medium Enterprises (SME) (online & 9pm watershed): Businesses with 249 employees or fewer, that pay to advertise HFSS products that they manufacture and/or sell, will be exempt from the HFSS restrictions and can continue to advertise.
- Audio (online only): As the impact and levels of child exposure to HFSS advertising on audio-only media (e.g. podcasts, online only radio) remain unclear, these forms of media are not subject to restrictions.
- Business to Business (online only): Businesses can continue to promote their products or services to other businesses, which we hope will prevent unintended consequences of impeding business activity where commerce is not with the purpose of encouraging children's consumption of HFSS food or drink.
- Transactional content (online only): To ensure that online content for the purpose of facilitating transactions involved in buying and selling products can continue and that consumers have enough information at the point of sale/purchase.

The enforcement approach will mirror current frameworks with broadcasters and ODPS under UK jurisdiction being liable for breaches of the watershed and advertisers being liable online. Ofcom will also be appointed as the appropriate regulatory authority for these restrictions and will be able to appoint a day-to-day regulator to carry out frontline regulation. The Government expects the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) to fulfil this role.

Obesity is a complex issue that will not be solved by one policy alone. This is why our strategy includes a suite of measures such as expanding weight management services and restricting promotions of HFSS products.

This is the latest measure to support individuals to improve their health and thereby reduce pressure on the NHS. I welcome your support and your views on how we can support the nation to get healthier and achieve our ambition of halving childhood obesity by 2030.

**TREASURY****■ Public Service Pensions: Consultations on the cost control mechanism and discount rate methodology****The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Steve Barclay):****[[HCWS117](#)]**

The Government has today published two consultations relating to public service pensions. These consultations seek views on two important aspects of the framework governing public service pension schemes: proposed reforms to the cost control mechanism and the methodology used to set the discount rate used at valuations of unfunded public service pension schemes.

One of the proposed reforms to the cost control mechanism could mean that the discount rate used at valuations of unfunded public service schemes to set employer contribution rates may also become relevant to the outcome of the cost control mechanism in the future. These consultations are therefore being published in parallel to ensure that respondents are fully informed of any potential interactions and to allow them to consider their responses across both areas of the public service pension framework.

**The cost control mechanism**

The first consultation document published today is titled 'Public Service Pensions: Proposal to Reform the Cost Control Mechanism'.

Following recommendations from the Independent Public Service Pensions Commission recommended in 2011, the cost control mechanism was introduced into the valuation process for public service pension schemes in the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 following consultation with member representatives. It was designed to ensure a fair balance of risk regarding the cost of providing defined benefit (DB) public service pensions between members and the taxpayer.

In September 2018, the Government announced it would ask the Government Actuary to conduct a review of the mechanism amidst concerns that it was not operating in line with its original objectives, which are:

- To protect taxpayers from unforeseen costs
- To maintain the value of pension schemes to the members
- To provide stability and certainty to benefit levels – the mechanism should only be triggered by 'extraordinary, unpredictable events'

The Government Actuary's final report, which sets out his findings and recommendations, was published on 15 June. The Government has considered this report and is now consulting on reforms it proposes to make to the mechanism to ensure it operates as intended. All of the Government's proposed changes are recommendations by the Government Actuary.

The consultation will last for 8 weeks and close on 19 August. The consultation document can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/public-service-pensions-cost-control-mechanism-consultation](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/public-service-pensions-cost-control-mechanism-consultation)

**The discount rate methodology**

The second consultation is titled 'Public Service Pensions: Consultation on the discount rate methodology'.

'SCAPE' (Superannuation Contributions Adjusted for Past Experience) is the name of the process for setting employer contribution rates at valuations of unfunded public service pension schemes. The 'SCAPE discount rate' is the discount rate used as part of this process. It is used to express the pension promises being built up in a scheme as a present-day cost and is set by HM Treasury following a prescribed methodology.

The Government previously consulted on the methodology used to set the SCAPE discount rate in 2010. In response to that consultation, it announced that the SCAPE discount rate methodology would be based on expected long-term GDP growth.

In response to the 2010 consultation, the Government expressed an intention to review the SCAPE discount rate methodology every ten years. This consultation meets that intention and seeks views on the most appropriate methodology for setting the SCAPE discount rate going forward.

The consultation will last for 8 weeks and close on 19 August. The consultation document can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/public-service-pensions-consultation-on-the-discount-rate-methodology](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/public-service-pensions-consultation-on-the-discount-rate-methodology)