



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 1 July 2021 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:33 P.M., 01 July 2021). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Attorney General: Directors

Grahame Morris: [\[23153\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what financial payments his Department makes to its non-executive directors; how many times his departmental Board will meet in 2021-22; and what work the non-executive directors undertake.

Grahame Morris: [\[23154\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what declarations of interests have been made by his Department's non-executive directors; and where those interests are published.

Grahame Morris: [\[23155\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, when his Department's current non-executive directors were appointed; what oversight officials of his Department had of the Ministerial appointments of those non-executive directors; and what assessment his Department made of the applicants' experience against the requirements for breadth and depth of experience set out in the Cabinet Office guidance on Departmental Boards of November 2014.

Michael Ellis:

The Attorney General's Office (AGO) does not have any non-executive directors sitting on its board. Whilst the AGO aligns its governance structures as closely as possible to Cabinet Office guidance, the appointment of non-executive directors would not be proportionate given the size of the AGO (headcount 54).

■ Attorney General: Security

Grahame Morris: [\[23156\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what private companies are contracted to provide security services at his Department's buildings that contain Ministerial private offices; and whether there are closed circuit television cameras in any Ministerial private offices within his Department's estate.

Michael Ellis:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

■ Domestic Abuse: Prosecutions

Charlotte Nichols: [\[902037\]](#)

What steps he is taking to increase the number of prosecutions relating to domestic violence.

Alex Davies-Jones:

[\[902039\]](#)

What steps he is taking to increase the number of prosecutions relating to domestic violence.

Lucy Frazer:

This Government has introduced the landmark Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Coordinated multi-agency action and supporting victims are key components of the CPS's ambitious programme of work published in January, which will help narrow the disparity between reporting and criminal justice outcomes.

The CPS recently hosted a virtual domestic abuse conference with the police and the courts, sharing best practice and innovation.

■ **Emergency Services: Crimes of Violence**

Mr Philip Hollobone:

[\[902044\]](#)

If he will hold discussions with the CPS on improving prosecution rates for assault of emergency workers in (a) Kettering, (b) North Northamptonshire and (c) England.

Lucy Frazer:

I agree that we should do everything we can to protect our emergency workers. I hope that the Honourable Member will be pleased to know that between 2019 and 2020 the numbers of prosecutions for these offences increased by 27.2% in the East Midlands CPS Area and by 25.1% overall across England and Wales.

■ **Sentencing: Appeals**

Jonathan Gullis:

[\[902040\]](#)

What recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the referral process for members of the public and victims to request review of sentences under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.

Lucy Frazer:

It is important that the ULS scheme is easy to operate. That is why there is no requirement to be connected to the case, and no particular form in order to make a reference.

The revised Victims' Code, which came into force earlier this year, contains for the first time the entitlement of victims to be informed about the scheme. This ensures that victims know about the scheme, promptly after sentence and so referrals can be made within the time limit.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY**Bounce Back Loan Scheme****Mr Gregory Campbell:**[\[23407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many loans have been issued under the Bounce Back Loan scheme and to what value in (a) England, (b) Scotland, (c) Wales and (d) Northern Ireland.

Paul Scully:

A breakdown on the number of loans issued through the Bounce Back Loan Scheme as of 10 January 2021 is in the table below.

	VALUE OF LOANS OFFERED (£)	NUMBER OF LOANS OFFERED
England	38,387,275,292	1,253,376
Scotland	2,496,404,756	86,062
Wales	1,524,813,850	55,094
Northern Ireland	1,172,538,374	38,181

Updated figures will be published in due course.

Certification Officer: Finance**Andy McDonald:**[\[23213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to his Department's plans for a levy on trade unions and employer bodies to fund the certification officer, what projections he has made for (a) the income levels that will determine whether a union is classed as (i) small, (ii) medium or (iii) large and (b) the levy apportioned to an individual organisation in the (A) small unions, (B) medium unions, (C) large unions, (D) union federations and (E) employer organisations category from April 2022.

Paul Scully:

The Government has taken steps to ensure the levy on trade unions and employers' associations to fund the Certification Officer is fair and affordable. Our proposal, which is subject to change, is that smaller organisations will be exempt from the levy. All other organisations will pay the basic levy and higher income organisations will pay an additional rate on top of the basic levy, to cover exempt organisations. As a significant amount of the Certification Office's time is spent on non-federated trade unions, an enhanced rate will be paid by those non-federated trade unions for whom the basic, additional and enhanced rate amounts to less than 2.5% of their income. No organisation will pay more than 2.5% of their income.

It will be for the Certification Officer to set the levy amounts and income bands within the framework of the Certification Officer levy regulations.

The Certification Officer has estimated that she is likely to need a budget of £1,150,000 from April 2022. Based on that estimate, and taking into account the current number of organisations subject to the levy and the annual income reported through annual returns, the Certification Office has made some projections as to the likely shape of the levy. These projections are, of course, subject to change, and will be updated once the regulations have been laid.

1. No organisation with an income of less than £105,000 will pay the levy.
2. Non-federated trade unions with an income of between £105,000 and £285,000 will pay £2600 per annum.
3. Non-federated trade unions with an income of between £285,000 and £455,000 will pay £7080 per annum.
4. Non-federated trade unions with an income of over £455,000 will pay £11350 per annum.
5. Employers' associations and federated trade unions with an income of between £105,000 and £275,000 will pay £2600 per annum.
6. Employers' associations and federated trade unions with an income over £275,000 will pay £6870 per annum.

■ Copyright

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[23277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has met with representatives of the UK book industry to discuss the potential impact of an international copyright exhaustion regime on that industry.

Amanda Solloway:

Officials at the Intellectual Property Office (an executive agency of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) which is responsible for policy development on the UK's IP exhaustion regime have met with representatives of the UK book industry to discuss the potential impact of an international IP exhaustion regime on that industry. The Government will continue to do so as part of the public consultation on the UK's future exhaustion of intellectual property rights regime.

The Government welcomes views from businesses and consumers and encourages interested parties to respond to the consultation.

■ Coronavirus: International Cooperation

Gareth Thomas:

[\[21803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the UK's statement from the last TRIPS Council meeting on June 9th, what steps he is taking to (a) incentivise UK industries to participate in the Covid-19 Technology Access Pool and (b) encourage further engagement by other World Trade Organisation members with the C-TAP scheme.

Amanda Solloway:

The UK has, and will continue to, engage extensively with all interested parties. We are in ongoing, constructive discussions with the World Health Organisation (WHO) as it refines both governance structures and operating model for the Covid Technology Access Pool (C-TAP). The UK has recently worked with the WHO on developing C-TAP, including with key partners such as the United Nations Development Programme and the Medicines Patent Pool, to share our approach to model licenses for IP. We are keen to see, and have facilitated, the WHO working with industry to incentivise participation in the scheme and we have encouraged WTO members to engage with C-TAP.

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination**Gareth Thomas:**[\[21128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many individual covid-19 vaccine doses the Government (a) has used, (b) has in stock, (c) is due to receive as part of signed contractual agreements with suppliers and (d) has committed to share through Covax.

Nadhim Zahawi:

As of 1 July, the total number of doses that have been administered is 77,592,212.

The UK Government has secured early access to 397 million vaccine doses through supply agreements with six separate vaccine developers, of which four have received regulatory approval and three are currently in deployment. This includes agreements with:

- Pfizer/BioNTech for 100 million doses (in deployment)
- University of Oxford/AstraZeneca for 100 million doses (in deployment)
- Moderna for 17 million doses (in deployment)
- Janssen for 20 million doses (approved)
- Novavax for 60 million doses
- Valneva for 100 million doses

In addition, the Government has a reservation agreement with GlaxoSmithKline/Sanofi Pasteur for 60 million doses and a non-binding agreement with CureVac for 50 million doses.

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

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

Gareth Thomas:[\[21129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential to include QR code technology on covid-19 vaccine packaging as a possible route to enable the quick export of surplus vaccines which are redirected to developing nations without the need to repackage those vaccines for the destination market; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

When distributing vaccines, our primary concern is that we do so safely.

Barcodes are currently used on COVID-19 packaging and labels; QR codes may also be used, for example in some regions of the world as part of anti-counterfeiting processes. In the UK, the use of a bar code or a QR code format for vaccine distribution is agreed during the vaccine manufacturer's application for regulatory authorisation.

Barcodes provide an effective, commonly accepted and reliable label format to enable the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines when part of the regulated distribution system. Use of barcodes or the use of QR codes is not the limiting factor in distribution choices. Neither can avoid the planning or re-planning time needed to re-pack or re-label vaccines, if re-packing or re-labelling is required to meet the regulatory requirements for a recipient country.

In order to account for necessary regulatory requirements, we ensure the safe and controlled distribution of vaccines through planning, re-planning, and the use of available, safety-regulated global technologies.

Caroline Lucas:[\[21859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the number of doses of covid-19 vaccines the UK will take receipt of in (a) 2021 and (b) 2022; and of those doses, what estimate he has made of the number that will be needed for domestic use in each of those years.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Vaccines are a precious resource and are in very high demand across the world; therefore, for security reasons it is not possible to provide detail about the size of our supplies or give exact detail about future deliveries.

The UK Government has secured early access to 397 million vaccine doses through supply agreements with six separate vaccine developers, of which four have received regulatory approval and three are currently in deployment. This includes agreements with:

- Pfizer/BioNTech for 100 million doses
- University of Oxford/AstraZeneca for 100 million doses
- Moderna for 17 million doses
- Novavax for 60 million doses

- Janssen for 20 million doses
- Valneva for 100 million doses

In addition, the Government has a reservation agreement with GlaxoSmithKline/Sanofi Pasteur for 60 million doses and a non-binding agreement with CureVac for 50 million doses.

We do not yet know how long vaccines will provide protection against Covid-19. For this reason, the Government is developing a plan for a vaccine booster campaign to protect against a resurgence of the virus in winter 2021/22. The final decision on what a booster programme will look like – and the cohorts included - will depend on the data from ongoing clinical trials, such as the COV-Boost trial, and advice from the independent medical experts at the JCVI. For this reason, we are currently unable to specify final dose numbers that may be required for 2021 and 2022.

However, as announced by my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister ahead of the G7 Summit, the UK has committed to donating 5 million vaccine doses, primarily through COVAX by the end of September 2021, for use in the world's poorest countries. The Prime Minister has also committed to making a total of 100 million doses available within the next year, including a total of 30 million by the end of 2021.

Caroline Lucas:

[21860]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the total cost of covid-19 vaccines the UK is planning to receive in (a) 2021 and (b) 2022 broken down by manufacturer.

Nadhim Zahawi:

We are not able to disclose details of commercially sensitive contracts between the Government and vaccine manufacturers.

At the Comprehensive Spending Review 2020, the Government announced that more than £6 billion has been made available to develop, manufacture, and procure COVID-19 vaccines.

We have secured early access to 397 million vaccine doses through supply agreements with six separate vaccine developers, of which four have received regulatory approval and three are currently in deployment. This includes agreements with:

- Pfizer/BioNTech for 100 million doses
- University of Oxford/AstraZeneca for 100 million doses
- Moderna for 17 million doses
- Novavax for 60 million doses
- Janssen for 20 million doses
- Valneva for 100 million doses

In addition, the Government has a reservation agreement with GlaxoSmithKline/Sanofi Pasteur for 60 million doses and a non-binding agreement with CureVac for 50 million doses.

■ **Deloitte: Arts**

Catherine West: [23279]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2021 to Question 13160, Deloitte: Arts, what the cost to the public purse was of commissioning Deloitte to produce that guidance on EU Member State immigration systems.

Paul Scully:

The maximum value of our contract with Deloitte is £200,000, excluding VAT. The cost covers the initial provision of information, and three subsequent reviews to maintain this information, to ensure it remains accurate and is of use to businesses.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Freedom of Information**

Angela Rayner: [21923]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many Freedom of Information requests have been referred by his Department for advice on handling to the Cabinet Office's clearing house for Freedom of Information requests in each year since 2016.

Amanda Solloway:

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy has referred requests to the Cabinet Office Clearing House where appropriate and in line with the published criteria which is available on GOV.UK here:

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

The Department does not keep a central record of Freedom of Information requests referred to the Cabinet Office Clearing House. Providing this information would require examination of records of every FOI request received during this period. This information could therefore only be supplied at disproportionate cost.

■ **Renewable Energy**

Sarah Olney: [23289]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to increase the development of renewable energy to support a green economic recovery following the covid-19 outbreak.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Through my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution and our Energy White Paper we have set out concrete steps to build back greener from the pandemic and reach net zero emissions by 2050.

The Ten Point Plan announced our ambitious target to quadruple the capacity of our offshore wind to deliver 40GW, including 1GW of floating offshore wind by 2030. To help deliver this, we announced in March that two new ports on the Humber and on Teesside will build the next generation of offshore wind projects –part of an up to £95 million investment to boost the UK's world-leading industry and create 6,000 new jobs in the North. Alongside this, UK Government also launched the Offshore Wind Investment Programme on 22 February to support the delivery of manufacturing investment in the offshore wind supply chain across the whole of the UK.

We have also announced that our next Contracts for Difference scheme to support the deployment of renewable energy will be held in December this year and will be our biggest auction to date – including a pot for established renewable technologies to ensure technologies such as onshore wind and solar can play their full role in meeting net zero.

Meanwhile, we are investing £320m to accelerate the growth of the UK heat networks market through the Heat Networks Investment Project and are preparing to launch the Green Heat Network Fund in April 2022. A new Clean Heat grant scheme will also support the deployment of heat pumps and, in limited circumstances, biomass boilers. Further information will be set out in the Government response to the consultation later this year and the scheme is due to open in April 2022. The Green Gas Support Scheme is due to launch in autumn this year and aims to increase the proportion of green gas in the grid. The Green Gas Support Scheme will be funded by the Green Gas Levy and will provide tariff-support for new biomethane produced via anaerobic digestion and injected into the gas grid.

■ Renewable Energy: Finance

Sarah Olney:

[23290]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to adjust the parameters of the upcoming Contracts for Difference fourth allocation round to support a green economic recovery following the covid-19 outbreak.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

We will publish specific auction parameters well in advance of the next allocation round. My Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution set out our very firm commitment to industry, including our plans to strengthen supply chain commitments to boost UK growth. We are also aiming to deliver up to double the amount of renewables we procure through the next Contracts for Difference allocation round, and this will be crucial for stimulating investment in the sector.

Virginia Crosbie:

[23399]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he has taken to prepare for the Contracts for Difference Auction Round 4 taking place in 2021, in relation to dedicated capacity; and what steps he is taking to put in place strike

price arrangements to support tidal stream and wave technology deployment in Welsh waters and across the UK.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Wave and tidal stream projects remain eligible to compete in Pot 2 for Contracts for Difference auctions. We are currently developing parameters for Allocation Round 4 and will publish these well in advance of the next auction, including consideration of technology-specific minima.

■ **Solar Events**

Chi Onwurah: [\[21214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish the Government's five-year space weather strategy.

Amanda Solloway:

BEIS is due to publish a new space weather strategy later this year. This will set out a five-year roadmap on the steps we will take to further enhance the UK's resilience to major space weather events.

■ **Solar Power**

Anne Marie Morris: [\[23202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans does his Department have to support the growth of solar energy in the UK.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Solar PV has been a UK success story, with rapid deployment over the last 10 years. Over 99% of the UK's solar PV capacity has been deployed since May 2010, and over a million homes have installed solar on their roofs.

Solar is a key part of the Government's strategy for low-cost decarbonisation of the energy sector. Achieving our ambitious 2050 Net Zero target will require significant increases in renewable electricity generation, and we will need to increase deployment across a range of technologies, including solar PV. Our recent Energy White Paper stated that we will need sustained growth in the capacity of solar over the next decade alongside onshore and offshore wind.

That is why the Government announced on 2 March 2020 that large scale solar PV projects will be able to compete in the next Contracts for Difference (CfD) allocation round. The round is planned to open in December 2021 and will aim to deliver up to double the renewable capacity of the last round, potentially providing enough clean energy for up to 10 million homes.

We also support small scale solar projects through the Smart Export Guarantee scheme, which requires electricity suppliers to offer a tariff to buy electricity exported to the grid by small low-carbon generators – typically households that have installed solar panels.

Solar is also an important part of the Government's strategy for energy efficient buildings and reducing fuel poverty. The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, the Social Housing Demonstrator Fund and the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme all include solar panels as an eligible measure.

In April next year we aim to launch the Green Heat Network Fund, which is intended to run for three years and will focus on helping new and existing heat networks to adopt low and zero carbon technologies. We recently consulted on proposals for the scheme design and our consultation document looked at the ways in which a number of low-carbon technologies, including solar thermal, might be treated. The consultation document can be found on gov.uk (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/green-heat-network-fund-proposals-for-the-scheme-design>). The consultation period ended on 29 January and we aim to publish the Government's response later in the summer.

Taken together this support reflects our commitment to reach our net zero ambition, through a sustainable, diverse, energy system.

■ Water Power

Virginia Crosbie:

[\[23398\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he plans to take to support the development of the onshore supply for tidal stream and wave technology; and if he will make a statement.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

Tidal and wave technologies could have a potentially important role in the long-term decarbonisation of the UK, however, they will have to reduce their costs sufficiently, to compete with other renewable technologies. We are committed to growing a development of a competitive UK supply chain in parallel with our plans for increasing the deployment of renewable electricity generating technologies. We are continuing to consider policy related to these technologies in light of the information received from the recent Marine Energy Call for Evidence on the potential of marine energy projects.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Office: Business Interests

Jack Dromey:

[\[23146\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what declarations of interests have been made by his Department's non-executive directors; and where those interests are published.

Jack Dromey:

[\[23147\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, when his Department's current non-executive directors were appointed; what oversight

his officials had of the Ministerial appointments of those non-executive directors; and what assessment was made of the applicants' experience against the requirements for breadth and depth of experience set out in the Cabinet Office guidance on Departmental Boards of November 2014.

Fleur Anderson:

[23359]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what financial payments his Department makes to its non-executive directors; how many times his departmental Board will meet in 2021-22; and what work the non-executive directors undertake.

Chloe Smith:

All financial payments to non-executive directors, their work and the work of the Board are published in the publicly available annual report and accounts, available on GOV.UK. For 2019/20: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-annual-report-and-accounts-2019-to-2020>

All CO non-executive directors' declarations of interest are published annually on GOV.UK here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/920469/Register_of_Non_Executive_Board_Members_Interests_August_2020.pdf

Appointment dates for the department's non-executives are published in the annual report and accounts for each year on GOV.UK. For current non-executives see 2019/20 report: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-annual-report-and-accounts-2019-to-2020>. For previously appointed non-executives, the relevant annual report is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-annual-report-and-accounts-2018-to-2019>

The process of NEDs is set out in Guidance: Role of government non-executives and departmental boards <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/role-of-government-non-executives> and the overarching Code of Practice 2017, both published and available on GOV.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/corporate-governance-code-for-central-government-departments-2017>

■ Cabinet Office: Furniture and ICT

Bridget Phillipson:

[23167]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much his Department spent (a) in total, (b) on furniture, including desks and chairs, (c) on IT hardware and (d) on programming for new visualizations and data outputs in respect of the operations room constructed in 70 Whitehall in the financial year 2020-21.

Bridget Phillipson:

[23168]

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what proportion in cost terms of the (a) furniture, including desks and chairs, (b) IT hardware

and (c) programming for new visualizations and data outputs in respect of the operations room constructed in 70 Whitehall in the financial year 2020-21 is capable of being reused in other government buildings.

Julia Lopez:

1. Total £3,710,000.00
1. Furniture £ 36,000.00
2. IT/AV costs £ 450,000.00
3. Visualisation & Programming £2,440,000.00

All furniture and systems are potentially capable of being reused in other Cabinet Office secure environments.

■ **Cabinet Office: Written Questions**

Jack Dromey:

[\[23145\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, when he plans to answer Question 13907 on Chambers of Commerce: Essex, tabled on 10 June 2021 by the hon. Member for Birmingham, Erdington, and due for answer on 15 June 2021.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the hon. Member to my answer given to [PQ13907](#) on 1 July 2021.

■ **Chambers of Commerce: Essex**

Jack Dromey:

[\[13907\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the statement of the Paymaster General on 18 May 2021, Official Report, column 545, what the offer from the Essex Chamber of Commerce referred to is.

Penny Mordaunt:

Further to my [comments of 18 May 2021](#) in response to the Rt. Hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne, the Rt. Hon. Member for Witham was approached regarding an offer of PPE supply from a contact involved with the Essex Chamber of Commerce in May 2020. This was passed to the Department for Health and Social Care to respond.

■ **Cybercrime**

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[23089\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Answer of 23 December 2020 to Question 130109 on Cybercrime, what the outcome was of his Department's work on developing the UK's strategic direction and funding for cyber security beyond 2021.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Integrated Review published in March set a goal of cementing the UK's position as a leading responsible and democratic cyber power, and committed to launching a new comprehensive cyber strategy in 2021 to implement this vision. The strategy will set out how we will build up the UK's cyber resilience; deter our adversaries; and influence tomorrow's technologies so they are safe, secure and open. Work is underway to develop the new strategy, and the government plans to continue engaging with partners before publishing it later this year and aligning with funding decisions in the next Spending Review.

■ Elections: Proof of Identity**Cat Smith:**[\[23231\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Government's proposals on voter ID, what plans are in place for voters whose gender identity may not match their photo ID.

Cat Smith:[\[23232\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the Government's proposals on voter ID, what plans are in place for people that wear face coverings for religious or cultural reasons when presenting photo ID.

Chloe Smith:

Everyone who is eligible to vote will have the opportunity to do so.

Those whose appearance has significantly changed in comparison to their existing identification documents can apply for a free, local Voter Card that matches their current appearance.

Polling station staff will be given appropriate training and there will be a requirement for privacy screens to allow electors who wish to have their form of identification viewed in private able to do so.

■ Ministers' Private Offices: CCTV**Michael Fabricant:**[\[23046\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the Government's policy is on the installation of surveillance cameras in Ministerial offices; whether the relevant Ministers are informed of their existence; and what instructions are in place regarding any recordings made from those cameras.

Jack Dromey:[\[23148\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what private companies are contracted to provide security services at his Department's buildings that contain Ministerial private offices; and whether there are closed circuit television cameras in any Ministerial private offices within his Department's estate.

Cat Smith:

[\[23233\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether any departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Cat Smith:

[\[23234\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether a risk assessment has been carried out on the secure holding of CCTV footage within his Department.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[23265\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether security cameras are used in Government buildings for the purposes of the surveillance of staff working in those buildings.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[23266\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether footage from CCTV cameras or audio recording devices has been used as evidence in disciplinary cases against departmental staff in the last five years.

Ruth Jones:

[\[24329\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether any Government Ministers have discussed Government contracts on their private email addresses.

Julia Lopez:

I refer the hon. Member to my [response](#) on 28 June 2021.

■ **Ministers: Correspondence**

Tony Lloyd:

[\[21147\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what his policy is on Ministers devolving responsibility for answering hon. Members letters to officials.

Julia Lopez:

As outlined in the '[Guidance for Handling Correspondence](#)', correspondence to Ministers from hon. Members should be signed off at an appropriate equivalent ministerial level. Where an MP has written about the day-to-day operations of an Executive Agency or a Non-Departmental Public Body, the appropriate Chief Executive may reply.

Official replies to letters from MPs should only be authorised in some circumstances, for example, when dealing with a large volume of letters on the same issue which would lead to an improvement in departmental performance handling or that it has been decreed that under certain circumstances an official reply would be more appropriate.

■ Official Residences

Emily Thornberry:

[\[23122\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, which of his Ministers is currently occupying (a) 1 Carlton Gardens, (b) the three flats in Admiralty House, (c) the Dorneywood estate and (d) the Chevening estate; and in each case, when the current occupants took up residence.

Chloe Smith:

The official residences which are owned by the Government and currently available to Ministers are:

- Flats above 10 and 11 Downing Street, which are used by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister respectively;
- 1 Carlton Gardens, leased from the Crown Estate, is available as the official residence for the Foreign Secretary; and
- Hillsborough Castle and Stormont are available for Ministers in the Northern Ireland Office while on duty in Northern Ireland.

The Chequers, Dorneywood and Chevening estates are available to Ministers for both official and private use. None of these properties are owned by the Government, and are run by trustees.

Admiralty House is part of the Government estate, which includes rooms that could be used as residential accommodation. It is not in Ministerial use.

DEFENCE

■ BOWMAN Combat Radio System

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[21156\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the Bowman ComBAT Infrastructure and Platform (BCIP) 5.6 was fielded to the British Army.

Jeremy Quin:

Bowman ComBAT Infrastructure and Platform (BCIP) 5.6 fielding to the British Army commenced in October 2018 and completed in June 2020. BCIP 5.6 Full Operating Capability was declared by the senior responsible owner (SRO) on 2 December 2020.

■ LE TacCIS Programme

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[21157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the Trinity communications system will be fielded to replace Falcon.

Jeremy Quin:

The contract for the TRINITY communications system has not yet been awarded. Therefore, there are no formally agreed Initial Operating Capacity Full Operating Capacity dates. The aspired TRINITY Equipment Delivery Date for Initial Operating Capacity is Quarter two 2025, and for Full Operating Capacity is Quarter one 2028.

■ Military Bases: Repairs and Maintenance**Sir Edward Leigh:**[\[21146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what maintenance or other works have been undertaken on the defence estate in the last six months.

Jeremy Quin:

This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost, as across every Ministry of Defence site maintenance tasks are carried out on a daily basis.

For example, Amey, who are responsible for the maintenance of Service Family Accommodation, carry out approximately 250,000 maintenance tasks per year under the National Housing Prime contract.

■ Ministry of Defence: CCTV**John Healey:**[\[23051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether a risk assessment has been carried out on the secure holding of CCTV footage within his Department; and if he will make a statement.

Leo Docherty:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not Government policy to comment on security procedures in Government buildings.

■ Ministry of Defence: Email**John Healey:**[\[23050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether any departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Leo Docherty:

I refer the hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments [on use of private emails](#)

John Healey:[\[23052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether his departmental IT systems routinely allow officials, advisers and ministers to access private email accounts from their office desktop computers, and department-issue laptop computers and mobile phone devices.

Leo Docherty:

I refer the hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments [on use of private emails](#)

It is Government policy not to comment on specific technical security controls; however, the incidental personal use of private email accounts from departmental systems is subject to MOD Acceptable Use policy, in spare time.

Ministry of Defence: Lost Property

John Healey: [\[23053\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many internal investigations have been launched into missing documents in his Department in each year since 2010.

James Heappey:

Due to the 11.5 year scope of the hon. Member's question it will take time to analyse the information held. I will write to him in due course.

Ministry of Defence: Mental Health Services

John Healey: [\[23049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many people are employed by his Department's specialist mental health services.

Leo Docherty:

Specialist mental health services are provided to the UK Armed Forces, including through Departments of Community Mental Health, satellite Mental Health Teams and visiting clinics. 245 personnel, a mixture of civilian and military, are currently employed in the provision of these services.

Nepal: Coronavirus

Sir Christopher Chope: [\[23042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to assist the Nepalese Government with its covid-19 vaccination programme; and if he will make a statement.

James Heappey:

We stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Nepal during this pandemic. The UK has an enduring defence relationship with Nepal and their Armed Forces.

The UK was one of the first countries to send life-saving medical equipment to Nepal, including 260 ventilators and thousands of pieces of personal protective equipment, to help the country's fight against Covid-19. The UK is one of the leading donors to COVAX, having committed £548 million to the scheme. COVAX has allocated 2,000,000 vaccine doses to Nepal, of which 348,000 have already been delivered and we understand another tranche will arrive by August.

UK aid to the Gurkha Welfare Trust has also ensured access to life-saving support and supplies to Gurkha veterans and their communities throughout the pandemic. Their distinguished service is a source of immense pride in both our countries.

■ Nuclear Weapons

Caroline Lucas:

[\[21865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the 260 cap on numbers of nuclear warheads is 76 more than could be operationally deployed at any one time by the Dreadnought class SSBN force.

Jeremy Quin:

The United Kingdom is committed to maintaining the minimum number of nuclear warheads needed to guarantee the nuclear deterrent remains credible and effective. To avoid simplifying the calculations of potential adversaries, we will not release publicly the precise number of warheads in the total stockpile, number of operationally available warheads, number of deployed warheads or number of deployed missiles. Therefore, I will neither confirm nor correct the hon. Member's calculation.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Arts and Design

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[21822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent estimate his Department has made of the contribution of the arts and design sector to the economy.

Caroline Dinenage:

The most recent data available from the DCMS Provisional Sector Economic Estimates shows that the arts sub sector contributed £7.9bn GVA in 2019, while the GVA of the design and designer fashion subsector was £3.6bn.

■ Arts and Design: Coronavirus

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[21811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to support the recovery of the arts and design sector from the impact of the covid-19 pandemic.

Caroline Dinenage:

The £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund (CRF) has benefited the arts and design sector by providing support to organisations and businesses of all sizes, allowing them to stay open and continue operating where COVID restrictions permit. Over £1.2 billion has now been allocated to over 5000 organisations and sites across the country.

A further £300 million package, announced by the Chancellor at the Budget in March, represents the final tranche of funding for the CRF, and will focus on supporting organisations in distress due to the pandemic. The fund will be open to new applicants as well as previous CRF recipients.

The package is made up of several strands, including £218 million for an emergency fund for organisations who are at risk of ceasing to trade viably within 12 weeks and have not been supported by the CRF (unless by exception previous recipients require emergency support); a continuity fund offering support for those who have been previous recipients but now may be struggling to survive/reopen; a £35 million heritage stimulus fund to support essential capital projects; and £20 million for the Cultural Asset Fund.

The Government continues to keep all support and policies under review, and is in close contact with these sectors to understand the challenges they face.

■ Arts and Design: Finance

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[21823]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of providing further financial support to small businesses in the arts and design sector.

Caroline Dinenage:

The £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund (CRF) has benefited the arts and design sector by providing support to organisations and businesses of all sizes, allowing them to stay open and continue operating where COVID restrictions permit. Over £1.2 billion has now been allocated to over 5000 organisations and sites across the country.

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The Government continues to keep all support and policies under review, and is in close contact with these sectors to understand the challenges they face.

■ Arts: Skilled Workers

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[21824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to help ensure that the creative industries do not suffer from skills shortages.

Caroline Dinenage:

As the creative sector continues to grow and build back better from the pandemic, this Government understands the importance of ensuring that the creative industries do not suffer from skills shortages. That is why the Government has supported initiatives to boost training and employment opportunities in these sectors.

At this year's Budget, the Chancellor announced a new £7m pilot fund to test 'flexi-job' apprenticeships, which will better suit the working practices of the creative industries and enable more young people to enter the workforce. This builds on the DCMS-funded ScreenSkills Apprenticeship Pilot with Netflix and Warner Media, relaunching this Summer with apprentices working across multiple productions and employers. DCMS also supports the industry-led Creative Careers Programme, which has to date showcased creative career pathways to over 115,000 pupils at over 1500 schools across England, as well as the Department for Work and Pensions' Kickstart Scheme through which over 8000 creative industry placements are now available to young people across the country. DCMS has also commissioned the British Film Institute to undertake a UK Skills Review this year, into the skills needs of our world-leading screen industries.

■ BBC

Dr Julian Lewis:

[\[23034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if he will make an assessment of the contribution to public service broadcasting made by the BBC's Regional Political Unit in (a) scrutinising parliamentary (i) debates and (ii) committees and (b) providing regionally-tailored input to (A) 13 television regions and (B) 39 local radio stations in England; and if he will make representations to the BBC that the proposal to reduce the size of that seven person Unit by more than half of its personnel should not proceed.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The government has been clear that the BBC needs to be closer to, and understand the perspectives of, the whole of the United Kingdom and avoid providing a narrow urban outlook.

However, the BBC is editorially and operationally independent of the government and the government has no say over its decision making, including any proposed changes to its Regional Political Unit.

■ Business: Voluntary Work

Rachael Maskell:

[\[21971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he is having with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on opportunities for businesses to allow employees to volunteer with civil society organisations.

Matt Warman:

Employer-supported volunteering can bring considerable benefits to individual wellbeing as well as the broader workforce, help to build stronger communities and enable charities and community groups to do more through employer-supported contributions.

Government wants to see employers with strong corporate responsibility programmes and to encourage businesses, the public sector and charities to consider the role employer-supported volunteering can play as part of their impact on society.

Employees already have the right to reasonable time off work to carry out specified public duties such as those of a magistrate, as established in Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996. However, in the absence of a statutory requirement to provide time off for all voluntary duties, this is a matter for individual employers.

Employer-supported volunteering programmes have made an important contribution to our community response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The National Business Response Network established by Business in the Community has coordinated the need for volunteers with local businesses, and their efforts have benefitted over 1 million people across the country to date.

■ Charities: Coronavirus

Fleur Anderson:

[\[902125\]](#)

What plans he has to help charities to support the recovery of the civil society sector from the covid-19 outbreak.

Matt Warman:

This Government has provided a multi-billion-pound package of support for Britain's charities to continue their vital work and mitigate the risks created by the pandemic.

Charities continue to benefit from the extension of cross-economy support, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

We continue to monitor sector health closely. Government is working with charity sector representatives to shape a future programme of work to support a strong and resilient charity sector.

■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Artificial Intelligence**

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[14041]

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

Matt Warman:

The opportunities and considerations associated with the use of AI continue to be explored, as outlined in the guidance on building and using artificial intelligence in the public sector, published on Gov.uk at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/a-guide-to-using-artificial-intelligence-in-the-public-sector>

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

■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: CCTV**

Jo Stevens:

[23227]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether a risk assessment has been carried out on the secure holding of CCTV footage within his Department.

Oliver Dowden:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Email**

Jo Stevens:

[23226]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether any departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Jo Stevens:

[23228]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether any departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Jo Stevens:

[23229]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether his departmental IT systems routinely allow officials, advisers and ministers to access private email accounts from their office desktop computers, department-issue laptop computers and mobile phone devices.

Oliver Dowden:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments [on use of private emails](#).

■ Design: Arts Festivals**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [21810]

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of hosting a festival to celebrate the design sector in Britain.

Caroline Dinenage:

We recognise the important contribution of the design sector and we are working closely with the Design Council and the Design Business Association to explore further showcasing opportunities and their potential merits. The design sector has already had a number of great showcase events, including the Design Council's recent webinars with industry experts.

■ Events Industry: Coronavirus**Rosie Cooper:** [902128]

What steps he is taking to make further financial support available to the events industry in response to the extension of covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

Nigel Huddleston:

The events industry makes a valuable contribution to the UK economy, and the Government is committed to supporting the sector's recovery.

We have provided an additional £700 million to support local and national arts, culture and sports institutions as they reopen, that's on top of the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund, bringing our total support for sports and culture to over £2 billion, with around £600 million yet to be distributed.

■ Film: Classification Schemes**Nick Fletcher:** [902129]

What recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of the classification guidelines used by the British Board of Film Classification.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Government has great trust in the BBFC best practice age ratings. The BBFC's Classification Guidelines are based on consultations every 4-5 years with experts and over 10,000 members of the public. This ensures the guidelines remain in step with societal standards and parental expectations. More information on the guides themselves can be found on the BBFC's [website](#).

In addition, the latest public consultation in 2019 showed 83% of parents trust BBFC age ratings all or most of the time.

■ Football Governance Fan-led Review**Jessica Morden:** [902140]

What steps he is taking to progress the fan-led review of football governance.

Nigel Huddleston:

Evidence sessions with nearly 70 fan groups and other key stakeholders are well underway, and I'm grateful to Newport County FC for their contribution.

Key themes emerging from these sessions will be set out in the interim findings due later this month. The Review panel will shortly be launching an online survey for all fans focusing on how we can improve football governance.

Internet: Fraud**Dr Luke Evans:****[22030]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of internet search providers to tackle the presence of advertisements encouraging additional payments for tasks of minimal financial cost or no cost, including driving licence renewal and health cards.

Caroline Dinenage:

My department continues to work closely across government to support the development of a coherent and robust approach to dealing with online fraud, including with the Home Office as the lead department responsible for setting out the government's approach to tackling fraud. The Government is aware this type of advertising exists and depending on the final scope of the policy, this type of advertising may fall within the scope of the Online Advertising Programme. The programme is seeking to reduce harms through online advertising.

Following a call for evidence in 2020, DCMS will be launching the Online Advertising Programme later this year to examine how best to strengthen standards around the placement and content of online advertising to minimise these types of financial harm, and to ensure they can be effectively enforced, including through new legislation where required.

More information about the Online Advertising Programme can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/online-advertising-call-for-evidence/online-advertising-call-for-evidence>

Internet: Protection**Ruth Jones:****[23330]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on the steps he is taking to protect people from online harms and misinformation in (a) Newport West constituency, (b) Wales and (c) the UK.

Caroline Dinenage:

The government has now published the [draft Online Safety Bill](#). The new regulatory framework will hold platforms to account for tackling harmful content and behaviours online. Platforms will need to remove and limit the spread of illegal content, and do more to protect children from being exposed to harmful content. The biggest social

media companies will need to set out in clear terms and conditions what is acceptable on their services and enforce those terms and conditions consistently and transparently.

The Bill will also require companies to prevent the proliferation of illegal disinformation and misinformation online, and the biggest tech companies will have duties on legal disinformation and misinformation content that may cause significant physical or psychological harm to adults, such as anti-vaccination content and falsehoods about COVID-19.

Internet law and regulation is a reserved policy area, and we intend for this law to apply across the UK. My officials have been working closely with officials in the Devolved Administrations, including in the Welsh Government, throughout the development of our proposals, and will continue to engage throughout the legislative process.

■ **Mobile Phones: Fees and Charges**

Michael Fabricant:

[\[23044\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to discourage mobile phone companies in the UK from introducing roaming charges in the (a) EU and (b) EEA for UK-based customers.

Matt Warman:

Since the end of the Transition Period the UK is no longer part of Roam Like at Home so surcharge-free roaming for UK consumers in the EU is no longer guaranteed. Mobile operators are now able to impose a surcharge on UK consumers travelling abroad to the EU for their mobile phone usage.

Ministers have regular discussions with senior representatives of mobile operators on a range of issues, including on the issue of mobile roaming, and the government will continue to promote a competitive marketplace that serves the interests of consumers.

Regarding the EEA, the UK recently announced a new agreement with Norway and Iceland for the first ever trade provision which will reciprocally cap the costs mobile operators are allowed to charge each other for international mobile roaming between these countries. This cap is the gateway to allowing surcharge-free roaming for everyone travelling between these countries.

■ **National Lottery: Licensing**

Carolyn Harris:

[\[22181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what provisions his Department plans to put in place to protect lottery players from harm as part of the Fourth National Lottery licence.

Carolyn Harris:

[\[22182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what process his Department plans to put in place to ensure that lottery players are better protected as part of the Fourth National Lottery licence.

Carolyn Harris:

[\[22183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of strengthening measures to protect lottery players from harm as part of the Fourth National Lottery licence.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The Government and the Gambling Commission share statutory duties to ensure that the National Lottery is run with all due propriety and that the interests of players are protected.

The competition for the fourth National Lottery licence is being run by the Gambling Commission. The next licence will see changes to how the National Lottery is licensed and regulated. It has been designed by the Commission to enable the next licensee continually to develop and adapt its operations in a safe and responsible way, to meet the needs of players in 2023 and beyond.

The licensee will be held fully accountable for protecting players. Through the competition process, the successful applicant will have demonstrated high standards of player protection, including on prevention of underage or excessive play, and the Commission will hold them accountable for their commitments during the licence period. The Commission will retain strong enforcement powers and, where necessary, will not hesitate to use them.

Mr Richard Holden:

[\[23378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with the Gambling Commission on the Fourth National Lottery licence in relation to harm prevention and better protecting customers.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The competition for the fourth National Lottery licence is being run by the Gambling Commission. I have regular conversations with the Commission on their responsibilities in relation to the National Lottery including progress on the fourth licence competition.

The Licensee will be held fully accountable for protecting players. The successful applicant will have demonstrated high standards of player protection, including prevention of underage or excessive play, and the Commission will hold them accountable for their commitments during the licence period. The Commission will retain strong enforcement powers and, where necessary, will not hesitate to use them.

Mr Richard Holden:

[\[23379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of requiring regular data reporting from the licensee as part of the Fourth National Lottery licence agreement.

Mr John Whittingdale:

The competition for the fourth National Lottery licence is being run by the Gambling Commission. The next licence will see changes to how the National Lottery is licensed and regulated.

The licensee will be required to provide a range of information to the Commission as part of its licence requirements, which will be used to hold them accountable for their performance during the licence period. The Commission will have the right to request additional information should this be necessary, including in relation to compliance risks or issues.

■ Regional Planning and Development: Arts and Design

Mr Barry Sheerman:

[\[21812\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of prioritising the arts and design sector as part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda.

Caroline Dinanage:

Levelling Up is a priority for this government, and the arts and design sectors are an essential component of this agenda. Investing in locally-led cultural, creative and heritage initiatives is even more important as we recover from the impact of Covid-19 and begin to build back better. We are committed to helping all places across the country to prosper and to unleash their full potential through levelling up those places that have not seen the full benefits of economic growth so far.

For example, we have recently launched the Cultural Investment Fund package, a landmark investment in cultural infrastructure, local museums and neighbourhood libraries. This will make £42 million of much-needed predominantly capital investment available this year across three streams.

Additionally, in March this year, the Government launched a new Levelling Up Fund worth £4bn for England. This will invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities and will support economic recovery. This includes investment in high value local projects, regenerating eyesores, upgrading town centres and community infrastructure, and local arts and culture.

Later this year the Government will publish a Levelling Up White Paper setting out how new policy interventions will improve livelihoods across the country as we recover from the pandemic.

■ Telecommunications: Infrastructure

Alun Cairns:

[\[21900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, when he plans to update the electronic communications code; and what plans he has to amend that code to support the rollout and development of the 5G network.

Matt Warman:

We recently consulted on whether changes to the Electronic Communications Code were necessary in order to support the deployment of digital infrastructure, including 5G. The responses to that consultation are currently being considered and a consultation response will be published in due course. We have confirmed our intention to legislate in this Parliamentary session and will bring forward legislative proposals as soon as parliamentary time allows.

EDUCATION

■ Children: Human Rights

John Howell:

[\[21183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies on children's rights and the covid-19 outbreak of the debate which took place at the Council of Europe on 22 June 2021.

Vicky Ford:

During the COVID-19 outbreak, protecting and promoting the best interests of the child has been at the heart of the action this government has taken, and continues to take. The debate at the Council of Europe highlighted a number of areas impacted by COVID-19 relating to children's rights, such as education, socio-economic inequality and vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak the government has worked to prioritise vulnerable children. During the outbreak, we were one of few countries across the world to keep schools open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers throughout national restrictions, protecting children's right to education. We also distributed over 1.3 million laptops and tablets to schools, trusts, local authorities and further education providers for disadvantaged children and young people as part of a £400 million government investment to support access to remote education and online social care services.

We know that the mental health and wellbeing of young people has been affected by the outbreak, and that being back in school and college plays a central role in promoting wellbeing for pupils. That is why we worked hard to ensure that schools were first to reopen in March 2021. We have also announced £17 million towards improving mental health and wellbeing support in schools and colleges, including £7 million additional funding for local authorities to deliver the Wellbeing for Education Recovery programme.

We have put £200 million into Summer Schools, giving secondary pupils access to enrichment activities and this year we are investing up to £220 million in our Holiday Activities and Food programme, which has now been expanded across England.

Children's social care services and early help services have also continued to support vulnerable children and young people and their families throughout the outbreak.

The government is now looking ahead to recovery. We must 'build back better' for vulnerable children and their families to ensure support is available for those that need it most, when they need it. As part of this, we have invested over £3 billion since June 2020 to support education recovery for children aged 2-19 in schools, colleges and early years settings. This will have a material impact in addressing lost learning and closing gaps that have emerged.

■ Pupils: Coronavirus

Dame Angela Eagle:

[23079]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many pupils in (a) the North West, (b) Wirral and (c) Wallasey constituency were off school and self-isolating as a result of covid-19 on each day of the last two months.

Nick Gibb:

The Department publishes geographic breakdowns of attendance and absence figures on a half-termly basis in the following publication: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/attendance-in-education-and-early-years-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>. The data for the final half of the summer term will be published through this route on 27 July 2021.

■ Pupils: Domestic Abuse and Offences against Children

Jim Shannon:

[21225]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to put in place adequate access to (a) helplines and (b) charities for students in schools who are in need of support in respect of sexual and domestic abuse.

Vicky Ford:

We continue to contribute funding to the NSPCC to ensure that children and young people of all ages have access to free, confidential and expert safeguarding advice and can raise concerns about sexual and domestic abuse. Support and advice are also available to professionals, parents and carers, and to any adults who have concerns about a child.

We have also created the 'Report Abuse in Education' helpline with the NSPCC, specifically in response to the testimonies shared on the 'Everyone's Invited' website. This dedicated route for raising concerns, receiving advice, or reporting an incident has received over 400 calls since 1 April 2021 and will be open until October.

■ Special Educational Needs

Daisy Cooper: [20538]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to improve the experience of further and higher education for neurodiverse people.

Daisy Cooper: [20539]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what provisions are in place to ensure that neurodiverse students are able to access all aspects of further and higher education courses, including work experience.

Daisy Cooper: [20540]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what additional funding is available to students in further or higher education with neurodiverse conditions.

Daisy Cooper: [20542]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many students with registered neurodiverse conditions there are in higher or further education.

Michelle Donelan:

This government believes it is important that all students, including those with neurodiverse conditions and/or disabilities receive an appropriate level of support wherever and whatever they choose to study, and is committed to ensuring that all students receive the support they need to enable them to study alongside their fellow students on an equal basis.

We do not hold information on whether a further education and skills learner has a registered neurodiverse condition. Adult (19+) further education and skills learner participation (which includes apprenticeships) in the 2019/20 academic year by primary learning difficulty and/or disability and/or health problem as self-declared by the learner can be found here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/a87f0184-c377-46df-b8d7-8c73d7aca865>.

This government expects all higher education (HE) providers to fulfil their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to be making reasonable adjustments for all students, including students with neurodiverse conditions, and disabled higher education students, not just those in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA).

In terms of funding, DSA is available in addition to the standard support package to help students with the additional costs they may face in HE because of their disability, including long-term health conditions, mental health conditions or specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

DSA is not means tested and does not have to be repaid. It is available to full-time and part-time students at undergraduate and postgraduate level, alongside support available from HE providers, and in line with the recommendations of the student's DSA Needs Assessment. There is no list of approved disabilities; to receive DSA, any

student must be eligible for the main support package and disabled in line with the definition contained in the Equality Act 2010.

Disabled students and students with neurodiverse conditions should expect to have their needs met through inclusive learning practices and individual reasonable adjustments made by their HE providers. DSA is available in addition to these for the provision of more specialist support (for example, British Sign Language interpretation).

■ Teachers: Arts

Peter Kyle:

[23275]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many teachers were employed in (a) art and design, (b) drama and (c) music in schools in England in each of the last 10 calendar years.

Nick Gibb:

The headcount of art and design, drama and music teachers in service in state funded secondary schools in November 2011 to November 2020 is provided in the attached table and published in the 'School Workforce in England' statistical publication at the following link: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england>.

While there is no formal register for teachers of these subjects, for context, information is also shown on the percentage of hours spent teaching each subject in each year and the percentage of hours of which are taught by a teacher with a relevant post A level qualification.

Attachments:

1. 23275_table [23275_table_school_workforce_headcount_specialist_subjects.xls]

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Fisheries: Territorial Waters

Virginia Crosbie:

[23397]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to prevent illegal fishing in UK waters.

Victoria Prentis:

Illegal fishing in UK waters by vessels of any nationality is an extremely serious matter which endangers the sustainability of our stocks and the long-term interests of the UK fishing fleet. Given that fisheries management is a devolved matter, the four UK fisheries authorities work together to combat illegal fishing by a range of means. These include: applying scientific data and evidence to fisheries management to ensure sustainable fishing; sharing intelligence and coordinating assets when required through the Joint Maritime Security Centre; significantly increasing the number of onshore personnel and maritime surveillance assets; ensuring that all

commercial fishing vessels operating in UK waters are licenced in a way which means that, regardless of nationality, they must all abide by the same regulations as UK vessels; and working closely with counterparts in EU Member States to ensure effective coordination of intelligence-sharing and inspections.

■ Food: Labelling

Virginia Crosbie:

[23396]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to introduce food labelling that specifies the (a) method of production and (b) country of origin for all raw and processed food.

Victoria Prentis:

Country of origin information is required for all prepacked food where its omission would be misleading to consumers, and is required for fresh and frozen meat of beef, sheep, goat, pigs and poultry, as well as for uncut fresh fruit and vegetables, honey, olive oil and wine. For processed food, where the origin of the primary ingredient is different to that of the food itself and the origin of the food is given, an indication that the origin of the primary ingredient is different or the specific origin must also be provided. In any case, where an indication, in words or pictures, of origin or provenance is given this must be accurate.

For method of production, an indication must be provided on shell eggs when sold as such and in the case of poultry, where it is stated must meet strict criteria. For other species and for dairy products, any claims around method of production either in words or pictures must not be misleading.

We have the opportunity to review food labelling now we are no longer bound by EU rules to ensure information supports UK consumers' food choices and the marketing of quality British food products. This review will be made in the context of the government's food strategy white paper which will be published following Henry Dimbleby's independent review of the food system later this year.

The Government has further committed to consult on what can be done through labelling to promote high standards and high welfare across the UK. There will be a call for evidence launched this summer which will look to address evidence gaps on the impact, costs and deliverability on different types of labelling reforms. This, alongside Henry Dimbleby's review, will inform a full consultation later this year which will seek stakeholder and public views on how welfare information should be presented to consumers.

■ JBS

Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger:

[19493]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will hold discussions with his EU counterpart on the food safety practices of the subsidiaries of JBS, the Brazilian meat processing company, in Europe.

Victoria Prentis:

My Rt Hon Friend the Environment Secretary has no specific plans to hold discussions with his EU counterpart in respect of the food safety practices of the subsidiaries of JBS. However, if any concerns are raised to Defra, he will be happy to pass them to the Food Standards Agency for consideration, as appropriate.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE■ **Ahmed Eriqat and Mai Afaneh**

Wayne David: [\[23087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with the new Government of Israel on ensuring that the bodies of (a) Mai Afaneh and (b) Ahmed Eriqat are returned to their families.

James Cleverly:

The UK continues to urge all sides to treat the dead with respect and Israel to return any bodies that they are holding.

■ **Arctic**

Douglas Chapman: [\[21246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government plans to review the UK's policy on arctic issues prior to COP26.

James Duddridge:

The UK revised its first Arctic Policy Framework, published in 2013, with the publication of "Beyond the Ice: UK policy towards the Arctic" in 2018. This recognised the accelerating rate of climate change in the Arctic and set out the UK's vision and priorities to underpin our commitment to an Arctic that is safe, secure and peaceful. The UK framework is based on three core principles of respect, cooperation and appropriate leadership. This reflects our respect for the sovereign rights of the eight Arctic States, the indigenous peoples and the environment of the region.

Whilst there are no immediate plans to revise the UK's Arctic Policy Framework before COP26, as the Arctic region is now warming at three times the global rate, the UK will maintain a significant contribution to Arctic science and research, focused on understanding the implications of climate change on the Arctic environment, and the livelihoods and economies of Arctic societies. We will highlight the consequences of rapid environmental change in both Polar Regions during COP26.

■ **Beijing Construction Engineering Group International**

Stephen Kinnock: [\[23214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions has he had with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on the role of the Chinese state owned Beijing Construction Engineering

Group International in the delivery of services to (a) local authorities and (b) the public sector.

Nigel Adams:

The Foreign Secretary engages his Ministerial counterparts on a range of issues, including those relating to China. As an open economy, we welcome foreign trade and investment including from Chinese businesses where it adheres to our laws and supports UK growth and jobs. In line with the Integrated Review, we will continue to pursue a positive trade and investment relationship with China, while ensuring our national security and values are protected.

■ **China: Ethnic Groups**

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

[\[23242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the genocide determination by the US Administration in respect of the treatment by China of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities.

Nigel Adams:

It is the long-standing policy of the UK Government that any judgment as to whether genocide has occurred is a matter for a competent court. The US has a different process that is not linked to a court decision. The UK's approach, shared by many countries around the world, does not prevent us from taking action to address serious human rights violations, as we have done in the case of Xinjiang.

On 22 March, the Foreign Secretary announced that the UK had imposed, under the Global Human Rights sanctions regime, asset freezes and travel bans against four Chinese government officials, as well as the Public Security Bureau of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. These measures were taken alongside the US, Canada and the EU, sending a clear message to the Chinese Government that the international community will not turn a blind eye to such serious and systematic violations of basic human rights.

The UK has also led international efforts to holding China to account at the United Nations. On 22 June, a global UK diplomatic effort helped deliver the support of over 40 countries for a statement on Xinjiang at the UN Human Rights Council calling on China to grant unfettered access to the region for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. We also led the first joint statements on this issue at the UN Human Rights Council in June 2020 and the UN General Assembly Third Committee in October 2019. The growing caucus of international concern reflects UK diplomatic leadership.

■ **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

Caroline Lucas:

[\[21863\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the G7 pledge of 13 June 2021 on covid-19 vaccines for covax and low and

middle income countries, whether any doses received from that pledge will (a) incur a charge to (i) lower and (ii) middle income countries and (b) be classed as Overseas Development Aid additional to the current target of 0.5 per cent of GNI in the 2021-22 financial year.

Wendy Morton:

The UK is leading the international response to COVID-19. We have made available new public commitments worth up to £1.3 billion of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to counter the health, economic, and humanitarian impacts of COVID-19, and to support the global effort to distribute vaccines equitably.

The cost of donating the UK's surplus vaccine doses to developing countries will be classified as ODA. This will be in addition to the £10 billion already committed in aid in 2021. Final UK ODA spend will be published in the FCDO's Statistics on International Development report in 2022, including COVID-19 related donations.

■ **Ethiopia: Homicide and Human Rights**

Hilary Benn:

[\[23058\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of reported killings and human rights abuses in Oromo in Ethiopia.

James Duddridge:

We are concerned by frequent incidences of ethnic violence and protests in Ethiopia including in the Oromia region, and especially on the Oromo border with the Amhara region. Regional Presidents and community leaders on all sides must be clear that they do not support ethnic-based violence and discrimination, and on the importance of respecting human rights and safeguarding human life. The Foreign Secretary and I have both raised the importance of respect for human rights and the need for political dialogue. Following the elections of 21 June, we must now see further steps in a transition to more democratic governance in which all of Ethiopia's diverse population can fully engage.

■ **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: CCTV**

Lisa Nandy:

[\[23178\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether a risk assessment has been carried out on the secure holding of CCTV footage within his Department.

Nigel Adams:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[23295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether a risk assessment has been carried out on the secure holding of CCTV footage within his Department.

Nigel Adams:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

■ **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Directors**

Florence Eshalomi:

[\[23406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what payments his Department makes to its non-executive directors; how many times his departmental Board will meet in 2021-22; and what work the non-executive directors undertake.

Nigel Adams:

The FCDO's Non-Executive Directors bring independent challenge and external expertise, an important function as we complete the merger of the two legacy Departments. In line with Cabinet Office guidance, the time commitment expected from Non-Executive Directors is approximately 20 days per year, for which they are paid £15,000 each per annum, except the lead Non-Executive Director who is paid £20,000.

All four are members of the FCDO's departmental board, the Supervisory Board, which meets quarterly. They are also all members of the Management Board, which meets monthly, and between them they chair the Staff Advisory Board and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and sit on the Strategy Committee, Investment Committee, Delivery Committee, Senior Leadership Board, Transformation Board, and People Committee. They also provide support and challenge to teams and projects across the FCDO.

■ **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Email**

Lisa Nandy:

[\[23177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Nigel Adams:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments on use of private emails.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-departments-on-private-email-use>

Lisa Nandy:

[23179]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his departmental IT systems allow officials, advisors and ministers to access private email accounts from their departmental desktop computers and department-issued laptop computers and mobile phone devices.

Nigel Adams:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments on use of private emails. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-departments-on-private-email-use>

It is government policy not to comment on specific technical security controls; however, the incidental personal use of private email accounts from departmental systems is subject to our 'Acceptable Use' policy, in spare time.

Preet Kaur Gill:

[23294]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether any departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Nigel Adams:

I refer the RtHon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments on use of private emails.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-departments-on-private-email-use>

Preet Kaur Gill:

[23296]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his departmental IT systems routinely allow officials, advisors and ministers to access private email accounts from their office desktop computers, department-issue laptop computers and mobile phone devices.

Nigel Adams:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments on use of private emails.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-departments-on-private-email-use>

■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Flags

Andrew Rosindell:

[20329]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what (a) process and (b) criteria his Department uses to determine which flags it flies from its buildings.

Nigel Adams:

[Holding answer 30 June 2021]: The FCDO sets its annual flag flying schedule in November/December for the following year. FCDO Directorates are consulted each year and any new proposals from the overseas network or Other Government Departments are also considered. The decision on whether a proposal is included is based on the relative merits, significance and impact of each proposal set against the existing schedule.

Andrew Rosindell:[\[20330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what flags his Department plans to fly from its buildings in the week commencing 28 June 2021.

Nigel Adams:

[Holding answer 30 June 2021]: In the week commencing 28 June 2021, the FCDO UK estate will only fly the Union flag from its buildings.

Andrew Rosindell:[\[20331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of flying the Commonwealth flag from his Departmental buildings on every day of the year.

Nigel Adams:

[Holding answer 30 June 2021]: The FCDO UK estate flies the Commonwealth flag on the second Monday in March to celebrate Commonwealth Day and our Posts in Commonwealth countries can do so on Commonwealth Day as well where the Post has sufficient flagpoles to do so. It is not the practice to fly the flags of organisations of which the UK is a member on a permanent basis. FCDO flag policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

■ Hamas: Israel**Wayne David:**[\[23088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the recent outbreak of violence between Hamas and Israel, what discussions he has had with his international counterparts on co-ordinating efforts to encourage Hamas to (a) disclose the fate of the two Israeli civilians seized and (b) release the bodies of the two Israeli soldiers claimed as a result of that violence.

James Cleverly:

The UK welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire in Israel and Gaza on 20 May, which is an important step to ending the cycle of violence and loss of civilian life. The UK position is clear: we urge all sides to treat the dead with respect and urge Palestinian authorities to return any bodies they are holding. The UK maintains a no contact policy with Hamas in its entirety.

■ India: Coronavirus**Yasmin Qureshi:****[23150]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what comparative assessment he has made of the vaccination rates for (a) men and (b) women in India.

Nigel Adams:

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UK has championed the importance of rapid, equitable access to safe and effective vaccines. We are among the largest donors to the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC), committing £548 million, which through match-funding leveraged \$1 billion from other donors in 2020. This support has been critical to COVAX's distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to over 130 countries and economies, including India, and to support countries to assess vaccine introduction readiness, develop detailed national deployment and vaccination plans, and strengthen delivery systems.

The Foreign Secretary launched the UK-India Vaccines Hub in December 2020, which has expanded collaboration between our two countries on vaccine trials, regulation, and vaccination strategies. Our two vaccine task forces are in regular contact, discussing the acceleration of the vaccine programme, target groups, dose intervals, and the best strategies to increase vaccine confidence.

According to India's National Statistic platform, CoWIN, as of 29 June 2021: of 326,840,417 total vaccine doses administered, 175,840,487 were administered to men and 150,944,754 to women.

■ Israel: Palestinians**Mr David Jones:****[23103]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the impact of the Government of Israel's demolitions policy on the rights of children in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including their right to education.

James Cleverly:

The UK opposes Israel's demolitions of Palestinian schools and we continue to urge Israel to cease such policies. The Foreign Secretary raised ongoing evictions, demolitions and settlement activity with the Israeli Authorities during his visit to the region on 26 May. The UK is clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. It is essential to have a strong and thriving Palestinian education system to provide opportunities for the next generation. UK aid works to support the Palestinian education system; in financial year 2020/21 we provided £20 million in funding to the Palestinian Authority to support the salaries of education workers in the West Bank. Our ongoing programme support to UNRWA also helps to provide education to children across the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs), including virtually since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr David Jones:

[\[23104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterpart on the escalation in the rate of demolitions of homes and other property belonging to Palestinians on the West Bank.

James Cleverly:

The UK regularly raises the issue of demolitions and forced evictions of Palestinians from their homes with the Government of Israel. The Foreign Secretary raised ongoing evictions, demolitions and settlement activity with the Israeli Authorities during his visit to the region on 26 May. The UK is clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law.

■ **Members: Prosecutions**

John Howell:

[\[21179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what plans he has to make an assessment for the implications for his policies of the debate that took place at the Council of Europe on 21 June 2021 on whether hon. Members should be prosecuted for statements made in exercise of their mandates.

James Cleverly:

The UK fully supports freedom of expression as a human right. We have a long history of promoting freedom of expression globally, including through our commitment to the European Convention on Human Rights. Freedom of expression is an essential quality of any functioning democracy. HMG is committed to continuing championing these values, and recognises the crucial work of the Council of Europe and in particular the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in this sphere, noting that the resolution and recommendations will go to the Committee of Ministers in due course for appropriate review.

■ **Mozambique: Kidnapping**

Brendan O'Hara:

[\[23217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help tackle the abduction of children by terrorists in Mozambique.

James Duddridge:

The UK is deeply concerned by the deteriorating security situation in Mozambique, including abductions of children, and the increasing number of attacks by groups with links to Islamic extremism. At the UN Security Council High-Level Debate on Children in Armed Conflict on 28 June, the UK highlighted and condemned recent reports of children being attacked, kidnapped and forcibly recruited in Cabo Delgado. I also made clear publicly on 26 and 28 March, in the wake of deadly attacks in Cabo Delgado, that we are appalled by such acts and stand with the people of Mozambique. Lord Ahmad, the UK's Minister of State for Human Rights, spoke to

Mozambican Foreign Minister Macamo on 11 March and reaffirmed UK support to help Mozambique fight terrorism.

We are working with the Government of Mozambique to address the root drivers of conflict and instability, including by providing targeted assistance under the framework of a Defence Memorandum of Understanding. The UK also has a regular high-level dialogue with the Government of Mozambique and international partners such as UNICEF about humanitarian and other crises, including the situation in Cabo Delgado. UK Aid has provided £20m of support in Cabo Delgado through UN agencies, ensuring access to food, shelter, water, sanitation and basic health.

■ **Pakistan: Sewage**

Brendan O'Hara:

[\[23216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made for the implications for his policies of the report by Aid to the Church in Need, published 23 June 2021, on the refusal of the Water and Sanitation Agency in Pakistan to close a sewage plant next to the New Covenant School System in the Punjab.

Nigel Adams:

We have not engaged on decisions about this sewage plant, which is a matter for local environmental authorities. The UK's policy towards freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) in Pakistan remains unchanged. We are committed to defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all, and promoting respect between different religious and non-religious communities around the globe. Pakistan is one of the FCDO's human rights priority countries and protecting FoRB is an integral part of our engagement on human rights in Pakistan. The UK Government strongly condemns the persecution of all minorities, including the targeting of innocent people based on their beliefs.

■ **Palestinians: International Assistance**

Theresa Villiers:

[\[23098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency on designing programmes to help Palestinians registered with the agency to achieve economic independence.

James Cleverly:

We are clear that the status of Palestinian refugees must be agreed as part of wider peace negotiations. Until that time, the UK remains firmly committed to supporting the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and Palestinian refugees across the Middle East. We are a leading donor to UNRWA and our economic development programme aims to lift the overall standard of those living in Gaza by increasing trade and job creation and enabling greater movement and access for people and goods.

■ **Shafqat Emmanuel and Shagufta Kausar**

Brendan O'Hara:

[23218]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the findings of the Aid to the Church in Need, published 11 June 2021, that Islamist groups in Pakistan are inciting violence towards Shagufta Kausar and Shafqat Emmanuel who were recently acquitted after being on death row for blasphemy.

Nigel Adams:

The UK Government welcomes the recent acquittal of Shagufta Kausar and Shafqat Emmanuel by the Lahore High Court. We remain concerned about the use of blasphemy laws in Pakistan, which are only compatible with international human rights law in narrow circumstances. It is our longstanding policy to oppose the death penalty in all circumstances as a matter of principle.

We regularly raise at a senior level our concerns about human rights with the Government of Pakistan. Most recently on 23 and 24 June during a visit to Pakistan, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon raised our human rights concerns with Pakistan's Prime Minister, Imran Khan, as well as other senior government ministers including Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, and Pakistan's Human Rights Minister, Shireen Mazari. Lord Ahmad also met with minority communities during the visit to understand better their concerns and the challenges they face.

We will continue to urge the government of Pakistan to guarantee the rights of all people in Pakistan, particularly the most vulnerable, as laid down in the Constitution of Pakistan and in accordance with international standards.

■ **Syria: Sanctions**

Brendan O'Hara:

[23219]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect on the Syrian people of sanctions against Syria.

James Cleverly:

UK Syria sanctions carefully target the Assad regime and its cronies, not the civilian population. The UK does not sanction medicine, medical equipment or medical assistance, and items required to fight the COVID-19 pandemic are not subject to direct restrictions on export, supply, financing or use in Syria. To further guard against unintentional humanitarian impact, UK sanctions provide for a range of exceptions, in order not to obstruct humanitarian activity, or export of medicines or other humanitarian goods.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Abortion: Telemedicine**

Mr David Jones: [23101]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what datasets he will be using as part of the Woman's Health Strategy review in respect of telemedical home abortions other than HSA4 forms submitted by abortion providers; and if he will make a statement.

Helen Whately:

Abortion is not in scope of the Women's Health Strategy.

■ Arthritis: Joint Replacements

Jonathan Ashworth: [16119]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure that people with arthritis can receive support from local health services whilst waiting for joint replacement surgery.

Vicky Foxcroft: [16166]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to promote physical activity programmes that can help people with arthritis stay active and prepare for surgery.

Helen Whately:

NHS England and NHS Improvement are working closely with professional stakeholders, patient organisations and lived experience groups to develop regional and system support strategies for those waiting for surgery. The focus of this work is on those with musculoskeletal conditions, including people with arthritis.

Public Health England (PHE) is also providing training and resources to support healthcare professionals to have conversations with their patients about the benefits of keeping active. The training forms part of the PHE-led Moving Medicine programme, which is available at the following link:

<https://movingmedicine.ac.uk/>

■ Arthritis: Medical Treatments

Vicky Foxcroft: [21292]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect of access to multiple innovative advanced therapies on supporting people with moderate rheumatoid arthritis to achieve disease remission.

Vicky Foxcroft: [21294]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that operational challenges do not delay the timely NICE assessment of new medicines for (a) rheumatoid arthritis, (b) axial spondylarthritis and (c) psoriatic arthritis.

Jo Churchill:

We have made no such assessment. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is the independent body responsible for providing evidence-based guidance for the NHS on whether new medicines represent a clinically and cost-effective use of resources. NICE is committed to publishing draft guidance on all new medicines at the time of licensing with final guidance published within three months of licensing wherever possible. The National Health Service in England is legally required to fund medicines recommended in a NICE appraisal, usually within three months of final guidance.

NICE has recommended a number of medicines for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis for some or all of the eligible patient population, including upadacitinib for treating severe rheumatoid arthritis in December 2020 and filgotinib for treating moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis in February 2021. NICE expects to publish further guidance on treatments for rheumatoid arthritis, axial spondylarthritis and psoriatic arthritis in the next few months.

■ Asthma: Health Services**Jim Shannon:**[\[13941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the report published in November 2020 by the all-party Parliamentary group on Respiratory Health entitled Improving Asthma Outcomes in the UK; and if he will make a statement.

Jo Churchill:

NHS England and NHS Improvement have considered the report, which sets out a balanced appraisal of asthma outcomes in the United Kingdom, including recommendations to achieve improvements.

In line with the report, the Academic Health Science Networks in England, in partnership with the Patient Safety Collaboratives, have been commissioned to work with provider organisations to improve the uptake of all elements as appropriate of the British Thoracic Society's asthma care bundle for patients admitted to hospital due to asthma in England.

An update to the General Practitioner (GP) Contract for 2020-21 to 2023-24 includes an improved Quality Outcome Framework (QOF) asthma domain. This incorporates aspects of care positively associated with better patient outcomes and asthma control. Including, as advised in the report, an assessment of inhaler technique. The QOF also ensures that all GP practices establish and maintain a register of patients with an asthma diagnosis in accordance with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guidance. It includes improved respiratory indicators, as implemented from April 2021.

Breast Cancer: Screening**Jonathan Ashworth:**[\[23193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his plans are for the recovery of breast screening services from the covid-19 outbreak by the end of the 2021-22 financial year.

Jo Churchill:

NHS England and NHS Improvement have advised that National Health Service breast screening providers are working to manage screening invitation and diagnostic backlogs. Amongst a range of initiatives to address recovery, breast screening offices (BSOs) are running extra screening sessions and utilising open invitations to fully optimise available appointments. Some BSOs have already cleared the backlog and others are aiming to do so by the end of 2021/22.

Cancer: Waiting Lists**Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[21986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish a 10-year funded plan to tackle the NHS cancer backlog.

Jo Churchill:

The next Spending Review will set out the Government's spending plans for health and social care for future years. NHS England's Cancer Recovery Plan set out the aims and actions needed to recover from the impact of COVID-19, while the NHS Long Term Plan remains the detailed strategy for cancer services and will continue to apply after the pandemic.

Cancer: West Midlands**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**[\[16024\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking in the West Midlands to ensure that the backlog for cancer treatment is prioritised.

Jo Churchill:

Cancer treatments in the West Midlands have continued throughout the pandemic with little reduction in capacity for chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatments. Work is now ongoing to prioritise surgery and diagnostic procedures, including additional endoscopy resource, further development of rapid diagnostic centres and implementation of community diagnostic hubs. The implementation of breast pain pathways should reduce demand on cancer services and help focus capacity on where it is needed. The elective recovery programme is underway and is focussing on the reduction of backlogs in the highest priority categories of patients, which includes cancer patients.

■ Care Homes

Rachael Maskell:

[\[21279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will ensure that people will not be separated from their spouse or partner if one requires residential social care.

Helen Whately:

The Care Act 2014 specifies that local authorities and their relevant partners have a reciprocal responsibility to cooperate to promote the wellbeing of adults with care and support needs. We recognise how important it is to allow care home residents to maintain contact with their loved ones safely so they are not unduly separated where residential social care is required. Since 17 May 2021, care home residents have been able to nominate up to five visitors, including their spouse or partner, for regular visits into or outside the home and have been able to undertake a number of activities outside the care home without the need to self-isolate on their return. All residents can nominate an 'essential care giver' who will have the same testing and personal protective equipment arrangements as care home staff so that they can also provide extra support.

■ Care Homes: Conditions of Employment

Rachael Maskell:

[\[21277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will place care staff on Agenda for Change pay, terms and conditions.

Helen Whately:

We have no plans to do so. The vast majority of care workers are employed by private sector providers who set their pay, independent of Government.

■ Carer's Allowance

Rachael Maskell:

[\[21280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on uplifting Carer's Allowance.

Helen Whately:

Ministers have regular discussions with their counterparts in the Department for Work and Pensions on a range of issues.

■ Contact Tracing: Data Protection

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[\[23068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken to ensure the privacy and safety of data held by the NHS track and trace application.

Sir Mark Hendrick:

[23069]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that NHS track and trace app complies with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation.

Jo Churchill:

The NHS COVID-19 App uses the minimum possible personal data and all data that could directly identify a person is not stored centrally. Expertise from across the Government and industry, including the National Cyber Security Centre, has been utilised to review the design and the App. Details of the data protection measures are set out in the Privacy Notice and Data Protection Impact Assessment which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-covid-19-app-privacy-information/nhs-covid-19-app-privacy-notice>

There is an ongoing programme of monitoring and assessment to ensure that the App continues to comply with data protection law.

■ Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell:

[20453]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will review the public communications on covid-19 symptoms to ensure all the symptoms of the delta-variant are included.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 28 June 2021]: Experts keep the symptoms under review as our understanding of the virus develops. Anyone experiencing the main symptoms of a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste should obtain a test as soon as possible and immediately self-isolate alongside their household.

Rachael Maskell:

[20455]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what advice he is receiving from SAGE on the rise in infection rates in (a) York and (b) England.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 28 June 2021]: The record of the Scientific Advisory Group on Emergencies' (SAGE) ninety-second meeting on 9 June 2021 shows that there were between 7,000 and 13,000 new infections per day in England.

The Joint Biosecurity Centre's data from the indicates that as of 18 June the weekly case rate in England is 98.4 per 100,000 population and in York, it is 113 per 100,000 population.

■ Coronavirus: Contact Tracing

Mr Steve Baker:

[R] [\[23172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what criteria will need to be met for NHS Test and Trace to be closed; and what estimate he has made of when those criteria will be met.

Jo Churchill:

As NHS Test and Trace transfers into UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), we are planning against a range of scenarios for the trajectory of the pandemic and assessing the appropriate test, trace and self-isolation response. We anticipate testing, tracing and self-isolation requirements to reduce as prevalence reduces. The UKHSA will be fully functional from 1 October.

■ Coronavirus: Screening

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[21227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many covid-19 lateral flow test kits have been ordered online through the gov.uk website each week since 9 April 2021.

Jo Churchill:

The data is not held in the format requested.

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[21228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many test results have been registered online each week after the use of at home covid-19 lateral flow test kits since 9 April 2021.

Jo Churchill:

The data is not held in the format requested.

■ Coronavirus: Vaccination

Colleen Fletcher:

[\[19606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to tackle vaccine hesitancy amongst groups with lower than average vaccination rates in (a) Coventry North East constituency, (b) Coventry, (c) the West Midlands and (d) England.

Nadhim Zahawi:

[Holding answer 24 June 2021]: The COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake Plan takes a local, community-led approach, with support provided from the Government, NHS England and NHS Improvement and local authorities to coordinate and enable action to increase vaccination rates.

In the Coventry North East constituency, National Health Service commissioners provided pop-up vaccination centres and walk-in clinics set up to remove potential barriers in accessibility, promoted through local community champions, the voluntary

sector and faith groups to further drive uptake. In Coventry, health champions, virtual engagements such as live forums, influential black, Asian and minority ethnic community leaders and over 150 community and voluntary organisations have played a key role in building trust.

In the West Midlands, mobile vaccination units in low uptake areas and have held out of hours and specially adjusted clinics to increase accessibility. We have been increasing our engagement with local faith leaders and trusted voices from specific communities alongside third sector partners and community messengers to drive vaccine uptake.

Theresa Villiers: [23095]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to ensure that elderly people who are bed-bound and unable to leave home can receive their covid-19 vaccinations.

Nadhim Zahawi:

As part of our vaccination programme, teams of experienced vaccinators have visited those who are housebound and unable to travel to a vaccination site, including elderly people.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Directors

Florence Eshalomi: [23402]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what financial payments his Department makes to its non-executive directors; how many times his departmental Board will meet in 2021-22; and what work the non-executive directors undertake.

Edward Argar:

Non-executive directors are entitled to an allowance of £15,000 per annum. An additional allowance of £5,000 per annum is available for the lead non-executive director role and the Audit and Risk Committee Chair. The Departmental board meets four times a year. In common with all Government departments, the role of the Departmental Board and the work of non-executive directors is set out in the Cabinet Office's guidance, which is available at the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/role-of-government-non-executives

Florence Eshalomi: [23404]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when his Department's current non-executive directors were appointed; what oversight officials of his Department had of the Ministerial appointments of those non-executive directors; and what assessment was made of the applicants' experience against the requirements for breadth and depth of experience set out in the Cabinet Office guidance on Departmental Boards of November 2014.

Edward Argar:

The Department has three non-executive directors as shown in the following table.

KATE LAMPARD (LEAD NON-EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR)

APPOINTED 2017

Gerry Murphy (Chair of the Audit and Risk
Committee)

Appointed 2014

Doug Gurr

Appointed 2020

Recruitment to non-executive roles is overseen by Departmental officials on behalf of Ministers in accordance with Cabinet Office guidance. Those recruited are selected on the basis of the skills and experience set out in the Cabinet Office's guidance, which is available at the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/role-of-government-non-executives

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Freedom of Information

Jonathan Ashworth:

[23192]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many Freedom of Information requests received by his Department have been sent to the central Cabinet Office Clearing House on Freedom of Information requests for advice on handling in each of the last 12 months.

Edward Argar:

The information requested is not collected centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

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

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

■ Disability: Coronavirus

Vicky Foxcroft:

[20463]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the findings of the report Coronavirus and the social impacts on disabled people in Great Britain: February 2021 published 09 April 2021 by the Office of National Statistics that after allowing for factors such as underlying health conditions, socio-economic and geographic factors, disabled people were significantly more likely to have died from coronavirus between 24 January 2020 and the end of February 2021, what steps his Department is taking to investigate fully the causes of that increased risk of death.

Helen Whately:

New research from the Office for National Statistics and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine published on 16 June 2021, which also considers deaths from COVID-19 by disability status, concludes that a combination of

circumstances explain the increased risk to disabled people but more information is needed to ascertain whether the findings are robust as well as which protective and policy measures should be put in place. We will continue to monitor the latest research and draw on the latest available evidence to inform policy-making.

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[20464\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the report by the Office for National Statistics, Coronavirus and the social impacts on disabled people in Great Britain: February 2021, published 9 April 2021, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that disabled people will be adequately protected in the event of a further wave of covid-19.

Helen Whately:

Rapid vaccine deployment is the most important means to protect people in the event of a further wave of COVID-19. We will continue to prioritise vaccines for those who are deemed to be most at risk, following the advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation. NHS Digital's data shows that as of 13 June, 93.6% of the clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) population, which includes many disabled people, have been vaccinated with at least one dose. Of those, 95.7% have received a second dose.

■ Disinfectants

Alex Norris:

[\[17818\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether hand hygiene, surface cleaning and disinfection will remain in public to help manage the risk of transmissible viruses and illness.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 22 June 2021]: Public Health England are currently reviewing the evidence base on surface transmission of COVID-19 in non-healthcare settings to develop general principles for cleaning and hand hygiene which can be applied to future guidance and the provision of advice.

■ Earwax: Medical Treatments

Thangam Debbonaire:

[\[20432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will reintroduce NHS ear wax syringing services.

Edward Argar:

Decisions about the funding and provision of health services, including ear wax removal, are the responsibility of local clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). They should plan services to meet the needs of local communities including continuing to ensure there is appropriate access to ear wax services.

General practitioner (GP) practices are increasingly recommending self-care methods as the primary means to support the safe removal of ear wax.

However, if a GP practice considers removal clinically necessary, the procedure should either be undertaken at the practice, or the patient should be referred to an appropriate local service depending on the arrangements in place in the local area.

■ Food: Advertising

Greg Smith:

[\[23354\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions he has had with businesses that will be affected by the introduction of restrictions on the promotions and placements of products that are high in fat, salt and sugar.

Jo Churchill:

The Department has regular discussions with the food and drink industry and other stakeholders.

■ Furosemide

Bill Esterson:

[\[21199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the availability of furosemide; and what steps he is taking to help ensure that supply is secured.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 28 June 2021]: We are currently unaware of any issues affecting the supply of furosemide to patients who require it. The Department has well-established procedures to deal with medicine supply issues and works with a range of stakeholders to ensure that the risks to patients are minimised should they arise.

■ Health Services and Social Services: Finance

Rachael Maskell:

[\[21276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he plans to take to integrate health and social care funding.

Helen Whately:

The Better Care Fund (BCF) is the national policy driving forward the integration of health and social care in England. The BCF requires clinical commissioning groups and local authorities to make joint plans and pool budgets for the purposes of integrated care, providing a context in which they can work together, as partners, towards shared objectives. The BCF continues to move integration forward by enabling greater cooperation between health and social care partners at a local level.

We have committed £6.9 billion to the BCF in 2021-2022. The Policy Framework and Planning Requirements for 2021-2022 will be published shortly. Funding decisions on social care beyond 2021-22 will be decided at the next Spending Review.

Hypertension: Drugs

Jim Shannon: [\[22161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people are on medication for high blood pressure, by (a) age and (b) gender.

Jo Churchill:

The information is not held in the format requested.

Ivermectin: Clinical Trials

Lee Rowley: [\[22011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what clinical trials underway in (a) the UK and (b) elsewhere in the world the Government is monitoring for the purposes of assessing the effectiveness of ivermectin as a treatment for covid-19; and what the timeframes are for the reporting of those trials.

Jo Churchill:

The Department is closely monitoring the evidence on the case for ivermectin as a treatment for COVID-19. On 23 June, the PRINCIPLE clinical trial platform announced that ivermectin would be investigated to generate robust data on its effectiveness in treating adults aged 18 years old and over who are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19. We will closely monitor the data from this trial, as well as emerging clinical trials worldwide to expand our evidence-base on the efficacy of ivermectin. We expect that data will become available from trials throughout 2021 and 2022 and will be reviewed by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency.

Joint Replacements: Waiting Lists

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[21912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people waited for more than 18 weeks from referral to treatment for (a) hip replacement and (b) knee replacements by NHS Hospital Trust from April 2020 to April 2021.

Edward Argar:

The data is not held in the format requested.

Ladders: Injuries

Rachael Maskell: [\[23249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of people in a year who visit (a) their GP, (b) an urgent treatment centre and (c) an accident and emergency department as a result of falling from a ladder.

Rachael Maskell: [\[23250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the annual cost to the NHS of falls from ladders.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[23251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of nights stayed in hospital in a year as a result of falls from ladders.

Edward Argar:

We have made no such estimate.

■ Long Covid: Health Services

Colleen Fletcher:

[\[19607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to improve the understanding and treatment of long covid; and what plans he has to provide additional support to people with long covid in (a) Coventry North East constituency, (b) Coventry, (c) the West Midlands and (d) England.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 24 June 2021]: On 15 June, NHS England and NHS Improvement published a new 10-point plan and announced an additional £100 million expansion of care for patients with 'long' COVID-19 in England. This additional investment includes £70 million which will be used to expand treatment and rehabilitation services and establish 15 paediatric hubs to coordinate care for children and young people. One of the paediatric hubs will be set up within Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust. The remaining £30 million will be used for an enhanced service for general practice to support 'long' COVID-19 care and enable consistent referrals.

Research is ongoing to understand the virus and its long-term effects. Over £30 million has already been committed to 'long' COVID-19 research projects and a further £20 million for a further research call which closed on 12 May. Successful applicants will be announced in due course.

■ Mental Health Services: Young People

Theresa Villiers:

[\[23097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to increase young people's access to early support hubs focused on mental healthcare.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

I refer my Rt hon. Friend to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Coventry South (Zarah Sultana MP) on 25 June 2021 to Question [18607](#).

■ Musculoskeletal Disorders: Health Services

Vicky Foxcroft:

[\[21291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the priorities will be of the newly established Best MSK Health programme; and whether that programme will include a focus on supporting people with rheumatoid arthritis to achieve disease remission.

Helen Whately:

The Best MSK Health programme was recently launched by NHS England and NHS Improvement and covers the breadth of musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions, spanning primary, secondary and community services.

One of the four key rheumatology pathways in the Best MSK Health collaborative specifically addresses care for patients with rheumatoid arthritis. This pathway provides for early diagnosis and treatment for people with rheumatoid arthritis and therefore increases their prospects of achieving remission. The pathway also addresses key features in their follow-up care which will help to maintain remission, such as prompt access to clinical staff through advice lines, patient initiated follow up and access to ongoing physiotherapy, occupational therapy and psychological support.

NHS: Software**Munira Wilson:**[\[22209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 14 June 2021 to Question 10673 on NHS: Computer Software, what measures are in place to prevent people who use lateral flow tests at home from failing to input a positive covid-19 test result.

Jo Churchill:

It is not a legal requirement to report the results of lateral flow tests taken at home. Users of the COVID-19 app are encouraged to enter their positive test result by using a one-off code. If this code is not used within 24 hours a reminder is sent.

Obesity**Jim Shannon:**[\[21224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an estimate of how many obesity-related hospital admissions there were in the UK in the last 12 months.

Jo Churchill:

We have made no such estimate as this data is not currently available.

Obesity: Health Services**Alex Norris:**[\[21325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when the NHS Digital Weight Management Programme will be available for all patients who require additional support.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 28 June 2021]: The Digital Weight Management Programme is now available for adults with a diagnosis of diabetes and/or hypertension with a Body Mass Index of more than 30.

It is designed to complement and expand the existing range of weight management services already commissioned through both the National Health Service and local authorities. A digital approach will not be preferable or appropriate for all patients seeking support to lose weight.

■ **Pregnancy: Smoking**

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[22143]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether it is his policy to include a target in the forthcoming Tobacco Control Plan to reduce the prevalence of women smoking during pregnancy to less than 6 per cent by the end of 2022.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 30 June 2021]: The Government remains committed to reducing the prevalence of women smoking during pregnancy. Addressing this issue will be a priority for our new Tobacco Control Plan, which we will publish later this year. A number of targets are currently under consideration, which will support our ambition to be Smokefree by 2030.

■ **Prescription Drugs**

Chris Green:

[23223]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of progress in improving patients' access to new medicines in response to the recommendations of the case for change arising from the NICE Methods Review; and if he will make a statement.

Jo Churchill:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) now aims to publish draft recommendations on all newly licensed treatments around the time of licensing with final guidance within 90 days of marketing authorisation wherever possible. NICE also recommends the vast majority of new medicines that it appraises for some or all of the eligible patient population.

NICE's review of its methods and processes is ongoing. The purpose of the review is to ensure that NICE's methods and processes support the National Health Service to provide high quality care and value for money. NICE consulted on proposals for the case for change in late 2020. NICE expects to consult on the draft programme manual in the summer, with implementation of the changes from early 2022.

■ **Rare Diseases: Drugs**

Liz Twist:

[22190]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of potential changes to NICE's methods and processes to improve access to new medicines for patients with rare diseases.

Liz Twist: [\[22191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of how the Innovative Medicines Fund and NICE Methods and Process Review can together improve access to new medicines for patients with rare diseases.

Liz Twist: [\[22192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent discussions officials in his Department have had with representatives from (a) NICE and (b) NHS England on the potential merits for rare disease patients of the proposed changes to accepting greater uncertainty, as set out in NICE's ongoing review of its methods and processes.

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 has consulted on a range of proposals although it is too soon to comment on the changes that may be implemented. However, NICE expects to consult on the draft programme manual in the summer, with implementation of the changes from early 2022. NICE and NHS England and NHS Improvement are working together on the development of proposals for the Innovative Medicines Fund. We expect NHS England and NHS Improvement and NICE to lead an engagement exercise later this year. A detailed timescale for this will be confirmed in due course.

■ Social Services: Reform

Rachael Maskell: [\[21273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he is making an assessment of the potential merits of making it his policy that the Government's forthcoming social care reforms will include social care services that are universally free at the point of need.

Rachael Maskell: [\[21275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if the Government will make it its policy to provide a national insurance contributions based solution to funding social care.

Helen Whately:

The Government is committed to sustainable improvement of the adult social care system. Our objectives for reform are to enable an affordable, high quality adult social care system that meets people's needs. The reform of social care and its funding arrangements are complex areas and a range of options for how to deliver on this commitment are being considered. We will bring forward proposals in 2021.

Rachael Maskell:

[\[21274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy that every person will have a choice over which residential care home they are placed in under his forthcoming social care reforms.

Helen Whately:

The Government is committed to sustainable improvement of the adult social care system and will bring forward proposals in 2021.

■ **Streptococcus: Screening**

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[23091\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the timetable is for the Group B Strep trial to report.

Ms Nadine Dorries:

The trial was paused last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and it is now expected that the results of the trial will be in the public domain in early 2025.

■ **Test and Trace Support Payment: North West**

Dame Angela Eagle:

[\[23080\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many parents who have had children told to self-isolate as a result of covid-19 have claimed a Test and Trace Support Payment in (a) the North West, (b) Wirral and (c) Wallasey constituency.

Jo Churchill:

The information requested is not currently available as this data is being collated and validated.

■ **Travel: Coronavirus**

Sir Christopher Chope:

[\[21143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what evidence of risk to public health his Department used to inform its decision not to include Sardinia as a green list country for the purposes of international travel under covid-19 restrictions; and what account his Department has taken of that island's covid-19 infection case statistics as at 22 June 2021 in respect of that decision.

Jo Churchill:

[Holding answer 28 June 2021]: Decisions to designate countries, including Italy and therefore Sardinia, 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>

John Howell: [21181]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies on covid-19 passes and certificates of the debate that took place at the Council of Europe on 22 June 2021.

Jo Churchill:

The debate at the Council of Europe highlighted key issues which the Government has considered in its policies regarding COVID-19 certificates. We are working to support United Kingdom residents to demonstrate their vaccination status using the fully secure NHS app. In addition to the digital service, the National Health Service is working on providing individuals with the means to demonstrate their COVID-19 status through non-digital routes to ensure the service is accessible to all.

HOME OFFICE

■ Asylum

Stuart C McDonald: [902034]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the compatibility of the Government's proposals on asylum with the (a) UN Convention on the Status of Refugees and (b) rule of law.

Chris Philp:

The New Plan for Immigration will deliver a fair but firm asylum system. We have a proud history of providing to protection to those who need it, and all policy measures will uphold our legal obligations, including the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

■ Door Supervisors: Licensing

Christian Wakeford: [22216]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of adjusting training requirements in order to re-activate expired door security licenses to address the shortage of security staff in the night time economy sector.

Kit Malthouse:

Door supervisors are licensed by the Security Industry Authority (SIA). The requirement for door supervisor licence holders to achieve a qualification helps to ensure that they and members of the public are kept safe. The SIA sets the appropriate standard of qualifications, taking into account the views of interested parties including the industry, public safety experts and coroners.

The Government does not believe that re-activating expired licences, without those holding expired licences being subject to the normal application process, would be acceptable on public safety grounds. The normal application checks include whether an operative has been convicted of any criminal offences since last being granted a licence.

The SIA recognises the qualifications offered by a number of government-regulated awarding organisations for the purposes of licensing. Neither the Home Office nor the SIA regulates the delivery of training which is the responsibility of dedicated agencies across the devolved administrations.

It is also not the responsibility of the Home Office or the SIA to fund vocational education and training. The SIA is funded by licence application fees and Approved Contractor Scheme fees on the basis of the full recovery of its costs. Funding training for one type of licence applicant would require the SIA to recoup these costs from other applicants.

However, the SIA recognises the importance of supporting licence-holders and applicants, especially during the current exceptional circumstances. The SIA has worked with the training providers' awarding bodies to ensure that training is as flexible and cost-effective as possible. Options include a mixture of self-study, virtual classrooms, and face-to-face training in COVID-19 secure environments in line with Ofqual guidance.

I am pleased to report that there are record numbers of licensed door supervisors on the register of SIA licence holders.

■ Door Supervisors: Training

Christian Wakeford:

[\[22217\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of increasing the efficiency of delivering training courses for licensed door supervisors to address the shortage of security staff working in the night time economy sector.

Christian Wakeford:

[\[22218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of funding or partially funding door security training courses for people wishing to enter the sector to increase the number of available licensed door supervisors.

Christian Wakeford:

[\[22219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to improve the efficiency and accessibility of the new training requirements for door supervisor licenses; and if she will make a statement.

Christian Wakeford:

[\[22221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the number of door security staff available to work in hospitality and late-night venues; and what steps her Department is taking to increase the number of available door security staff.

Kit Malthouse:

Door supervisors are licensed by the Security Industry Authority (SIA). The requirement for door supervisor licence holders to achieve a qualification helps to ensure that they and members of the public are kept safe. The SIA sets the appropriate standard of qualifications, taking into account the views of interested parties including the industry, public safety experts and coroners.

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I am pleased to report that there are record numbers of licensed door supervisors on the register of SIA licence holders.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals

Seema Malhotra:

[\[23205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the stability of the Apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (settled and pre-settled status) website; and how many times that website has crashed in the last month.

Kevin Foster:

Stability assessment

The Apply for the EU Settlement Scheme is monitored continuously to test the health of the service. For each new release, changes to the service are tested in addition to regression tests against a functional and non-functional baseline. Performance testing is assessed against a benchmark which has been agreed within the department. The benchmark is informed by historic models of service usage to ensure our tests are relevant and true to how the service is used.

In addition, the service also uses a queueing service, Queue-It, to manage the demand of the service. When the service is at maximum capacity users are redirected to a virtual waiting room, the service passes users back to the website in a first come, first served order.

Outages

The EU Settlement Scheme has experienced one outage in the last month, on 30 June 2021. Some users had difficulty accessing the application form from 17:50, with the service being unavailable from 18:19 to 18:33, however it then remained available until 9am on 1st July 2021.

■ **Police Custody: Legal Opinion**

Sarah Jones: [\[23304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to end the facility for lawyers to give advice remotely to suspects.

Sarah Jones: [\[23305\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effect of the move to remote legal advice for suspects on the take up of legal advice by those detained and interviewed in police custody.

Sarah Jones: [\[23306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she has taken to ensure that people who received remote legal advice in police custody gave informed consent to receive legal advice in that way.

Sarah Jones: [\[23307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she consulted groups representing or supporting suspects on the change from in-person to remote legal service (a) before and (b) after that change was implemented.

Kit Malthouse:

The Joint Interim Interview Protocol was developed by the CPS, NPCC, Law Society, Criminal Law Solicitor's Association and the London Criminal Courts Solicitors' Association as a temporary requirement at the start of the pandemic to ensure the functioning of the criminal justice system was maintained. An exit strategy from the protocol is ongoing and will continue to be reviewed in accordance with the Government's 'road map' for removing national restrictions. It is for the signatories to this protocol – the NPCC, CPS and solicitors' organisations – to determine how this

should progress. Since stage 3 of the roadmap out of lockdown on 17 May, solicitors have been required to attend interviews with children and vulnerable adults in person and ensure the most vulnerable in society receive in person support.

The Home Office has been chairing a weekly operational meeting with custody partners (Independent Custody Visiting Association, National Appropriate Adult Network, NPCC, Police Federation, Law Society and others) since March 2020. This has allowed for effective communication, feedback and learning to be embedded and the operational impact of the interview protocol to be assessed on a continuing basis.

The NPCC monitor compliance with the interview protocol across force areas to ensure that detainees are providing informed consent to receive remote legal advice. ICVA and NAAN additionally provide regular feedback to the weekly meeting on the implementation of the interview protocol.

Academic research into the long term impacts of remote advice in police custody is ongoing and the Government awaits its findings with interest.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Audit: Coronavirus

Nickie Aiken:

[\[23338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will extend the deadline by which local authorities must publish audited accounts to 30 November 2021 following audit delays caused by the covid-19 outbreak.

Luke Hall:

The Government extended the accounts publication deadline to 30 November for accounting year 2019/20 to deal with delays caused by the Covid-19 outbreak

In line with the recommendations of the Redmond review, regulations extending the deadline from 31 July to 30 September for accounting years 2020/21 and 2021/22 came into force on 31 March

There is a balance to be struck in providing extra time for accounts to be completed and enabling the accounts to be published in a timely manner. The Government will review these arrangement after 2 years.

■ Churches: Coronavirus

Theresa Villiers:

[\[23100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will amend covid-19 restrictions to permit congregations to sing hymns in churches.

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 of 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.

There are currently no plans to allow congregational singing indoors, with or without masks, before Step 4 of the roadmap in England, which would be no earlier than 19 July.

■ EU Grants and Loans

Alan Brown:

[\[21268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much funding the Government has allocated to replace EU funding streams for (a) Scotland, (b) Wales and (c) England; and if he will make a statement.

Luke Hall:

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund will help to level up and create opportunity across the UK in places most in need, such as ex-industrial areas, deprived towns and rural and coastal communities, and for people who face labour market barriers.

Spending Review 2020 set out the main strategic elements of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in the Heads of Terms. We will ramp up funding so that total domestic UK-wide funding will at least match EU receipts, on average reaching around £1.5 billion a year. In addition, the UK Government is providing an additional £220 million funding in 2021/22 through the UK Community Renewal Fund to help local areas prepare for the launch of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The Government will publish a UK-wide investment framework later this year and confirm its funding profile at the next Spending Review.

■ First Time Buyers: Greater London

Sir David Evennett:

[\[21829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many homes were purchased by first-time buyers in (a) Bexleyheath and Crayford constituency, (b) Bexley Borough and (c) Greater London, in each month of the covid-19 outbreak.

Christopher Pincher:

We have taken steps to keep the housing market open during the Covid-19 and allow people to buy, sell and view properties during periods of national restrictions. This is supported by the temporary cut to Stamp Duty Land Tax for home buyers and

underpinned by our guidance for consumers and industry on how the process can operate while minimising the risks presented by the virus.

This Government is committed to helping people get on the housing ladder across the country. Over 717,000 households have been helped to purchase a home since spring 2010 through government-backed schemes such as Help to Buy: Equity Loan and Right to Buy. New initiatives including First Homes, improving shared ownership and a new £11.5 billion affordable homes programme will bring more affordable housing to those who need it.

In addition, the Government has launched a new mortgage guarantee scheme to support a new generation in realising the dream of home ownership. This will increase the availability of 95% loan-to-value mortgage products, enabling more households to access mortgages without the need for prohibitively large deposits.

The English Housing Survey is published annually and reports on housing trends in England, including homeownership rates. Data for 2019-20 is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-housing-survey>. Data for 2020-21 will be published at the end of this year.

Data on the number of first-time buyers using Help to Buy: Equity Loans is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/help-to-buy-equity-loan-scheme-data-to-31-december-2020>. This data indicates that, despite a drop in the earlier stages of the pandemic, the number of first-time buyers who bought a home in England in Q4 2020 using a Help to Buy Equity Loan, exceeds the number in Q4 2019 before the pandemic, with 17,348 and 12,262 first-time buyers respectively. A similar rate of recovery can be seen in the number of first-time buyers in Bexley Borough and across London. Data for Help to Buy: Equity Loan first-time buyer purchases are not published at monthly or parliamentary constituency level.

■ Housing: Construction

Rachael Maskell:

[21288]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how his Department measures whether new build developments are used as a primary or second home; and how his Department assesses the number of homes used mainly for (a) holiday and (b) airbnbs lets.

Christopher Pincher:

Data on whether new build developments are used as a primary or second home are not centrally collected

The English Housing Survey (EHS) gathers data on the number and proportion of households who have a second home. However, we do not collect data on whether the second home was a new-build or otherwise. We have recently published 2018-19 data in our second homes fact sheet, accessible here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2018-to-2019-second-homes-fact-sheet> . It shows that in 2018-19, 772,000 households in England

reported having a second home. 39% of these said they used their second home as a holiday home or weekend cottage.

■ Housing: Coronavirus

Rachael Maskell:

[\[21970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to measure the potential changes in housing need as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Christopher Pincher:

The Government believes that certainty and stability are of paramount importance for our local communities, local authorities and developers following the Covid-19 pandemic and at a time when the planning system will be undergoing significant long-term reforms.

Following consultation, in December, we made changes to our standard method by increasing need in our 20 most populated urban areas to maximise use of existing infrastructure and to support development that reduces the need for high-carbon travel. Our changes allow local areas to get on and plan based on a method and level of ambition that they are familiar with, giving them the best possible chance of ensuring their plans are up to date by December 2023.

■ Housing: Students

Alex Sobel:

[\[21330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to students who (a) reach the end of their tenancies and (b) are required to self-isolate as a result of covid-19, what rights those students have to (i) not be evicted after the end of the tenancy and (ii) move to temporary university accommodation if a landlord requires them to vacate their property for new tenants.

Eddie Hughes:

We strongly urge accommodation providers to be flexible in extending tenancies and delaying moves if tenants are isolating due to Covid-19.

However, under The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Self-Isolation) (England) if someone is legally obliged to move, they are allowed to do so even if isolating.

We know that some universities have temporary accommodation available to those if they are required to move. Students should let their accommodation provider know immediately if they are required to isolate and speak to the university accommodation office.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals**Stephen Farry:****[22045]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether an EU citizen fleeing domestic abuse who misses the EU Settlement Scheme 30 June 2021 deadline and subsequently makes a late application will be eligible for (a) local authority homelessness assistance and (b) a place in a women's refuge, while she waits for a decision on her EUSS application.

Eddie Hughes:

Guidance on eligibility for homelessness assistance in England can be found in chapter 7 of the statutory Homelessness Code of Guidance. This is available at www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities

Individual refugees will make their own decision on whether to accept an EEA citizen who has missed the deadline for the EUSS

The Government has been clear we will take a flexible and pragmatic approach where a person has reasonable grounds for missing the 30 June 2021 deadline for making an application to the EUSS. The Home Office is putting in place measures to expedite the processing of late applications from vulnerable people, (including victims of domestic abuse) using existing processes with charities, their network of grant funded organisations, local authorities and others to identify and expedite such cases.

■ Leasehold: Legal Costs**Justin Madders:****[21253]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department has conducted a recent review of the legal fees charged to leaseholders for the legal process of purchasing the freehold of their property.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government is committed to promoting fairness and transparency for homeowners and ensuring that consumers are protected from abuse and poor service. We are taking forward a comprehensive programme of reform to end unfair practices in the leasehold market.

Under the current system, too many leaseholders find the process for extending their lease or buying their freehold (a process known as enfranchisement) too complex, lacking transparency and prohibitively expensive.

We will reform the process of enfranchisement valuation that leaseholders must follow to calculate the cost of extending their lease or buying their freehold.

The Government will abolish marriage value, cap the treatment of ground rents at 0.1% of the freehold value, and prescribe rates for the calculations at market value. The Government will also introduce an online calculator, further simplifying the process for leaseholders and ensuring standardisation and fairness for all those looking to enfranchise. These changes to the enfranchisement valuation process will

result in substantial savings for some leaseholders, particularly those with less than 80 years left on their lease.

The Law Commission's report on enfranchisement includes recommendations relating to lease extensions, including payment of costs incurred by this process and under the terms of the new lease. We will bring forward a response to these and the other remaining Law Commission recommendations in due course.

■ Levelling Up Fund

Alan Brown:

[\[21267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much funding has been allocated to the Levelling Up Fund; what the closing dates are for each future funding round; and if he will make a statement.

Luke Hall:

The £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund will invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, including regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in cultural and heritage assets.

Applications for the first round of the Levelling Up Fund were due at 12 noon on Friday 18 June 2021.

Further detail on how the Fund will operate from 2022-23 onwards will be set out later this year.

■ Local Government Finance

Steve Reed:

[\[23211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of local authorities that may be unable to set balanced budgets in 2021-22 without a capitalisation direction from his Department.

Luke Hall:

All local authorities set a balanced budget for 2021/22. The Department continues to engage regularly with local government, which includes our ongoing financial monitoring survey and direct contact with councils and their representatives, local Leaders and Chief Executives.

Local authorities that have needed to seek additional support from the Government have done so because of unique circumstances or residual issues, reflecting local circumstances. Where the Department has provided targeted support, these cases have been published on the Gov.uk website.

■ Local Government: Meetings

Anne Marie Morris:

[\[23203\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of returning to in-person

local council meetings during the outbreak of covid-19 on wide and full participation in those meetings.

Luke Hall:

The Government issued Covid-19 guidance to ensure local council meetings take place safely. The guidance actively encourages local authorities to continue to provide remote public access until 19 July, at which point it is anticipated that restrictions on indoor gatherings will be lifted. It is for local authorities to satisfy themselves they have met the necessary requirements and apply the Covid-19 guidance to ensure meetings take place safely.

However, we recognise there may continue to be concerns about the potential risks of holding face-to-face meetings. The Government continues to work with sector representative bodies to ensure that local authorities understand the guidance and are aware of the full range of options available to them.

■ **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: CCTV**

Lucy Powell: [23207]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether a risk assessment has been carried out on the secure holding of CCTV footage within his Department.

Steve Reed: [23209]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether a risk assessment has been carried out on the secure holding of CCTV footage within his Department.

Eddie Hughes:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

■ **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Email**

Lucy Powell: [23206]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether any departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Eddie Hughes:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments [on use of private emails](#) .

Steve Reed: [23208]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether any departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of official business conducted on those email addresses.

Eddie Hughes:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments [on use of private emails](#) .

Steve Reed:**[23210]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his departmental IT systems routinely allow officials, advisers and ministers to access private email accounts from their office desktop computers, department-issue laptop computers and mobile phone devices.

Eddie Hughes:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments [on use of private emails](#).

It is government policy not to comment on specific technical security controls; however, the incidental personal use of private email accounts from departmental systems is subject to our 'acceptable use', in spare time.

■ Owner Occupation**Tulip Siddiq:****[23278]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what the Government's timeframe is for bringing forward legislative proposals on leasehold extension and commonhold reform.

Eddie Hughes:

The Government is committed to promoting fairness and transparency for homeowners and ensuring that consumers are protected from abuse and poor service. The Government is taking forward a comprehensive programme of reform to end unfair practices in the leasehold market. This is a long-term reform programme; it is complex with many interdependencies and will take time to get the detail right. Once it is enacted the effect will be felt for generations and so we are determined this work considers all the implications with care.

Under the current system, too many leaseholders find the process for extending their lease or buying their freehold (a process known as enfranchisement) too complex, lacking transparency and prohibitively expensive.

The Government will reform the process of valuation that leaseholders must follow to calculate the cost of extending their lease or buying their freehold. The Government will abolish marriage value, cap the treatment of ground rents at 0.1% of the freehold value, and prescribe rates for the calculations at market value. The Government will also introduce an online calculator, further simplifying the process for leaseholders and ensuring standardisation and fairness for all those looking to enfranchise. These changes to the enfranchisement valuation process will result in substantial savings for some leaseholders, particularly those with less than 80 years left on their lease. Our reforms to enfranchisement valuation also ensure that sufficient compensation is paid to landlords to reflect their legitimate property interests.

Through these reforms, the length of a statutory lease extension will increase to 990 years, from 90 years (for flats) and 50 years (for houses). Leaseholders will be able to extend their lease with zero ground rent on payment of a premium. Leaseholders will also be able to voluntarily agree to a restriction on future development of their property to avoid paying 'development value'.

The Government has also established a new Commonhold Council as a partnership of industry, leaseholders and Government that will prepare homeowners and the market for the widespread take-up of commonhold. This will take time and close working with consumers and industry, and the Commonhold Council will be the critical first step of this.

We will respond to the Law Commission's remaining recommendations on enfranchisement as well as commonhold in due course.

The measures will be translated into law as soon as possible, starting with the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rents) Bill, which was introduced into Parliament on 12 May. This Bill will make homeownership fairer and more transparent for thousands of future leaseholders, by legislating to prevent landlords under new residential long leases from requiring a leaseholder to pay a financial ground rent. This will be the first part of major two-part legislation to implement leasehold and commonhold reforms in this Parliament.

■ Permitted Development Rights

Steve Reed:

[23212]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 21 June 2021 to Question 16856 on Permitted Development Rights, if he will publish the evidential basis for his answer that the local tax base will be maintained.

Christopher Pincher:

As set out in the response to Question UIN 16856, we believe that facilitating the diversification of our high streets and town centres will help their recovery as the country re-opens.

■ Planning Permission: Appeals

Rachael Maskell:

[21969]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what comparative assessment he has made of the number of planning appeals in local authorities (a) with and (b) without a Chief Planning Officer.

Christopher Pincher:

This information is not collected centrally. The Planning Inspectorate publishes as part of its annual statistics the number of decisions issued per year by local planning authority area. This can be found at Table 5.1 of the Quarterly and Annual Volume Statistics Q4 2020 to 2021: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/planning-inspectorate-statistics>.

■ Property Development

Lee Anderson:

[21338]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps the Government has taken to protect green and open spaces from unsuitable developments.

Christopher Pincher:

The National Planning Policy Framework acknowledges the importance of green and open space and makes clear that where new development is proposed an appropriate amount of public space should be provided. It is also set out that existing open space should not be built on unless there is evidence to demonstrate that it is no longer required, or it will be replaced by equivalent or better provision at a suitable location.

The Framework also sets out how both local and neighbourhood plans allow communities to identify and protect green areas which they consider to be of particular importance, by formally designating these as Local Green Space.

In addition, the National Model Design Code, which we have recently consulted on, sets out proposals for how nature and green spaces should be woven into the fabric of our villages, towns and cities, providing benefits in terms of health and wellbeing, biodiversity, climate and flood mitigation.

■ Rents: Burlington House

Sir Christopher Chope:

[23043]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when the negotiations with the five learned societies resident at Burlington House, Piccadilly, on an affordable rent will be concluded; and if he will make a statement.

Eddie Hughes:

The Department has written to the Learned Societies and has invited them to work with us to find a viable solution that will enable the Learned Societies to deliver public value and remain in situ at New Burlington House. The Department is not yet in a position to state when discussions with the Learned Societies will conclude.

■ UK Community Renewal Fund

Chris Elmore:

[21315]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what plans his Department has to use the methodology for the determination of priority places for the UK Community Renewal Fund to inform the determination of similar areas under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Luke Hall:

The UK Community Renewal Fund will help inform the design of the UK Shared Prosperity through funding of one year pilots, but the funds are distinct in regard to

design, eligibility and duration. Successful UK Community Renewal Fund bids will be for 2021/22 only.

The UK Community Renewal Fund aims to support our communities to pilot programmes and new approaches, aligning national and local provision. We want to use the UK Community Renewal Fund to test greater integration of types of interventions and greater flexibility between investment themes than under EU structural funds.

A big part of testing and trialling means evaluating what works well and what does not so that it can feed into the development of both the places and people portions of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Spending Review 2020 set out the main strategic elements of the UKSPF in the Heads of Terms. The Government will publish a UK-wide investment framework later this year and confirm its funding profile at the next Spending Review

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Beef: Australia

Theresa Villiers:

[\[23096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the oral contribution of the Secretary of State for Scotland of 23 June 2021, Official Report 842, on safeguards to stop the UK market being flooded with beef or experiencing a collapse in price following the trade agreement with Australia, if she will publish details of those safeguards referred to.

Greg Hands:

Any deal the Government signs with Australia will include protections for the agriculture industry and will not undercut UK farmers unfairly or compromise the UK's high animal welfare standards. Beef imports from Australia account for only a tiny fraction of the UK's overall beef imports – around 0.5% in 2020.

Throughout negotiations the Government has listened closely to the concerns of farmers and other stakeholders. The Government has agreed 15 years of capped tariff free imports from Australia. In addition, a general bilateral safeguard mechanism will provide a safety net for industry if they face serious injury from increased imports as a direct consequence of the Free Trade Agreement. This applies to all products.

Further details on what has been agreed is available on gov.uk.

■ Cattle: Australia

Rachael Maskell:

[\[21270\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she has visited an Australian cattle station.

Greg Hands:

The Secretary of State visited Australia in September 2019 and on that occasion did not visit a cattle station.

■ Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership**Emily Thornberry:**[\[22147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to her Department's document, UK Accession to CPTPP: The UK's Strategic Approach, published 22 June 2021, if she will publish the modelling used as the basis for (a) Table 5: Summary of UK macroeconomic impacts, long run change on baseline, (b) Table 6: Summary of UK macroeconomic impacts, long run change on baseline, from static modelling and (c) Table 14: Long-run changes in GDP in full range of baseline scenarios modelled (£ billion).

Emily Thornberry:[\[22148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the UK-US Free Trade Agreement, published on 2 March 2020, if she will publish the full DIT modelling used as the basis for (a) Table 6: Summary of UK macroeconomic impacts, long run change on baseline, (b) Table 7: Impact on UK GDP, by expenditure components of GDP, long run percentage point change and (c) Table 18: Summary of estimated impacts of scenarios (all measures relative to baseline).

Emily Thornberry:[\[22149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to her Department's document, UK-New Zealand free trade agreement: the UK's strategic approach, published on 17 June 2021, if she will publish the full DIT modelling used as the basis for (a) Table 3: Summary of UK macroeconomic impacts, long run change on baseline, (b) Table 4: UK GDP impact, by expenditure components of GDP, long run percentage change on baseline and (c) Table 16: Summary of estimated impacts of scenarios.

Emily Thornberry:[\[22150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to her Department's policy paper, UK-Australia free trade agreement: the UK's strategic approach, published on 17 June 2021, if she will publish the full DIT modelling used as the basis for (a) Table 4: Summary of UK macroeconomic impacts, long run change on baseline, (b) Table 5: UK GDP impact, by expenditure components of GDP, long run percentage change on baseline and (c) Table 17: Summary of estimated impacts of scenarios.

Greg Hands:

The scoping assessments published for the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), Australia, New Zealand, and the United States (US) set out the potential impacts of deals in advance of negotiations, including estimates of the long run impact on Gross Domestic Product, imports, exports, real wages, and welfare.

The full Department for International Trade modelling, including a description of the methods, evidence base and main modelling results are included within the scoping assessments published for Australia, New Zealand, and the US. For CPTPP, further technical detail on the methods used will be published in the forthcoming technical annexes.

Following the conclusion of negotiations, a full impact assessment will be published with updated modelling of the negotiated deals for each of the agreements.

■ Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership: Dispute Resolution

Emily Thornberry: [\[23113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she has (a) sought and (b) received legal advice on the potential effect of the Government's proposals to ban online adverts for foods high in fat, sugar and salt on the UK's exposure to Investor State Dispute Settlement claims under the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, including the currently suspended provisions of that chapter.

Emily Thornberry: [\[23114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the Government's proposals to ban online adverts for foods high in fat, sugar and salt on the UK's exposure to Investor State Dispute Settlement claims under the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, including the currently suspended provisions of that chapter.

Emily Thornberry: [\[23115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what representations she has made to her Cabinet colleagues on the potential effect of the Government's proposals to ban online adverts for foods high in fat, sugar and salt on the UK's exposure to Investor State Dispute Settlement claims under the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, including the currently suspended provisions of that chapter.

Emily Thornberry: [\[23116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she has (a) sought and (b) received legal advice on the potential effect of the Government's review of football governance, ownership and financial sustainability and any policies that may arise from that review on the UK's exposure to Investor State Dispute Settlement claims under the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, including the currently suspended provisions of that chapter.

Emily Thornberry: [\[23117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the Government's review of football governance, ownership and financial sustainability and any policies that may arise from that review on the UK's

exposure to Investor State Dispute Settlement claims under the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, including the currently suspended provisions of that chapter.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[23118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what representations she has made to her Cabinet colleagues on the potential effect Government's review of football governance, ownership and financial sustainability and any policies that may arise from that review on the UK's exposure to Investor State Dispute Settlement claims under the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, including the currently suspended provisions of that chapter.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[23119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether she has (a) sought and (b) received legal advice on the potential effect of (a) the review of the Gambling Act 2005 and (b) any changes to gambling legislation that may arise from that review on the UK's exposure to Investor State Dispute Settlement claims under the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, including the currently suspended provisions of that chapter.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[23120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of (a) the review of the Gambling Act 2005 and (b) any changes to gambling legislation that may arise from that review on the UK's exposure to Investor State Dispute Settlement claims under the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, including the currently suspended provisions of that chapter.

Emily Thornberry:

[\[23121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of (a) the review of the Gambling Act 2005 and (b) any changes to gambling legislation that may arise from that review on the UK's exposure to Investor State Dispute Settlement claims under the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, including the currently suspended provisions of that chapter.

Greg Hands:

Acceding to the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) will not prevent the UK regulating in the public interest, including in relation to public health, football governance and gambling. CPTPP explicitly reaffirms states' right to regulate under international law. It also protects this right through numerous safeguards, including procedural provisions to minimise the impacts of frivolous and unsuccessful Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) claims faced by states.

■ Department for International Trade: CCTV**Emily Thornberry:** [\[23131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent risk assessment has been carried out on the secure storage of CCTV footage recorded within her departmental estate.

Greg Hands:

It is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

■ EU External Trade: China**Ms Nusrat Ghani:** [\[23244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what discussions she has had with her European counterparts on freezing trade or bilateral trade discussions with China following the sanctions placed on hon. Members of Parliament and the EU's freezing of the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment.

Greg Hands:

China's attempt to silence those highlighting violations of human rights in Xinjiang is unwarranted and unacceptable. The Prime Minister has made clear that the freedom to speak out in opposition to human rights violations is fundamental and HM Government stands firmly with those who have been sanctioned. Whilst the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment is a matter for the EU, the United Kingdom will continue to work alongside the EU and other partners to send the clearest possible signal of the international community's serious concern and our collective willingness to act.

■ Forced Labour**Ms Nusrat Ghani:** [\[23243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the commitment in the G7 Communique to work together including through our own available domestic means and multilateral institutions to protect individuals from forced labour and to ensure that global supply chains are free from the use of forced labour, what steps his Department has taken since the G7 to implement that commitment.

Greg Hands:

G7 Trade Ministers aim to identify areas for strengthened cooperation towards the eradication of forced labour in global supply chains when they meet again in October.

We are convening a technical discussion with G7 partners to share data and evidence and develop recommendations based on best practices to prevent, identify, and eliminate forced labour in global supply chains ahead of the meeting.

■ Pigmeat and Sheep Meat: Australia

Caroline Lucas:

[\[21185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether (a) lamb from mulesed sheep flocks and (b) pork from pigs reared in sow stalls will be permitted to enter the UK under the terms of the newly agreed tariff rate quotas as part of the UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement.

Greg Hands:

The UK has secured ground-breaking provisions on Animal Welfare in its deal with Australia going further than any free trade agreement in force anywhere in the world, and will work with them closely – including internationally – to progress animal welfare standards.

Maintaining the UK's high domestic standards and including protections for the agriculture industry is a red line in its trade negotiations. The UK already imports meat from Australia and imports will continue to meet the same UK food safety and biosecurity import standards as they did before.

■ Trade Agreements: Agriculture

Jim Shannon:

[\[21222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will make it her policy to ensure that the UK agricultural sector is safeguarded when legislating for any trade deals.

Greg Hands:

HM Government will stand firm in trade negotiations to ensure any future trade deals live up to the values of farmers and consumers across the United Kingdom. The Government will not lower standards as it negotiates new trade deals.

The Government is also clear that its trade deals will not mean a flood of cheap imports. In addition, under the UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the Government has provided multiple forms of protection for the agricultural sector, including Tariff Rate Quotas, product specific safeguards, and a general bilateral safeguard mechanism which will provide a safety net for industry if they face serious injury from increased imports as a direct consequence of the FTA.

■ Trade Agreements: Australia

Rachael Maskell:

[\[21269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many times she visited Australia (a) in person and (b) virtually to discuss a trade deal between Australia and the UK; and how many meetings has she attended in the UK about the trade deal since December 2019.

Greg Hands:

The Secretary of State for International Trade has visited Australia once in person in September 2019. The Secretary of State has held, and continues to hold, regular meetings with the Australian Trade Minister, as was the case with his predecessor.

The Secretary of State has and continues to have regular meetings with a wide range of stakeholders about the UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement.

■ Trade and Agriculture Commission

Daisy Cooper: [\[23346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, when she plans for the new Trade and Agriculture Commission to be established.

Greg Hands:

On 7 June, the Department launched a call for expressions of interest for expert advisors to join the new Trade and Agriculture Commission. The Commission will be established in time to scrutinise the planned Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Australia, to inform parliamentary scrutiny following signature. It will also scrutinise other planned FTAs.

JUSTICE

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[902035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to tackle the level of cases that are withdrawn due to (a) court delays and (b) case backlogs.

Chris Philp:

In the courts we have taken decisive action to address the impact of the pandemic on how quickly cases can be heard. We spent over £250 million on recovery last financial year to roll out new technology for remote hearings, make the court estate COVID-secure, and set up 60 new Nightingale courtrooms. This has enabled disposals to return to pre-pandemic levels in the Crown Court, which is over 2000 cases per week, and we completed over 7,000 jury trials last year.

Criminal courts continue to recover from the pandemic, with magistrates' backlogs having fallen by 70,000 since last summer and our figures show that in recent weeks the outstanding caseload in the Crown Court has begun to reduce.

We will continue to address the outstanding caseload and reduce delays by increasing capacity in our physical estate, running Crown Courts to the fullest possible extent, using every judge and courtroom to maximise court sitting days.

Supporting victims and witnesses is a top priority for the Government. We are acutely aware of the risk of victims dropping out of the criminal justice process and we have listened carefully to stakeholders and worked across government to build an understanding of the long-term causes of victim attrition.

We continue to monitor the impact of Covid-19 on victims and victim attrition. We know that victims of certain crime types and in certain geographical areas have been particularly impacted during this period.

In 2021-22, we will provide c.£151m for victim and witness support services, £27m of which will be used to increase the number of independent advisors for sexual violence and domestic abuse victims by over 40 per cent. Beyond significant increases in funding to victims' services, the Government has taken a range of actions to ensure that victims and witnesses receive the support they need in the face of delays caused by the court backlogs.

■ **Bronzefield Prison: Homelessness**

Ms Lyn Brown:

[\[23138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to ensure provision of homelessness prevention support work in HMP and YOI Bronzefield from 26 June 2021 is on a basis no less than that provided by the previous Community Rehabilitation Company contract.

Alex Chalk:

The Hon Member for West Ham will be aware that the changes we have made to the probation system include significant changes to our approach to meeting the needs of people in custody.

As a result of these changes and to ensure women held in HMP Bronzefield receive the support they need to reduce the risk of them being released without an address, those staff based in Bronzefield who have transferred to the Probation Service will play the lead role in working with women to assess their needs and ensure that appropriate action is undertaken to meet their resettlement needs, in particular accommodation.

What is new is that we have also commissioned rehabilitative services for women from specialist providers who are based in the community and have the links that will help women when they are released. Whilst these providers may provide this support either by visits or by phone/ video-links, women will benefit from the local knowledge of the housing options in the area to which they will be released and will also have ongoing support from the same organisation on release. This enables continuity of support from prison to community and a prompt response if circumstances change.

Whilst these new arrangements will take time to embed, we believe that this approach will provide the support women need in making a successful transition from custody to community. We will be reviewing how the model is operating over the coming weeks and the Department will continue to work with all our commissioned suppliers, prisons and other partners to try to ensure the resources we have are used as effectively as possible to meet priority needs.

■ **Domestic Abuse: Prosecutions**

Yvette Cooper:

[\[23063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many domestic abuse cases have been prosecuted as common assault under Section 39 of Criminal Justice Act 1998 in each

year since 2015; and what that figure is as a proportion of all domestic abuse cases in each year since 2015.

Kit Malthouse:

Statistical information held centrally by the Ministry of Justice on the Court Proceedings Database does not include the circumstances behind each case beyond the description provided in the statute – in this case common assault or battery. It is not possible separately to identify from this centrally held information how many people were convicted for common assault in a domestic abuse context. This detailed information may be held on court records but is not reported centrally to the Ministry of Justice. As such, the information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ **Ministry of Justice: CCTV**

Mr David Lammy: [23037]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department has carried out a risk assessment of the secure holding of CCTV footage filmed within his Department.

Chris Philp:

As has been the practice of successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Email**

Mr David Lammy: [23036]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether any departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Mr David Lammy: [23038]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department permits (a) officials, (b) special advisors and (c) Ministers of his Department to access private email accounts from their office desktop computers, department-issued laptop computers or department-issued mobile phone devices.

Chris Philp:

I refer the Rt. Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments [on use of private emails](#).

It is government policy not to comment on specific technical security controls; however, the incidental personal use of private email accounts from departmental systems is subject to our IT Acceptable Use Policy, in spare time.

■ **Prisoners' Release: Females**

Ms Lyn Brown: [23139]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to ensure the changes to the contracts for probation services that took place on 26 June 2021 do not result in

increasing risks of (a) homelessness, (b) destitution and (c) non-continuation of medical treatment including substance misuse treatment for vulnerable women prison leavers.

Alex Chalk:

Ensuring a safe, stable transition to the new unified probation model has been our key priority as contracts with Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) come to an end. We have worked to support that through our overall approach to transition, which has meant transferring staff, caseloads and ways of working to the new Probation Service as is, to support continuity in how offenders are supervised and supported.

From 26 June 2021, new contracts for specialist women's services are in place across the 12 probation regions in England and Wales. To prevent gaps in delivery of services, we have sought to ensure that planned work delivered by previous suppliers was completed before 26 June, and that, where the same provider is delivering the service pre and post-26 June, the women receiving those services experience continuity of delivery. We have also made referrals well in advance of the first day of new contracts for women who presented a high risk of harm, in order to enable new suppliers to prioritise these cases for early appointments. For women who require accommodation support pre-release and who have 14 days or less to serve when the referral is made, the new suppliers are required to make an initial response within 24 hours of receiving the referral.

Alongside this, HMPPS is continuing to fund Homelessness Prevention Teams (HPTs) to help find accommodation for offenders upon release, which were originally established as part of the response to COVID-19. These teams have been very successful in securing temporary accommodation outcomes, including short-term rented accommodation and building new local partnerships with local authorities and housing partners. The HPTs continue to operate as part of the unified model.

Probation and Prison Service pre-release staff working in prisons will continue to provide finance benefits and debt support for women before release, including being able to address the issue of identification. The majority of former 'Through the Gate' staff who delivered this support to people in prison are now part of the Probation Service to enable this service to be continued. The commissioned services now in place to support women include provision for finance, benefit and debt support where needs remain outstanding after release. In the longer term, probation practitioners will be responsible for assessing needs pre-release enabling more time to make plans to address the needs a person leaving prison has as part of this transition.

Health care teams within prisons continue to have responsibility for ensuring there is a continuity of care either side of release, including that people in prison are registered with a GP. Staff based in the prison can continue to support people in prison to access primary health care. Where there are outstanding needs coming up to release, women's services commissioned by probation regions are able to support women after release to engage with support services including primary health care and counselling.

■ Prisons: Wales**Ruth Jones:** [21334]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the number of deaths in Welsh prisons since 2016.

Alex Chalk:

We publish the number of deaths in prison custody in England and Wales as part of the Safety in Custody quarterly statistics available in the deaths data tool at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics>

NORTHERN IRELAND**■ Northern Ireland Office: CCTV****Louise Haigh:** [23269]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether a risk assessment has been carried out on the secure holding of CCTV footage within his Department.

Mr Robin Walker:

Yes, a full risk assessment was carried out when CCTV cameras were first installed and all associated risks are routinely reviewed. All footage is held securely.

■ Northern Ireland Office: Email**Louise Haigh:** [23268]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether any Department business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Mr Robin Walker:

It is Northern Ireland Office policy that all official business is conducted using official email addresses on corporate IT and mobile devices.

■ Northern Ireland Office: Freedom of Information**Fleur Anderson:** [23355]

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

Mr Robin Walker:

The Northern Ireland Office does not hold this information centrally, and it can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

The Northern Ireland Office has referred requests to the Cabinet Office Clearing House where appropriate and in line with the published criteria. This is available on

the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-and-freedom-of-information) website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-and-freedom-of-information>.

SCOTLAND

■ Energy: Scotland

Alan Brown:

[21266]

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to the Answer of 16 June 2020 to Question 13125 on Energy: Scotland, what his planned timescale is for the publication of details of meetings he has had with representatives of Scottish renewables companies in 2021; and what discussion she has had with representatives of Scottish renewables ahead of COP26.

Mr Alister Jack:

I refer the Hon Gentleman to my answers of 9 and 16 June to questions 10486 and 13125 respectively. The government publishes details of Ministerial meetings with external organisations on a quarterly basis. Information for the period January to March 2021 is due to be published on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) in July 2021.

■ Scotland Office: Freedom of Information

Fleur Anderson:

[23356]

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

Mr Alister Jack:

The Office has referred Freedom of Information requests for advice on handling to the Cabinet Office's clearing house for Freedom of Information requests since 2016, in accordance with the referral criteria which are available at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-and-freedom-of-information>.

TRANSPORT

■ Aviation: Coronavirus

Drew Hendry:

[23246]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions his Department has had with the aviation industry on the number of flights being undertaken with two metre social distancing in place between different households and bubbles.

Robert Courts:

We continue to engage with the aviation sector on a regular basis, including on social distancing and other health measures. We consulted with the sector prior to developing the Government's operator and passenger guidance and advised airlines

to carry out a risk assessment and implement appropriate risk controls where social distancing was not possible. Wearing a face covering, which is mandatory on-board aircraft, can play a role in helping to prevent transmission of COVID-19, as can regular hand-washing and sanitisation.

Passengers are seated facing forwards in the same direction on board aircraft, which avoids the increased transmission risk of being seated face to face. In addition, air conditioning systems on modern aircraft do filter cabin air every few minutes. These filters are very effective at capturing airborne microbes in the filtered air and, when coupled with the drawn in fresh air, can help to mitigate the longer-range risk of transmission.

■ **Cycling: Infrastructure**

Rachael Maskell:

[\[21961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the accessibility of cycling infrastructure for use by accessible modes of active travel.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department has not made any such assessment. Local authorities are required by their Public Sector Equality Duty to consider the particular needs of those with protected characteristics, including disabled people, in designing their cycling and walking infrastructure. The Department's Cycle Infrastructure Design Guidance (Local Transport Note 1/20) emphasises the importance of high-quality and accessible cycle infrastructure. It also recommends that an Access Audit be undertaken of all cycling and walking schemes to ensure that they meet the needs of those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. This may form part of an Equality Impact Assessment.

■ **Department for Transport: Email**

Jim McMahon:

[\[23286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether any departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Departmental business is conducted through the official DfT email systems. Any correspondence to external addresses will be directed to our official DfT channels.

All DfT staff and ministers have DfT email accounts and sign up to acceptable use and cyber security operating policies, which state that departmental business must be conducted via DfT email addresses, and not personal email or other web-based mail system.

Jim McMahon:

[\[23287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether a risk assessment has been carried out on the secure holding of CCTV footage within his Department.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The Department and its Executive Agencies have risk assessments and policies in place for the usage of CCTV and the secure storage of CCTV footage. All CCTV systems have had a Data Protection Impact Assessment undertaken which includes a review of controls for the usage and secure storage of CCTV footage.

Electric Vehicles: Charging Points**Kerry McCarthy:****[23093]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding has been allocated for electric vehicle charging infrastructure to each local authority in England in the financial year 2020-21 (a) in total and (b) by the scheme through which it was issued.

Rachel Maclean:

Funding spent on electric vehicle charging infrastructure through the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme (EVHS) and the Workplace charging Schemes (WCS) are provided to households and business respectively rather than being allocated to local authorities, these schemes are demand led.

Funding for the On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) is allocated to local authorities. The ORCS allocated over £6.5m to English local authorities for charging infrastructure in the 2020-21 financial year.

Statistics on the grant values allocated for the EVHS, WCS and ORCS by local authority area can be found at the following link;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/electric-vehicle-charging-device-grant-scheme-statistics-april-2021/electric-vehicle-charging-device-grant-scheme-statistics-april-2021>

Electric Vehicles: Disability**Jamie Stone:****[23298]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that electric vehicle infrastructure is accessible for disabled people.

Rachel Maclean:

The Government understands the importance of car ownership to many people with disabilities, with research indicating that nearly three in five disabled people use a private car three or more times per week. We recently conducted a call for evidence on accessibility in our consumer experience at public chargepoints consultation.

The consultation gathered evidence for any interventions needed for consumers using the public charging infrastructure. This closed on 10 April and we are intending to publish the government response to this consultation in the autumn and lay legislation relating to open data, payment methods and reliability, later this year.

The responses provided for the call to evidence on accessibility are being reviewed. We are working closely with Motability to develop clear accessibility standards for public EV chargepoints to ensure that consumers can find the right chargepoints for

their needs, for electric vehicle drivers with visible and non-visible disabilities. Drivers who lease a vehicle through the Motability Scheme are able to apply the OZEV Plug-in Car Grant of up to £2,500, or Plug-in Van Grant of up to £3,000, to an eligible vehicle and also apply for the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme (EVHS) which provides a grant of up to £350 towards the purchase and installation of a home chargepoint.

The Government will continue to monitor market developments to determine whether any significant gaps in charging infrastructure provision emerge in the medium term and whether there may be a case for direct central government support in areas of market failure, which may include accessibility.

■ Electric Vehicles: Rural Areas

Jamie Stone:

[\[23299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to (a) encourage and (b) support the use of electric vehicles among lower wage earners resident in rural and semi-rural settings.

Rachel Maclean:

The Government has announced £2.8 billion to support industry and drivers to make the switch to zero emission vehicles. Reforms to our home and workplace charging schemes will focus support on those that need it most, including those living in flats, rental and leasehold accommodation, SMEs and charities. We will publish an electric vehicle Infrastructure Strategy in 2021 to set out the vision and action plan for charging infrastructure rollout needed to achieve the 2030/35 phase out successfully, this will consider and address both urban and rural charging needs. Electric vehicles can also be cheaper to run: It costs from as little as 1p/mile to run a new electric vehicle, compared to around 10p per mile for new diesel/petrol vehicles. This will be valuable for rural drivers who travel longer distances than average. Electric vehicle drivers also benefit from a favourable tax regime that rewards cleaner vehicles. As manufacturers produce more electric vehicles, we expect their cost to come down over the coming years and for more vehicles to become available on the second hand market.

■ Railway Stations: Tickets

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:

[\[22195\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the William-Shapps Plan for Rail, what plans his Department has to continue to consult passengers on ticket office closures.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

Schedule 17 of the Ticketing and Settlement Agreement (TSA) sets out the process for making changes to ticket offices, which includes changing the hours they are open or proposing any closures. The TSA requires consultation with Transport Focus and

London Travel Watch. This agreement is still in place and rail operators must follow this as it is a requirement of their Office of Rail and Road operating licence.

■ Railways: Season Tickets

Peter Kyle:

[\[23276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 28 June 2021 to Question 21298, Railways: Season Tickets, what comparative assessment he has made of the cost-per-day savings offered to two and three days a week commuters travelling from Hove to London and back in a day using (a) a flexible season ticket and (b) annual season ticket.

Chris Heaton-Harris:

The flexible season ticket is a national product, priced to provide better value and convenience for commuters travelling two to three days a week.

For most 2 and 3 day a week commuters, the flexible season ticket will offer savings against buying daily tickets or traditional seasons, provided that they are following this commuting pattern.

For those with different commuting patterns, existing tickets such as traditional seasons or dailies may be the best choice.

Commuters should always consider which product best suits their journey and travel pattern. This is easier than ever with the updated season ticket calculator.

■ Road Traffic Offences

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:

[\[23300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the timescale is for implementing Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to enable traffic authorities outside London to carry out civil enforcement of moving traffic offences including those needed for school streets schemes.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:

[\[23301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if his Department will issue guidance to local authorities on the civil enforcement powers set out in Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle:

[\[23302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of the civil enforcement of moving traffic offences by traffic authorities outside London on the prevention of lorries getting stuck on narrow roads or junctions, or causing damage to pavements and bridges by enforcing height, width and length restrictions.

Rachel Maclean:

We plan to introduce the regulations to commence Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 in December. Once the powers are commenced, local authorities wanting to

undertake civil enforcement of moving traffic contraventions, will need to apply to the Secretary of State for an Order to be made, designating the council as the enforcement authority in their area.

Work is underway on drafting statutory guidance, which we plan to publish in tandem with the regulations coming into force. In addition, we will issue advice to local authorities shortly, to enable them to prepare their applications in the meantime, ready for when the powers come into force.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 specifies those traffic signs to which moving traffic enforcement will apply. This includes the sign indicating prohibition of goods vehicles for environmental reasons; such as narrow roads unsuitable for large vehicles, or to protect residents from the nuisance caused by lorries in residential streets. The sign still applies to such vehicles when driven unladen, or when only the cab section of an articulated vehicle is being driven, whether or not its weight is then below that shown on the sign. There are no plans to expand the list of applicable traffic signs to include structural weight limits, or vehicle height, width, length limits, which will remain enforceable by the police.

■ Roads: Capital Investment

Kerry McCarthy:

[23094]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of the £27 billion the Government announced for the Road Investment Strategy 2 programme is being allocated to (a) ongoing road construction projects, (b) new road construction projects, (c) road maintenance for existing roads, (d) research and development into low carbon road building materials and techniques and (e) other spending.

Rachel Maclean:

The Government has made £27.504 billion available to Highways England from 2020 to 2025 for the Strategic Road Network (SRN) for Road Investment Strategy 2. This includes £14.264 billion for capital enhancements, covering ongoing and new schemes and £5.825 billion for the capital cost of operations, maintenance, renewals and business costs. How this is allocated into further sub-categories of spend is a matter for Highways England and is reported by them in their published delivery plan and annual updates. The remainder of the total is for operational resource costs, designated funds and preparing for Road Investment Strategy 3.

■ Roads: Hedgehogs

Derek Twigg:

[23065]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many applications for hedgehog road signage, warning motorists of animal hazards in the road, has he received from local authorities in the last three years; and how many of those applications have been approved by his Department.

Rachel Maclean:

The Department has received six applications for the small wild mammal traffic sign in the last three years. None of these applications have been approved.

■ **Travel: Coronavirus****Neil Coyle:**[\[22168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what support he is providing to maintain jobs in the travel industry during the covid-19 outbreak.

Robert Courts:

The Government recognises the challenging circumstances facing the aviation and travel sectors because of Covid-19 and firms experiencing difficulties can draw upon the unprecedented package of measures announced by the Chancellor.

In total, we estimate that by the end of September 2021, the air transport sector will have benefitted from around £7bn of Government support since the start of the pandemic. This includes support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), which was extended until 30 September 2021. From official statistics from HM Revenue and Customs, we estimate around 50% of air transport sector employees are currently furloughed using the CJRS.

In February the Department for Transport also launched the Aviation Skills Retention Platform which allows former and current aviation sector workers who are currently out of work to register their skills, so they can be notified of relevant jobs opportunities, advice and upskilling opportunities.

Mrs Pauline Latham:[\[23159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the (a) Joint Biosecurity Centre's most recent risk assessment data for the entire covid-19 traffic light list and (b) current risk assessment status of all countries and destinations on the green, amber and red lists.

Robert Courts:

The traffic light system categorises countries based on risk to protect public health and the vaccine rollout from variants of COVID-19. The Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) produces risk assessments of countries and territories. Decisions on Red, Amber or Green List assignment and associated border measures are taken by Ministers, who take into account the JBC risk assessments, alongside wider public health factors. Key factors in the JBC risk assessment of each country include:

- genomic surveillance capability
- COVID-19 transmission risk
- Variant of Concern transmission risk

A summary of the JBC methodology is published on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk), alongside key data that supports Ministers' decisions.

Current risk assessment status of all countries are reflected in the traffic light system. Countries are categorized according to their the level of risk with Green indicating low-risk, Amber indicating medium-risk and Red indicating high-risk.

Catherine West:

[\[23281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish all relevant sources of information that were used alongside the Joint Biosecurity Centre's publication of data used to inform Ministerial decisions in relation to the international travel traffic-light risk assessments on (a) 3 June 2021 and (b) 24 June 2021.

Robert Courts:

A summary of the JBC methodology has been published on GOV.UK, alongside key data from publicly available platforms such as GISAIID, the World Health Organization and host government websites, in relation to the traffic light risk assessments for the 3 and 24 June 2021.

Catherine West:

[\[23282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to Portugal and Malta introducing new obligations on arrivals, what discussions he is having with his European counterparts on international travel and requirements for vaccination for children aged 12 to 17.

Robert Courts:

Department for Transport ministers and/or officials have met with counterparts from Portugal, Malta and the EU to discuss the safe and sustainable unlocking of international travel. Our Embassies in these countries, and Mission to the EU are also very active in ensuring that we share relevant information, including on vaccination requirements.

We continue to work with international partners as we seek to cautiously balance the reopening of international travel with managing the public health risks.

■ Travel: Quarantine

Mrs Pauline Latham:

[\[23160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his announcement of 24 June 2021, if he will publish the criteria that need to be met in order for the Government to proceed with the removal of quarantine requirements for arrivals from amber list countries who are fully vaccinated against covid-19.

Robert Courts:

There are a number of factors to be considered, including Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's view on the participation of children in the vaccine programme, as well as consideration for travellers who are exempt from vaccination, such as those who are unable to be vaccinated for medical reasons or those on clinical trials. Further detail will be set out shortly on these issues and how and when it will be operationalised.

Mrs Pauline Latham:

[\[23161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to his announcement of 24 June 2021 on future plans to exempt arrivals who are fully vaccinated against covid-19 from quarantine when travelling from amber list countries, what the public health justification is for introducing that policy in phases starting with UK residents.

Robert Courts:

The recognition of vaccine status at ports and airports is currently available for UK citizens through the NHS app or an accessible letter, but it is currently less easy to prove for someone from overseas visiting the UK. The government is keen to work constructively with international partners to reopen travel in a sustainable way for travellers and industry.

Further detail will be set out next month including the rules which will apply to children, vaccine clinical trial volunteers and those unable to be vaccinated, how we will operationalise this approach at the border, and the dates on which any changes will come into effect.

TREASURY

■ Air Passenger Duty: Regional Airports

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[23090\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of the rate of air passenger duty on regional airports.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Government recently consulted on aviation tax reform. As part of the consultation, the Government outlined its initial view that the effective rate of Air Passenger Duty (APD) on domestic flights should be reduced in order to support Union and regional connectivity and that the number of international distance bands should be increased in order to align APD more closely with our environmental objectives.

The consultation sought evidence on the potential impacts of these proposals, including on regional air routes, and closed on 15 June. The Government is currently reviewing responses and will update in due course.

■ Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Holiday Leave

Anne Marie Morris:

[\[23200\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps the Government plans to take to support businesses that are responsible for holiday pay accrued while staff were on furlough during the covid-19 outbreak.

Anne Marie Morris:

[\[23201\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment has been made of the impact of employers being responsible for holiday leave accrued by staff while on furlough, on small businesses.

Jesse Norman:

The CJRS operates within the employment law framework. Rights as an employee are not affected by being on furlough. Existing legislation means that furloughed employees continue to accrue leave as per their employment contract.

In terms of wider support, businesses have access to the Recovery Loan Scheme until 31 December 2021. Eligible businesses will continue to benefit from business rate reliefs until 31 March 2022, and as of 1 April have access to the one-off Restart grant of up to £18,000. In addition, over £2 billion of discretionary business grant funding has been provided to local authorities via the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) fund, including the £425 million top-up announced at the Budget.

■ Funerals: Pre-payment

Rosie Cooper:

[\[23134\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps his Department is taking in preparation for the upcoming Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) regulations of prepaid funeral plans to ensure that people who have purchased plans from suppliers that fail to receive FCA approval will receive an equal plan from another provider or get a refund.

John Glen:

Following consultation with industry the Government concluded that the majority of providers operating in the pre-paid funeral plan market are well run with properly funded trusts.

The Government also found that the reports of poor practices have largely been attributed to providers that had chosen not to register with the sector's voluntary regulatory body – the Funeral Planning Authority – thereby demonstrating that a voluntary system of regulation cannot be fully effective because providers can simply choose not to comply.

It is a regrettable fact that bringing a previously unregulated sector into regulation creates a possibility that some providers are not able to meet the threshold for authorisation

The Government therefore cannot rule out that in authorising these firms under the new regime, it is revealed that some funeral plan providers are unable to deliver on the promises they have made to their customers.

However, the Government and the FCA are monitoring the situation very closely and, subject to the facts at the time, stand ready to take any appropriate action.

■ Insurance: Business

Gareth Thomas: [21130]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish the proposals that have been (a) granted and (b) refused for the transfer of an insurance business under Part VII of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 in each year since 2001-02; and if he will make a statement.

Gareth Thomas: [21131]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many times the (a) FCA and (b) PRA have rejected the appointment of an Independent Expert for a Part VII insurance business transfer under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

The Part VII transfer of business is a Court process with input from the independent regulators, the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) and Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

The Treasury does not hold the requested information and the question has been passed to the PRA. The PRA will reply directly to the honourable member by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House

■ Liverpool Victoria

Gareth Thomas: [21132]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if will list the occasions (a) Ministers and (b) senior officials from his (i) Department and (ii) executive agencies have met representatives of Liverpool Victoria since that organisation announced its plan to convert from a friendly society to a company limited by guarantee; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery.

Details of ministerial and permanent secretary meetings with external organisations on departmental business are published on a quarterly basis and are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>

Gareth Thomas: [21135]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department holds information relating to the views of the With-Profits Committee of Liverpool Victoria on the proposed demutualisation and sale to Bain Capital; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

The Treasury does not hold information relating to the views of the With-Profits Committee of Liverpool Victoria on the proposed demutualisation and sale to Bain Capital.

The assessment of the proposed sale is an ongoing and independent process, overseen and scrutinised by the financial services regulators, and subject to approval by the Courts.

■ Liverpool Victoria: Mutual Societies**Gareth Thomas:**[\[21133\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many letters he has received on the proposed demutualisation of Liverpool Victoria; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

HM Treasury has had several representations over the last few months on this issue. However, the exact number cannot be provided as this information is not readily available.

I would like to reassure you that I am closely engaged on this matter, and that it is a priority of mine to keep informed of any progress

■ London Capital and Finance: Compensation**John McNally:**[\[21931\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will take steps to ensure that all LCF bondholders will be compensated.

John Glen:

I know that this has been a very difficult time for LCF bondholders. The Government has announced that it will establish a compensation scheme that will provide 80% of LCF bondholders' principle investment up to a maximum of £68,000. The scheme will be available to all LCF bondholders who have not already received compensation from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS).

The FSCS will administer the scheme. They are committed to ensuring that payments are made to all eligible LCF bondholders within 6 months of the Compensation (London Capital & Finance plc and Fraud Compensation Fund) Bill securing Royal Assent. This Bill was brought forward by the Government at the earliest possible opportunity and was introduced on 12 May 2021.

I hope that the compensation offered by the Government scheme will offer some relief to the distress and hardship suffered and provide closure on this difficult matter.

■ Motor Vehicles: Taxation**Sarah Olney:**[\[23288\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what options he is considering to ensure revenue from motoring taxes keeps pace with the transition away from petrol and diesel

vehicles; and whether those options include (a) the introduction of a national road pricing scheme and (b) the taxing of electric vehicles on a similar basis to petrol or diesel vehicles.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Prime Minister stated as part of the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution that the Government is committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, and that the transition towards electric vehicles and the phase out of new petrol and diesel cars and vans will make a vital contribution to this.

As we move forward with this transition, and as you have acknowledged - we will need to ensure that revenue from motoring taxes keeps pace with this change, so that we can continue to fund the first-class public services and infrastructure that people and families across the UK expect.

All taxes are kept under review, and any changes to the tax system will be considered by the Chancellor and any further steps will be announced in due course.

■ **Treasury: CCTV**

Bridget Phillipson:

[23165]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has carried out a risk assessment on the secure holding of CCTV footage within (a) HM Treasury and (b) HM Revenue and Customs.

Kemi Badenoch:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

■ **Treasury: Directors**

Jack Dromey:

[23149]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what financial payments his Department makes to its non-executive directors; how many times his departmental Board will meet in 2021-22; and what work the non-executive directors undertake.

Kemi Badenoch:

This information is published in the Department's annual report and accounts, available on gov.uk.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hm-treasury-annual-report-and-accounts-2019-to-2020>

The Department's report and accounts for 2020-21 will be published in due course, in the usual way.

Departmental boards provide strategic leadership for each central government department, as well as advising on/challenging how the department is performing. Each board is chaired by the Secretary of State and includes junior ministers, the permanent secretary and non-executive board members. Non-executives are

appointed to government departments from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Their role is to provide advice and bring an external perspective.

A summary of the work of non-executive directors across Government can be found in the Government Lead Non-Executive's annual report, available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-lead-non-executives-annual-report-2019-to-2020>

Afzal Khan:

[23311]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what declaration of interests have been made by his Department's non-executive directors; and where those interests are published.

Kemi Badenoch:

Non-executive directors comply with the provisions of the Cabinet Office's Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies.

Board members are required to submit any declarable interests annually; this information forms part of the independent National Audit Office review ahead of the publication of Departmental annual report and accounts.

Information on any relevant interests is published in the Department annual report and accounts, which are available on gov.uk.

Afzal Khan:

[23312]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when his Department's current non-executive directors were appointed; what oversight officials of his Department had of the Ministerial appointments of those non-executive directors; and what assessment was made of the applicants' experience against the requirements for breadth and depth of experience set out in the Cabinet Office guidance on Departmental Boards of November 2014.

Kemi Badenoch:

Departments follow the principles set out in Cabinet Office/HM Treasury '[Corporate governance in central government departments: code of good practice](#).'

HM Treasury publishes the appointment and reappointment dates of non-executive directors, as well as their experience, in the Annual Report and Accounts. Information on the current non-executive directors can be found on page 57 to 58 of the 2019-20 Annual Report and Accounts.

■ Treasury: Email

Bridget Phillipson:

[23164]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether any departmental business within (a) his Department and (b) HM Revenue and Customs has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Kemi Badenoch:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments [on use of private emails](#).

It is government policy not to comment on specific technical security controls; however, the incidental personal use of private email accounts from departmental systems is subject to our Acceptable Use policy, in spare time.

Bridget Phillipson:

[23166]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his departmental IT systems in (a) HM Treasury and (b) HM Revenue and Customs routinely allow officials, advisers and Ministers to access private email accounts from their office desktop computers, department-issue laptop computers and mobile phone devices.

Kemi Badenoch:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments [on use of private emails](#).

It is government policy not to comment on specific technical security controls; however, the incidental personal use of private email accounts from departmental systems is subject to our Acceptable Use policy, in spare time.

■ Treasury: Security

Afzal Khan:

[23313]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what private companies are contracted to provide security services at his Department's buildings that contain Ministerial private offices; and whether there are closed circuit television cameras in any Ministerial private offices within his Department's estate.

Kemi Badenoch:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

WALES

■ S4C: Finance

Jonathan Edwards:

[21875]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent discussions he has had with (a) the Chancellor of the Exchequer and (b) the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on ensuring an adequate level of funding for Welsh language free-to-air television channel S4C.

Simon Hart:

I have regular discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport about a wide range of issues including broadcasting matters and the funding settlement for S4C. Furthermore, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and I have had a number of constructive discussions about the licence fee settlement for S4C with the Minister of State for Media and Data.

S4C is the only Welsh language TV channel in the world and the UK Government understands this incredibly distinctive position.

DCMS has received S4C's submission of need and negotiations are ongoing.

■ **Wales Office: CCTV**

Nia Griffith: [\[23136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether his Department has carried out a risk assessment of the secure holding of CCTV footage filmed within his Department.

David T C Davies:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

■ **Wales Office: Email**

Nia Griffith: [\[23135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether his Department permits (a) officials, (b) special advisors and (c) Ministers of his Department to access private email accounts from their office desktop computers, department-issued laptop computers or department-issued mobile phone devices.

David T C Davies:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments on use of private emails. www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-departments-on-private-email-use

It is government policy not to comment on specific technical security controls; however, the incidental personal use of private email accounts from departmental systems is subject to our 'Acceptable Use' policy, in spare time.

Nia Griffith: [\[23137\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether any Departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses by (a) officials, (b) special advisors and (c) Ministers of his Department.

David T C Davies:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments on use of private emails. www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-departments-on-private-email-use

■ **Wales Office: Freedom of Information**

Fleur Anderson: [\[23357\]](#)

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

David T C Davies:

The Office of the Secretary of State for Wales has referred requests to the Cabinet Office Clearing House where appropriate and in line with the published criteria which is available on gov.uk here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-and-freedom-of-information>.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES**■ Females: Politics and Government****John Howell:**[\[21184\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policy on equality for women of the debate at the Council of Europe on 23 June 2021 on the participation of women from under-represented groups in political and public decision-making.

Kemi Badenoch:

We have more women MPs than ever before, making up 34% of the commons, and in 2019 around a third of local councillors were women, but we must ensure all women have an equal voice in the decisions that affect them. Government can't control who political parties select as candidates, and it is for parties to ensure that their selection processes are responsive to known barriers and lead the way in improving representation of women from all groups.

■ Government Equalities Office: Freedom of Information**Fleur Anderson:**[\[23358\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, 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.

Kemi Badenoch:

The Equality Hub is an integral part of the Cabinet Office, therefore I refer the hon. Member to the response given to [PQ 21941](#) on 29 June 2021.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Department for Work and Pensions: CCTV****Jonathan Reynolds:**[\[23182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether a risk assessment has been carried out on the secure holding of CCTV footage within her Department.

Guy Opperman:

As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on security procedures in government buildings.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Email

Jonathan Reynolds: [\[23181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether any departmental business has been conducted on private email addresses; and what mechanisms are in place to ensure that full records are kept of that business.

Guy Opperman:

I refer the Hon. Member to the Cabinet Office guidance to departments [on use of private emails](#).

■ Judicial Review

Jonathan Reynolds: [\[23183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much her Department has spent from the public purse on contesting court cases in each of the last three years.

Guy Opperman:

The Department does not keep this information centrally and to provide it would incur disproportionate costs.

■ Kickstart Scheme

Alison McGovern: [\[23180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Kickstart scheme jobs have been (a) approved and (b) started in each nation and region of the UK.

Mims Davies:

As of the 16th June there were over 230,000 jobs approved for funding by the Kickstart Scheme. We are unable at present to provide data on the number of approved jobs by region, as at that stage in the process we do not hold information about the exact location of a job, only the head office of the employer.

Over 138,000 jobs have been made available for young people to apply for and over 36,000 young people have started Kickstart jobs. On average more than 500 young people started a Kickstart job a day between 22/04/2021 and 27/05/2021.

Below are tables listing the number of Kickstart jobs which have been offered and started by young people to date by geographical area of Great Britain and work sector. The figures in these tables are correct as of 16/06/2021 and these figures have been rounded according to departmental standards.

LOCATION	JOBS ADVERTISED	TOTAL JOBS STARTED
East Midlands	9,320	2,060
East of England	11,050	2,520
London	27,020	7,780

LOCATION	JOBS ADVERTISED	TOTAL JOBS STARTED
North East	5,420	1,650
North West	17,490	4,650
Scotland	10,190	3,090
South East	16,060	3,960
South West	10,240	2,450
Wales	7,820	1,890
West Midlands	12,910	3,170
Yorkshire and The Humber	10,720	2,680
Rounded Totals	138,290	36,000

*These numbers are rounded and so may not match provided totals. Jobs Advertised include 1,000 non-grant funded vacancies and around 900 starts to non-grant funded jobs

SECTOR	JOBS ADVERTISED	TOTAL JOBS STARTED
Administration	34,940	9,230
Animal Care	620	290
Beauty & Wellbeing	1,000	280
Business & Finance	4,990	1,260
Computing, Technology & Digital	10,510	3,360
Construction & Trades	4,420	1,210
Creative & Media	10,610	3,760
Delivery & Storage	4,080	1,090
Emergency & Uniform Services	330	40
Engineering & Maintenance	4,970	1,040

SECTOR	JOBS ADVERTISED	TOTAL JOBS STARTED
Environment & Land	2,550	700
Government Services	450	70
Healthcare	4,470	940
Home Services	1,040	150
Hospitality & Food	12,630	2,320
Law & Legal	310	130
Managerial	930	200
Manufacturing	3,340	990
Retail & Sales	21,390	5,840
Science & Research	690	150
Social Care	3,390	530
Sports & Leisure	3,210	790
Teaching & Education	6,430	1,350
Transport	510	80
Travel & Tourism	480	100
Totals	138,290	36,000

*These numbers are rounded and so may not match provided totals. Jobs Advertised include 1,000 non-grant funded vacancies and around 900 starts to non-grant funded jobs

Cat Smith:

[\[23230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will publish the Equality Impact Assessment for the Kickstart scheme.

Mims Davies:

The Department for Work and Pensions plans to publish the Equality Impact Assessment on the Kickstart Scheme in due course.

■ Ladders: Accidents

Rachael Maskell: [\[23252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the annual cost to the economy of accidents caused by falls from ladders.

Rachael Maskell: [\[23253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the number people who fall from ladders each year.

Rachael Maskell: [\[23254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent steps the Government has taken to prevent falls from ladders; and what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of those steps.

Rachael Maskell: [\[23255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to improve the safety of people who use a ladder as part of their job.

Mims Davies:

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) leads on the prevention of falls from height, including from ladders, in Britain's workplaces.

As a significant cause of workplace death and injury, the prevention of falls from height has been a key area of focus for HSE and the recently published HSE Plan of Work for 2021-22 states that '*We will continue to tackle long-standing problems, such as... falls from height*' underlining HSE's on-going commitment to addressing this significant workplace issue.

The costs to Britain arising from workplace fatalities and self-reported injuries and ill health is substantial, with the cost of workplace injuries alone being £5.6bn in 2018/19. The costs arising specifically from falls from ladders has not been evaluated, but a wider analysis, considering the cost of workplace injuries and new cases of work-related Ill Health in 2018/19 is published on the HSE [webpages](#).

HSE figures show a steady reduction in the number of workplace fatalities and major injuries relating to falls from height over recent years, with fatal injuries reducing from 42 in 2014/15 to 29 in 2019/20, and the number of non-fatal injuries from 6,165 in 2014/15 to 5,214 in 2019/20 (provisional figures are given for 2020). HSE publishes a summary of statistics for "health and safety at work in Great Britain 2020" on the HSE [website](#).

To further reduce accidents involving ladders in Britain's workplaces, HSE staff continue to raise work at height issues as a matter of priority during site visits to conduct inspections and investigations, taking enforcement action including prosecutions where necessary. HSE also provides information, advice and [guidance on ladders](#) via its website and across a wide range of communication channels. HSE are working in collaboration with the Ladder Association to publish an updated suite of guidance that covers new types of ladders and is aligned to the latest standards for

safe use. A free webinar with industry experts and HSE on safe ladder use and to announce the new guidance is scheduled for 15 July 2021. HSE also continues to work with trade associations and other stakeholders – such as the Access Industry Forum to promote and communicate safe working at height practices across industry.

■ Lone Parents: Coronavirus

Jim Shannon:

[21907]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to support single parent families in the context of the impact of the covid-19 outbreak on those families.

Will Quince:

Since the start of the pandemic, the Government's priority has been to protect lives and people's livelihoods, through its economic response.

It has supported those on low incomes, including single parent families, in a number of ways, such as by increasing the living wage, and by spending an estimated £112 billion on welfare support for people of working age in 2020/21. This included around £7.4 billion of Covid-related welfare policy measures.

For single parents on Universal Credit, there is help with childcare costs and a dedicated Work Coach. The Government considers that, where possible, it is in the best interests of children to be in working households, and we are committed to helping lone parents into a job which fits in around their caring responsibilities. Claimants with children will benefit from a work allowance and Universal Credit pays up to 85 per cent of childcare costs, compared to 70 per cent in legacy benefits which can be claimed up to a month before starting a job.

To further support those with children we introduced the Covid Winter Grant Scheme, now the Covid Local Support Grant, with over £420m provided to Local Authorities in England between 1 December 2020 and 30 September 2021 to help the most vulnerable children and families with the cost of food, utilities and other essentials.

As the economy recovers, our ambition is to help people move into and progress in work as quickly as possible, based on clear evidence around the importance of employment, particularly where it is full-time, in substantially reducing the risks of poverty. We are investing over £30 billion in our ambitious Plan for Jobs which is already delivering for people of all ages right across the country.

■ Unemployment: Ethnic Groups

Ruth Jones:

[23325]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent steps she has taken with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reduce the unemployment gap for Black, Asian and ethnic minority people in (a) Newport West, (b) Wales and (c) the UK.

Mims Davies:

The Government is committed to supporting people from all backgrounds, including those from ethnic minorities, to move into work. It provides a national offer of support ensuring that no matter where they live, all customers receive the help they need, when they need it.

Our Job Centre Plus network offers tailored interventions which allow Work Coaches to adapt their approach to suit each customer's needs. Our Plan for Jobs Programme protects, supports and creates jobs, targeting young people, the long term unemployed, and those in need of new training and skills. It includes the Kickstart Scheme, an expanded youth offer, and the expansion of the Work and Health Programme, all offering new support to jobseekers, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

We also have a national programme of mentoring circles, involving employers offering specialised support to unemployed, ethnic minority jobseekers.

■ Universal Credit: Overpayments**Drew Hendry:****[22175]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans her Department has to allow discretion in taking recovery action for overpayment of universal credit when that overpayment occurred as a result of her Department's error.

Will Quince:

[Holding answer 30 June 2021]: Following the introduction of the 2012 Welfare Reform Act, all overpayments of Universal Credit and new style benefits paid in excess of entitlement are recoverable.

The trend in recent years has been to ensure claimants are left with more of their benefit; through two successive reductions in the proportion of UC we will deduct – from 40% of the UC Standard Allowance to 30% and now 25% from April 2021.

The Department seeks to recover benefit overpayments without creating undue financial hardship; any person who does experience such hardship is encouraged to contact the Department's Debt Management unit. Where a person cannot afford the proposed rate of repayment a lower amount can be negotiated.

In exceptional circumstances discretion not to pursue recovery can also be applied under guidelines set out by HM Treasury. Typically, this would be where the continuing recovery would cause severe hardship or risk to the customer and/or their family. Further details of which are publicly available in HM Treasury's Managing Public Money.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/994902/MPM_Spring_21_with_annexes_180621.pdf

■ Universal Credit: Pilot Schemes**Jonathan Reynolds:****[21902]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when her Departments plans to restart the managed migration pilot scheme following its suspension during the covid-19 outbreak.

Will Quince:

The pilot that had been active in Harrogate was suspended as the Department focused on delivering its part of the Government's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to its suspension, the emphasis of the pilot was to assist with developing the design of the Move to Universal Credit service and its processes, to provide the best possible support for claimants who are moved to Universal Credit.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Business Update

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Kwasi Kwarteng):

[\[HCWS137\]](#)

I am delighted to announce that Nissan has confirmed a significant investment into their Sunderland plant and a partnership with their battery supplier, Envision AESC, and Sunderland City Council to create a North East electric vehicle manufacturing hub.

As Nissan's second global electric vehicle manufacturing hub, Sunderland will produce battery electric vehicles at scale from 2024 with projected volumes of 100,000 each year. The site will also be home to the UK's first large scale Gigafactory, with Envision AESC supplying batteries for Nissan's electric vehicles. This is a transformational investment not just for the North East of England but for the UK, as we move towards a fully electrified future and deliver our Net Zero ambitions.

Nissan has a long and successful history in the UK and Sunderland is one of the most productive plants in Europe. The North East of England is renowned for automotive manufacturing and this investment will deliver economic growth in the area and support the levelling up agenda as we build back greener from the pandemic. Nissan's commitment to Sunderland is testament to the strength of the British automotive sector and the quality and skill of our expert UK workforce. This investment will secure Nissan's presence in Sunderland and thousands of highly skilled jobs at the plant. Indeed, as Nissan themselves have recognised, our Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the European Union has brought the automotive industry, and our wider economy, the confidence and certainty needed to invest, employ, and plan ahead.

This North East EV Hub is an important first step in delivering our 10 Point Plan and manifesto commitment of securing our first large scale Gigafactory. In increasing their battery production, initially to supply Nissan, the Envision AESC Gigafactory will start to anchor the development of EV supply chains within the UK. This is vital as we start the mass UK manufacture of batteries needed for the next generation of electric vehicles.

The Government is also supporting Sunderland City Council to carry out infrastructure works on the adjacent International Advanced Manufacturing Park, to make space for the Gigafactory expansion and to start development of a local energy network supplying renewable energy.

The Government has played a crucial role in securing this major investment decision. Between us the Prime Minister, Lord Grimstone and I have engaged strongly with Nissan and their partners, Envision AESC and Sunderland City Council, to demonstrate our commitment to this opportunity. This investment will deliver the first EV to be manufactured at this scale in the UK and is a monumental step in the transition of the automotive industry to electrification.

This Government is committed to ensuring the UK continues to be one of the best locations in the world for automotive manufacturing, investing hundreds of millions to protect and create jobs, while securing a competitive future for the sector. The strong reputation of British automotive manufacturing is evident with over 80% of the cars produced in the UK being exported overseas.

As part of the Prime Minister's 10-Point Plan, we have already announced £500 million to support the electrification of vehicles and their supply chains, and other strategically important technologies through the Automotive Transformation Fund, over the next four years. This is our approach to industrial policy in action: a strong and active government within a dynamic enterprise economy, working with industry to secure private investment and new jobs. We will continue to work with investors to secure the UK's position at the forefront of the global green industrial revolution.

The Faraday Battery Challenge, with a further £317m of Government support, is creating the research, innovation and commercialisation pathways and ecosystem that are establishing the UK as a battery science superpower, growing innovative companies and attracting large scale battery manufacturing to the UK. This includes our investment in the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre, a unique open access facility.

Today's announcement shows that Nissan and Envision share our commitment to an automotive sector fit for the future as we transition to electric vehicles. The government is determined to ensure that the UK continues to be a great place to do business and one of the most competitive locations in the world for automotive and other advanced manufacturing. Nissan's choice of the UK as their first location outside of Japan for such a major investment in electric vehicles underlines the strength of the UK to build such strategic partnerships and deliver our vision.

CABINET OFFICE

■ EU relations: Withdrawal Agreement

Paymaster General (Penny Mordaunt):

[\[HCWS144\]](#)

My noble Friend, the Minister of State in the Cabinet Office (the Rt Hon Lord Frost CMG), yesterday made the following written statement:

The Government has been consistently clear that there should be no barriers on the movement of meat products from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. In order to avoid any disruption to those movements, the Government proposed to the EU that it would be sensible to extend the grace period agreed at the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee in December, which would otherwise have expired on 1 July, on certain conditions.

Following detailed discussions, the UK and EU have agreed to extend the grace period until 30 September. In line with that agreement, the United Kingdom has today set out a unilateral declaration, of which the EU has taken note, relating to the movement of meat products from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. This sets out the conditions under which meat products otherwise classed as prohibited and restricted goods will move from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. This agreement does not require the rest of the United

Kingdom to align with any changes in EU agrifood rules during the grace period - there is no dynamic alignment.

The extension ensures that Northern Ireland consumers will continue to be able to buy chilled meat products from Great Britain. This is a positive first step but agreement is still required on a permanent solution, and this further period provides time for those discussions to proceed. This is also only one of a very large number of problems with the way the Protocol is currently operating, for which solutions need to be found with the EU to ensure the Protocol delivers on its original aims: to protect the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, safeguard Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom, and protect the EU's single market for goods.

Attachments:

1. Unilateral Declaration [Unilateral declarations by the United Kingdom of Great Britain - chilled meats - 30.06.21.pdf]

DEFENCE

■ Atomic Weapons Establishment

Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Ben Wallace):

[\[HCWS142\]](#)

On 2nd November 2020 I announced to the House [HCWS544] that on the 1st July 2021 AWE plc, the company operating the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) would become a Non-Departmental Public Body, wholly owned by the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

I can confirm that from today, following a constructive and effective transition period, we welcome AWE plc as the newest Arms-Length Body of the MOD.

The change in operating model will further strengthen the relationship between the MOD and AWE plc, enhancing the management of the UK's nuclear warhead programme whilst also delivering on core MOD objectives and value for money to the taxpayer. AWE plc is part of the Defence Nuclear Enterprise, which is responsible for sustaining and renewing the UK's nuclear deterrent.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ EU-UK Personal Data transfers

Minister of State for Media and Data (Mr John Whittingdale):

[\[HCWS143\]](#)

Following just over a year of constructive discussions, the European Union has rightly recognised the UK's high data protection standards by formally adopting adequacy decisions for the UK. The completion of this process allows for the continued free flow of personal data between the EU and the UK. These decisions will minimise burdens for businesses and support continued cooperation between the EU and UK, including helping our law enforcement authorities to keep our citizens safe.

We will approach our data relationship with the EU, as in other areas of our new relationship, as sovereign equals. This will include a full UK assessment of the EU under our own independent international transfer regime to ensure that it remains a safe destination for UK personal data. We will continue to engage with the EU as appropriate with a view to ensuring our reciprocal arrangements for free flow of personal data can remain in place on an ongoing basis.

We will do so whilst operating a fully independent UK framework. Rapid technological change in data-intensive sectors and three years' experience of implementing GDPR have prompted lively debates about the future of data protection, including within the EU. We want our data protection law to remain fit for purpose, and to support the future objectives of the UK.

Maintaining personal data flows is important: people and organisations are now sharing more personal data more regularly and in greater quantities than ever. Data has allowed businesses to grow and transform, hospitals to help patients, scientists to accelerate groundbreaking research, and law enforcement authorities to keep the public safe. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that the use of data has never been more crucial in making vital decisions in public life.

The Government is committed to ensuring the UK can use data to drive innovation, the economy, trade, better government and more effective law enforcement and protection of public safety; without compromising security or privacy. We will design and operate a data regime that maintains high data protection standards whilst enabling transformative, creative, innovative and responsible data use to ensure that the benefits of the data revolution are felt by all people, in all places.

Maximising the opportunities from innovative use of data will also depend on better flow of data between international partners. Independent of the EU, the UK will promote the free flow of personal data across borders, including through ambitious new trade deals; new data adequacy agreements with some of the fastest growing economies; and more innovative transfer mechanisms, whilst ensuring that this data will be properly protected, including through effective regulatory cooperation. We will also explore wider global opportunities on data, seeking to increase the availability of data and minimise burdens on organisations seeking to tackle some of the most pressing international questions of our time, including climate change and prevention of disease.

With our progressive legal system, robust protection of individual rights, and an influential regulator, the UK is in a strong starting position. Our approach towards data in future will be forward thinking and innovative but, above all, it will be founded upon the democratic values of the rule of law and transparency to maintain our public trust and confidence.

I look forward to engaging with interested colleagues across the House on maximising the potential benefits of data use for the whole of the UK.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Reducing demand for water****Secretary of State (George Eustice):****[[HCWS140](#)]**

In 2019 the Government carried out a consultation on measures to reduce personal water consumption. Today I wish to announce measures that the Government will take following our consultation.

Context

The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan sets out our ambition for achieving clean and plentiful water. The Environment Agency's National Framework set out that an additional 25% of the current daily volume put into our public water supply will be needed in England by 2050 to meet future pressures on public supply[1].

Water demand reduction is essential to support the delivery of our commitment. Water companies need to reduce the leakage from their network infrastructure and we need to support households and businesses (including charities and the public sector) to use less water.

Leakage

Ofwat has set companies a performance commitment to reduce leakage by 16% by 2025 and water companies have gone further and committed to delivering a 50% reduction in leakage from 2017/18 levels by 2050, which is predicted to save up to 1,400 mega litres of water per day[2]. The Government expects this to be met and has required water companies to plan on this basis.

Business water use

Businesses use 20% of the total water put into our public supply. Water companies and retailers have worked with the Government, regulators, the market operator and Waterwise to produce an action plan to sustainably reduce businesses' water use. This includes understanding how businesses use their water; greater collaboration in water resource planning; identifying and addressing regulatory and other relevant barriers to the delivery of business water efficiency; and supporting businesses to save water through information awareness.

Water meters

The Government will make no changes to existing rules around when people can be charged for their water use through water meters.

Water companies in seriously water stressed areas may implement wider water metering programmes where it is shown within their Water Resources Management Plans that there is customer support and it is cost effective to do so. Using the latest evidence, the Environment Agency has published its recommendation that additional areas in the South, East and the Midlands should be designated as in serious water stress.

Metering programmes must nevertheless be justified by water companies and achieve customer support. This strikes the right balance between the need to protect water

supplies and importance of water companies reducing leakage before expanding the use of water meters. This protects unmetered family homes from unexpected large increases in bills.

Water efficient homes

Today I am announcing measures that the Government will take forward to support water efficiency in homes. We will:

- Ask water companies to develop a consistent approach to address leakage on customers' own pipes, as, over the last 10 years around 25% of total leakage has been from customer supply pipes;
- Make regulations to introduce a mandatory water efficiency label to inform consumers and encourage the purchase of more water efficient products for both domestic and business use. We will consider the potential to achieve energy savings, as well as further water savings, and explore how these can be achieved in a way that minimises the impact on consumers;
- Write to local authorities to encourage them to adopt the optional minimum building standard of 110 litres per person per day in all new builds where there is a clear local need, such as in water stressed areas; and
- In 2022 develop a roadmap towards greater water efficiency in new developments and retrofits, including the exploration of revised building regulations and how the development of new technologies can contribute to meeting these standards. We will ensure that the underlying legislation can, where appropriate, accommodate any potential future expansion of rainwater harvesting, water re-use and storage options.

Conclusion

These measures, along with the actions of water companies, will support the delivery the ambitions set out in the National Framework to reduce personal water consumption to 110 litres per person per day by 2050, without affecting the quality of life and the enjoyment of water used by households.

Waterwise has agreed to chair a group of industry experts, reporting to me regularly, that will track delivery of these stretching commitments.

This work will support the measures set out in the Environment Bill to further help us secure long-term, resilient water and wastewater services, making sure that we have a cleaner, greener and more resilient country for the next generation.

[1]

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/873100/National_Framework_for_water_resources_summary.pdf

[2] <https://nic.org.uk/app/uploads/NIC-Preparing-for-a-Drier-Future-26-April-2018.pdf>

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ **Healthy Weight Programme: final funding allocations for children and family local authority weight management services**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Prevention, Public Health and Primary Care) (Jo Churchill): [\[HCWS147\]](#)

On 23 March this year I confirmed the Government was dedicating £34.9 million of new funding to support the expansion of local authority weight management services for adults, children, and families in 2021/22. These funds will be allocated via two ringfenced grants under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The first grant distributed £30.5 million among all local authorities in England to commission adult behavioural weight management services and draft allocations were published in late March. Since publication 149 local authorities have accepted funding awards.

At the same time, I launched the application process for local authorities to apply for funding through a second grant distributing £4.4 million to test the expansion of behavioural weight management services for children and families and pilot an intervention to improve access to local services for children identified as living with overweight or obesity through the National Child Measurement Programme.

I am pleased to announce that eight applicants representing 11 local authorities will be awarded funding through the Child and Family Weight Management Grant (No. 31/5627). A full list of awardees will be published on GOV.UK and all applicants will be notified of the outcome of the application process in writing.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ **Revitalising high streets and town centres**

Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Robert Jenrick): [\[HCWS145\]](#)

As part of our on-going measures to improve the planning system, increase housing supply on brownfield land, stimulate investment in urban areas and sustain jobs, we have in recent years introduced new permitted development rights which allow the change of use to residential without the need for a full planning application. I am pleased that, through these measures, we have made a significant additional contribution to our housing supply by utilising already-developed brownfield land. We have also legislated to ensure new homes delivered via permitted development rights provide adequate daylight and meet national space standards. Our most recent reforms introduced a new right to allow change of use from the Commercial, Business and Service Use to residential. This will breathe new life into commercial areas and high streets by bringing vacant buildings back into use as new high street homes - all the more important as a result of the economic disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In very specific circumstances, local authorities can make Article 4 directions to suspend individual permitted development rights, when justified by robust evidence.

This Written Ministerial Statement sets out measures I am taking to ensure that our policy on Article 4 directions is used in a highly targeted way to protect the thriving core of historic high street areas, but does not unnecessarily restrict the ability to deliver much needed housing through national permitted development rights. Our new policy will apply to all Article 4 directions.

We recently consulted on revised policy on Article 4 directions in our consultation on the *National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code: consultation proposals*, which ran from 30 January to 27 March 2021. I have reviewed our national policy in the light of the helpful responses to that consultation.

As a result, I intend to make changes to the National Planning Policy Framework later this year, but ahead of that I wanted to announce our new policy, so that local authorities and communities can take it into account from today when they consider bringing in any new Article 4 directions.

The new paragraph 53 of the National Planning Policy Framework will read:

The use of Article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should:

- where they relate to change from non-residential use to residential use, be limited to situations where an Article 4 direction is necessary to avoid wholly unacceptable adverse impacts (this could include the loss of the essential core of a primary shopping area which would seriously undermine its vitality and viability, but would be very unlikely to extend to the whole of a town centre)
- in other cases, be limited to situations where an Article 4 direction is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area (this could include the use of Article 4 directions to require planning permission for the demolition of local facilities)
- in all cases, be based on robust evidence, and apply to the smallest geographical area possible.

Our aim is to support high streets and by ensuring a higher threshold for making Article 4 directions relating to change of use to residential we will maximise the potential for underused buildings to be converted to an alternative use. Councils should recognise the value to housing supply and increasing resident town centre footfall from supporting 'flats above shops'; for example, councils can consider applying different policies to residential conversions above ground floor level. This is important to support mixed and flexible high streets, to deliver additional homes more easily, and to support jobs in the construction industry, while increasing demand for local high street services through new high street homes. This change only applies to changes from non-residential to residential use. **This change does not apply to changes between different residential uses**, which will enable local authorities to continue to restrict change of use from a family home to a house of multiple occupancy where that is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of an area.

Article 4 directions should be very carefully targeted, applying only to those locations where they are necessary to avoid wholly unacceptable adverse impacts. For that reason, I want to make clear that the geographical coverage of all Article 4 directions should be the smallest area possible to achieve the aim of the Article 4 direction. In respect of historic high streets and town centres, this is likely to be the irreducible core of a primary shopping area. It is very unlikely to be applicable to a broad area, and is not expected to be applied to an entire local authority area. Local authorities will need to have robust evidence to justify the Article 4 direction and the area it covers.

In advance of the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework, I want local authorities to follow this new policy when they consider making new Article 4 directions so that they can assure themselves and their communities that the Article 4 direction is necessary and meets the higher threshold. Local authorities are required to notify me about new Article 4 directions. I will instruct my officials to look closely at all new Article 4 directions to check that they comply with the new policy, and I will consider exercising my power to intervene if they do not.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Trade Update

Secretary of State for International Trade (Elizabeth Truss):

[\[HCWS136\]](#)

The Government is announcing today that it will make new regulations to help defend the UK steel industry.

The move follows a review by the Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) last year on defensive tariff rate quotas (TRQs) on 19 categories of steel imports retained from when the UK was a member of the European Union.

This review concluded that TRQs should be extended in 10 of the categories and revoked in nine others.

Current legislation means that the Government only has two choices: either to accept the TRA recommendation in full or reject it entirely – leaving all 19 categories of UK steel products at risk from tariff-free imports.

The Government has accepted the TRA's recommendation to maintain the safeguard on ten steel product categories for a further three years. The Government is at the same time making new regulations to further defend the UK steel industry by extending the safeguard by public notice. The public notice will set out the details of the temporary extension on a further five of the 19 steel products for one year. Imports outside the quotas will face a tariff of 25%.

The UK Government will always do everything in its power to defend UK industry and jobs and to allow our world-leading manufacturers to compete on a level playing field. Current disruption to industry caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, threats of dumping and unfair subsidies, and continued trade restrictions in third countries all put UK steel products at an unacceptable disadvantage.

The steel sector supports the jobs of over 80,000 people across the UK, including some 35,000 well-paid jobs in steel production, and a further 44,000 jobs supported in wider supply chains.

That is why the Government is taking decisive action today by making new regulations to defend jobs in the UK steel industry. This will give an opportunity for the industry to appeal the recommendation made by the TRA so any new evidence can be reviewed in the context of the unique global market conditions which currently prevail.

This includes assessing the risk of injury arising from the EU safeguard which was published after the TRA made their decision.

It is important to note that the ability of industry to gather the data and the TRA to consider the evidence was extremely challenging given the unprecedented disruption to trade caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The UK Government will also review the Trade Remedies framework as an urgent priority. The Trade Remedies framework was first introduced in 2018 under the previous Government. The current Government will review it to ensure it is up-to-date, champions WTO rules and is fit for purpose in the post-COVID world.

It is crucial we have the tools in the future to ensure industries are defended against unfair competition and unforeseen surges in imports.

TREASURY

■ Financial Services Consultation

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Glen):

[\[HCWS146\]](#)

The Government is today publishing the Access to Cash Consultation on legislative proposals to protect access to cash. Our society and economy is embracing the transition to a more digital world and as part of this the transition towards digital payments brings many opportunities, including the opportunity for faster and cheaper payments. Nonetheless, cash remains an essential payment mechanism for many people and businesses across the United Kingdom.

The Government therefore committed at March Budget 2020 to bring forward legislation to protect access to cash and ensure that the UK's cash infrastructure is sustainable long term. The Government supports and welcomes innovation in payments; this is an area where the UK is at the cutting edge globally, and we wish to see that continue. The Government's aim in protecting access to cash is consistent with this approach and seeks to ensure continued choice in payments solutions for all parts of the UK, and for people that rely on more traditional options.

In October 2020, the Treasury published a Call for Evidence, which sought views on the key considerations associated with cash access. The responses demonstrated strong and broad support for Government intervention to protect access to cash, and the Treasury is publishing a Summary of Responses to the Call for Evidence today.

Furthermore, the Government took action to make legislative changes to support the widespread offering of cashback without a purchase by shops and other businesses as part of the Financial Services Act 2021. Cashback has the potential to be a valuable facility to cash users, and play an important role in the evolution of the UK's cash infrastructure.

The Access to Cash Consultation is the next step to progress our commitment to legislate to protect access to cash.

The consultation sets out proposals for legislation to ensure that people and businesses can continue to make cash withdrawals and deposits within a reasonable distance. This will help to ensure that the cash system continues to meet the needs of businesses and consumers and that the UK's cash infrastructure is sustainable in the long-term.

To achieve this, the consultation seeks views in three key areas:

- 1) Geographic access requirements for providing access to cash withdrawals and deposits
- 2) Designation of firms to meet requirements to provide access
- 3) Regulatory oversight, including proposals to ensure the FCA has appropriate powers and responsibilities to hold firms to account to meet requirements

The Government's proposals for consultation seek to ensure a stable and resilient solution for cash access in the long term, where large current account providers are obliged to ensure their customers can access key cash services alongside new and convenient digital payments solutions. The decline in cash usage is a trend that is occurring in many countries across the world. The Government's proposed approach is in line with international precedent. For example, Sweden, is one of the most advanced countries in terms of declining cash usage and it has placed legislative geographic access requirements for deposit and withdrawal facilities on its largest banks.

The consultation will be published on Gov.uk

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/access-to-cash-consultation and will run for 12 weeks, closing on 23 September 2021.

Today's publication helps to ensure that the financial system supports the real economy and delivers for businesses and consumers. As my right honourable friend, the Chancellor set out at Mansion House today, the Government is taking action to deliver on our vision for a world-leading financial services sector, which includes this consultation. It is important that our financial services sector is open, green, technologically advanced and globally competitive and acts in the interests of our communities and citizens, creating jobs, supporting businesses, and powering growth across all of the UK.

■ Publication of 'UK Government Green Financing Framework'

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Glen):

[HCWS138]

In November 2020, my right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Rishi Sunak) announced plans for the UK to issue its inaugural Sovereign Green Bond (or

‘Green Gilt’). Green Financing products like these are a form of Government borrowing to finance projects with clearly defined environmental benefits.

Since then, the Government has set out its intention to issue a series of Green Gilts to meet growing investor demand. Budget 2021 confirmed the following ambitious commitments, including that:

- the UK will conduct at least two Green Gilt issuances in 2021;
- Green Gilt issuances in the 2021-22 financial year will total a minimum of £15bn;
- the UK will also issue retail Green Savings Bonds via NS&I, the first standalone retail product tied to a Sovereign Green Bond; and
- in another first for comparable sovereign issuers, the UK will report on social co-benefits of expenditures financed by the Green Gilt and retail Green Savings Bonds, such as job creation, access to affordable infrastructure and socioeconomic advancement.

Green Financing will be a multi-year programme, and HM Treasury will announce future years’ Green Financing targets as part of its usual approach to debt management.

In May 2021, the UK Debt Management Office (DMO) announced that the first Green Gilt will be issued in September 2021, subject to demand and market conditions.

NS&I today announced that Green Savings Bonds will go on sale later in the year, with full details available on the NS&I website.

Ahead of this, HM Treasury and the DMO yesterday published the *UK Government Green Financing Framework*. This document sets out the Government’s ambitious climate and environmental agenda and its vision for enhancing the UK’s leadership as the world’s pre-eminent green financial centre. The Framework also details how the proceeds from the Green Gilt and retail Green Savings Bonds will finance expenditures to help tackle climate change, biodiversity loss, and other environmental challenges, while creating green jobs across the UK.

As part of this, the Framework lists the six types of green expenditures that will be financed across the UK by the Green Gilt and retail Green Savings Bonds:

- Clean Transportation
- Renewable Energy
- Energy Efficiency
- Pollution Prevention and Control
- Living and Natural Resources
- Climate Change Adaptation.

The Framework also stipulates that funds raised from each offering must be allocated to government expenditures occurring no earlier than 12 months before and no later than two budget years after that offering. At least 50% of funds will be allocated to current and

future expenditure rather than refinancing past expenditures, matching the strongest commitments of other major sovereigns.

Finally, this document commits the Government to annual allocation reporting and at least biennial reporting of metrics on environmental impacts and social co-benefits, ensuring transparency for retail and institutional investors and other interested parties.

Two independent reports assessing the Framework and the eligible government expenditure were published alongside the framework on 30 June 2021:

- in line with market best practice, V.E, part of Moody's ESG Solutions, has provided a Second Party Opinion on the sustainability credentials of the Government of the United Kingdom's Green Financing Framework, which assesses the alignment of the Framework with the Green Bond Principles 2021 published by the International Capital Market Association. V.E expressed a 'robust' level of assurance on the contribution of the UK's Framework to sustainable development, which is the same positive assessment achieved by major sovereign issuers. V.E also assessed the UK's Environmental, Social and Governance performance as 'advanced', the highest level on V.E's four-point scale;
- the Carbon Trust has produced a Pre-Issuance Impact Report on the UK Government Green Financing Programme, which reviews the Government's intended allocation of proceeds under the Framework and the proposed impact metrics. They found that the allocations 'align sensibly' with the Climate Change Committee's recommended climate targets for the UK (known as its 'Sixth Carbon Budget') and they are 'confident that the programme will contribute to achieving net zero by 2050'. This is the first report of its kind among sovereign issuers and provides additional evidence of the coherence of the Government's green financing programme with its wider environmental agenda.

Copies of the Framework, Second Party Opinion, and Pre-Issuance Impact Assessment have been placed in the Libraries of the House and are published on www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-government-green-financing. Further information can also be found on the DMO and NS&I websites.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ BPDTS Tailored Review Update

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Pensions & Financial Inclusion. (Guy Opperman): [\[HCWS141\]](#)

My Noble Friend The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (The Baroness Stedman-Scott) has made the following Written Statement.

On 29th September 2020 the outcome of the BPDTS Tailored Review was published. The review recommended the creation of a single departmental digital function for DWP – concluding that the strategic context and challenges which BPDTS was designed to address had fundamentally altered since its creation in 2016.

Action has now been taken to implement the recommendations and all BPDTS staff and functions will transfer to DWP on 1st July 2021.

From 1st July activities in BPDTS will focus on the closure of the company and the publication of final Annual Reports and Accounts, with formal closure anticipated in early 2022.

■ **In-Work Progression Commission: Report Launch**

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Dr Thérèse Coffey):
[\[HCWS139\]](#)

In March 2020, I established the In-Work Progression Commission and appointed Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith to lead an independent review into the barriers that prevent people from progressing in work and increasing pay.

Her report, 'Supporting progression out of low pay: a call to action', which sets out the Commission's findings is being published today. This timely and important report will help increase the evidence base about the nature of the barriers holding people back and how government and employers could improve progression opportunities. I would like to thank the Baroness for leading the review, as well as her Advisory Panel for their considered contributions. I will place a copy of the report in the House Library.

The Commission's review shows we all have a role to play. The report highlights examples of great employers around the country who are leading the way and who other employers should look to learn from. It also makes recommendations for the Government which we will carefully consider and respond to in due course.

Since the Commission started its review, Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the labour market and created challenges for workers and businesses throughout the country. The Government has provided an unprecedented package of support for workers and businesses throughout the pandemic and our multi-billion-pound Plan for Jobs will ensure jobseekers of all ages get the support they need to build additional skills and find work.

Building back fairer from the pandemic means better opportunities for people across the country to move into decent jobs, climb the career ladder and raise their earnings. With government and employers working together, we will achieve our ambition to make the UK the best place in the world to work.