



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 15 September 2021 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:30 P.M., 15 September 2021). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

### CONTENTS

<b>ANSWERS</b>	<b>7</b>		
<b>BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY</b>	<b>7</b>	■ Earl Mountbatten of Burma: Disclosure of Information	14
■ Animal Experiments: Cosmetics	7	■ Zero Hours Contracts: Ellesmere Port and Neston	14
■ Business: Coronavirus	7	COP26	15
■ Construction: Unfair Practices	7	■ Carbon Emissions	15
■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points	8	■ Coal Fired Power Stations: Construction	15
■ Electric Vehicles: Rural Areas	8	■ COP26: Welsh Government	15
■ Energy and Internet: Infrastructure	9	■ Environment Protection	16
■ GKN: Birmingham	9	■ UN Climate Conference 2021	16
■ Motor Vehicles: Environmental Protection	10	■ UN Climate Conference 2021: Schools	17
■ Post Offices	10	<b>DEFENCE</b>	17
■ Procurement	11	■ Ajax Vehicles: Armed Conflict	17
■ Trade Unions: Membership	11	■ Ajax Vehicles: Armed Forces Compensation Scheme	18
■ Wind Power: Seas and Oceans	11	■ Ajax Vehicles: Procurement	18
<b>CABINET OFFICE</b>	<b>12</b>	■ Army: Recruitment	18
■ Cabinet Office: Written Questions	12	■ BOWMAN Combat Radio System	19
■ Coronavirus: Surveys	12	■ Challenger Tanks: Ammunition	19
■ Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice	13	■ Defence: Procurement	19
		■ Fleet Solid Support Ships: Procurement	20
		■ LE TacCIS Programme: Staff	20

■ Minesweepers: Sales	20	■ Pre-school Education: Enfield North	33
■ Type 23 Frigates	21	■ Pupil Premium: Arts	34
■ Type 23 Frigates: Sales	21	■ Pupils: Food Poverty	34
■ Warrior Armoured Vehicle: Ammunition	21	■ Schools: Coronavirus	35
DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT	22	■ Schools: Finance	36
■ Aerials: Middlesbrough	22	■ Schools: Pay	37
■ Charities: Newport West	22	■ Special Educational Needs	38
■ Culture Recovery Fund: Applications	22	■ Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus	39
■ Data Protection: EU Law	23	■ Special Educational Needs: Universities	40
■ Football: Reviews	23	■ Summer Schools	41
■ Gambling	24	■ Teachers: Vacancies	41
■ Gambling: York	24	ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	42
■ Internet: Repairs and Maintenance	25	■ Agriculture: Free Movement	42
■ National Lottery	26	■ Air Pollution	42
■ Television Licences: Non-payment	26	■ Air Pollution: Coronavirus	42
■ Tourism: Wales	28	■ Cats and Dogs: Imports	43
EDUCATION	28	■ Deposit Return Schemes	44
■ Assessments	28	■ Dogs: Imports	45
■ Breakfast Clubs: Disadvantaged	29	■ Food Supply	46
■ Colour Vision Deficiency: Children and Young People	29	■ Food: Labelling	46
■ Education: Finance	30	■ Grasslands: Environment Protection	47
■ Immigration: Afghanistan	30	■ Horses: Animal Breeding	48
■ Members: Correspondence	31	■ Horticulture: Free Movement	48
■ National School Breakfast Programme	31	■ Pest Control	49
■ National School Breakfast Programme: Bexleyheath and Crayford	32	■ Pinnipeds: Animal Welfare	49
■ Paramedical Staff: Training	32	■ Plastic Bags: Fees and Charges	50
		■ Plastics: Waste Disposal	51
		■ Recycling	51
		■ Slaughterhouses	52

■ Sulphur Hexafluoride	52	■ Sri Lanka: Generalised System of Preferences	64
■ Tree Planting	53	■ Sri Lanka: Human Rights and Torture	64
FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	54	■ Tigray: Armed Conflict	64
■ Afghanistan: British Nationals Abroad	54	■ Tigray: Prison Sentences	65
■ Afghanistan: Christianity	54	HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	65
■ Afghanistan: Hinduism	54	■ Blood Tests: Bottles	65
■ Afghanistan: Peace Negotiations	55	■ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome	66
■ Afghanistan: Politics and Government	55	■ Coronavirus	66
■ Afghanistan: Refugees	55	■ Coronavirus: Vaccination	67
■ Afghanistan: Repatriation	56	■ Dementia: Research	67
■ Afghanistan: Sikhs	56	■ Department of Health and Social Care: Written Questions	68
■ Ascension Island: Airports	57	■ Health and Social Care Act 2008	68
■ British Overseas Territories: Coronavirus	57	■ Health Services Safety Investigations Body: Powers	69
■ British Virgin Islands: Travel Restrictions	58	■ Hormone Treatments	69
■ Developing Countries: Coronavirus	58	■ Hyperactivity	70
■ Developing Countries: Education and Family Planning	59	■ Infant Mortality	70
■ Falkland Islands: Sovereignty	59	■ Integrated Care Boards	71
■ Guinea: Politics and Government	59	■ Maternity Services	71
■ Iran: Capital Punishment and Human Rights	60	■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People	71
■ Iran: Human Rights	61	■ Mental Health Services: Vacancies	72
■ Military Aid	62	■ Perinatal Mortality	72
■ Nigeria: Fulani	62	■ Prisoners: Hyperactivity	72
■ Responsibility to Protect	63	■ Royal Berkshire Hospital: Hydrotherapy	73
■ Sri Lanka: Counter-terrorism and Torture	63	■ Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Private Finance Initiative	73
		HOME OFFICE	74
		■ Action Fraud	74

■ Asylum	74	■ Berwyn Prison: Bullying	85
■ Crime	75	■ Berwyn Prison: Staff	86
■ Deportation: Jamaica and Zimbabwe	75	■ Crimes of Violence: Females	87
■ Drugs: Crime	76	■ Domestic Abuse: Legal Aid Scheme	87
■ Housing: Refugees	76	■ Employment Tribunals Service: Standards	89
■ Immigration Bail: Merseyside	77	■ Family Proceedings	90
■ Immigration: Afghanistan	79	■ Low Newton Prison	92
■ Immigration: Fees and Charges	79	■ Prison Accommodation: Standards	92
■ Members: Correspondence	79	■ Prison Service: Dismissal	93
■ Migrant Workers: Food	79	■ Prisoner Escapes	94
■ Undocumented Migrants: English Channel	80	■ Prisoners	97
HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	81	■ Prisoners on Remand	98
■ Leisure: Older People	81	■ Prisoners on Remand: Ethnic Groups	98
INTERNATIONAL TRADE	81	■ Prisoners: Coronavirus	99
■ Department for International Trade: Hotels	81	■ Prisons: Civil Disorder	99
■ Department for International Trade: Public Expenditure	82	■ Prisons: Firearms	101
■ Export Credit Guarantees	82	■ Prisons: Overcrowding	102
■ Overseas Trade: Sri Lanka	83	■ Prisons: Seized Articles	103
■ Shipping: Exports	83	■ Probation: Procurement	103
■ Trade Agreements: Australasia	83	■ Probation: Vetting	106
■ UK Defence and Security Exports	84	■ Television Licences: Non-payment	107
■ UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement: Falkland Islands	84	■ Wormwood Scrubs Prison: Inspections	107
JUSTICE	84	■ Wormwood Scrubs Prison: Prison Accommodation	108
■ Administration of Justice: Neurology	84	■ Youth Custody	108
■ Administration of Justice: Standards	85	NORTHERN IRELAND	109
		■ Air Pollution: Northern Ireland	109
		■ Climate Change: Northern Ireland	109

TRANSPORT	110	■ Travel: Economic Situation	123
■ Aircraft: Noise	110	■ Travel: USA	124
■ Aviation: Recruitment	111	■ Veterans: Railways	124
■ Aviation: Renewable Fuels	111	TREASURY	124
■ Bus Services: Regulation	113	■ Cash Dispensing: Fees and Charges	124
■ Cathay Pacific: Heathrow Airport	114	■ Collateral (UK): Insolvency	125
■ Civil Aviation Authority	114	■ HIV Infection	125
■ Civil Aviation Authority: Environment Protection	114	■ No-interest Loans Scheme	126
■ Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Standards	115	WALES	126
■ Driving Licences: Foreign Nationals	115	■ Coronavirus: Wales	126
■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points	115	■ Devolved Matters: Wales	126
■ Electric Vehicles: Grants	117	■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Wales	127
■ Ferries: Greenhouse Gas Emissions	119	WORK AND PENSIONS	127
■ Freight: Conditions of Employment and Pay	120	■ Fuel Poverty: Scottish Highlands	127
■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Pay	120	■ Labour Market: Newport West	128
■ Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Recruitment	120	■ Local Housing Allowance	128
■ Members: Correspondence	121	■ Universal Credit	129
■ Public Transport: Finance	121	<b>MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS</b>	<b>130</b>
■ Restoring Your Railway Fund	122	FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE	130
■ Roads: Bridges	122	■ Afghanistan: Peacekeeping Operations	130
■ Taxis: Licensing	122	■ Afghanistan: Refugees	130
■ Travel Restrictions: Bangladesh and Pakistan	123	■ Afghanistan: Taliban	131
■ Travel Restrictions: Coronavirus	123	■ Asia: Diplomatic Service	132
		<b>WRITTEN STATEMENTS</b>	<b>133</b>
		CABINET OFFICE	133
		■ Election Systems	133
		■ Election Finance and Policy	134

**Notes:**

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

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

## ANSWERS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ **Animal Experiments: Cosmetics**

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[44297\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will maintain the existing ban on animal testing for cosmetics and the sale of newly tested cosmetics ingredients.

**Paul Scully:**

Animal testing of cosmetics for the purposes of meeting the Cosmetics Regulation has been banned in the United Kingdom since 1998. No animal testing on finished cosmetic products, or ingredients or combinations of ingredients may take place in the United Kingdom. There are no plans to change this position.

#### ■ **Business: Coronavirus**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[43708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the economic impact on businesses of closures resulting from staff required to self-isolate during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Paul Scully:**

The Test, Trace and Isolate system has been a core element of the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The NHS app has been proven to work, breaking chains of transmission and saving lives. Whilst the requirement to isolate presents challenges to some businesses, isolation following contact with a person with COVID-19 remains an important action people can take to stop the spread of the virus. This will help to protect businesses, their employees, and their customers.

#### ■ **Construction: Unfair Practices**

**Drew Hendry:**

[\[46997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions his Department has had with the Competition and Markets Authority on monitoring for unfair market practices in construction materials supply chains while there is a shortage of construction materials.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is independent of government, with a remit to tackle individual and market-wide competition issues, including breaches of competition law. My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State, BEIS officials and I have regular discussions with the CMA on a wide range of issues.

At present, global demand for building materials is far in excess of supply, leading to product shortages and rapid and sustained price inflation. The situation is being

exacerbated by disruption to shipping and port operations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to work closely with the Construction Leadership Council's Product Availability Group to monitor and manage this challenging situation.

## ■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

**Rachael Maskell:**

[44386]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of installing photovoltaic cells on all upward facing surfaces of electric car charging points.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

Solar energy is a key part of the Government's strategy for decarbonisation of the energy sector and the Energy White Paper, published in December 2020, committed to 'sustained growth' in solar photovoltaics (PV) across the next decade.

Installing solar PV alongside electric vehicle (EV) chargepoints, particularly if also paired with battery storage, has a number of benefits. Smart and flexible solutions such as this can increase the use of renewable electricity and reduce demand on the grid. Reducing demand can in turn reduce the cost of connecting the chargepoints to the electricity network and avoid costly electricity network reinforcement.

The Government promotes the use of smart and flexible solutions for those seeking to install EV chargepoints. The Office for Zero Emission Vehicles provided grant funding to the UK's first solar electric forecourt demonstrator project which is led by Gridserve and opened at the end of 2020. The Government has also published guidance on connecting EV chargepoints to the electricity network, which highlights that businesses should consider implementing flexible solutions. The guidance can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/connecting-electric-vehicle-chargepoints-to-the-electricity-network/connecting-electric-vehicle-chargepoints-to-the-electricity-network>.

## ■ Electric Vehicles: Rural Areas

**Ben Lake:**

[45240]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of banning the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030 on people living off the electric grid; and what assessment he has made of the support required by those people living off-grid to assist in the transition to using electric vehicles.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

*[Holding answer 13 September 2021]:* The Government had already committed £1.5 billion to support the early market and remove barriers to zero emission vehicles ownership. Alongside the new phase out dates we have pledged a further £2.8 billion package of measures to support industry and consumers to make the switch to cleaner vehicles.



The Government wants to ensure everyone, including those without access to the electricity grid can still benefit from the transition to zero emission vehicles. The On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) is available to all UK local authorities to provide public chargepoints for their residents including those without access to the electricity grid. Drivers may also chose to charge their vehicle at their workplace, or when they do their shopping.

The forthcoming EV Infrastructure Strategy will also set out Government's vision for the future of EV charging. A strong focus will be on the needs of those who cannot rely on off-street charging. Local authorities and Chargepoint operators should work together to provide sufficient levels of provision in order to meet demand.

## ■ **Energy and Internet: Infrastructure**

**Owen Thompson:**

[\[44407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment the Government has made of the resilience of (a) power grids and (b) internet infrastructure against coronal mass ejections from the sun.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The Government works closely with infrastructure operators to ensure that the impacts of a severe space weather event are well understood, and the appropriate steps are taken to ensure the sector's preparedness for major space weather events.

## ■ **GKN: Birmingham**

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[45102\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of providing grants to support the transition of the GKN Driveline factory in Birmingham to produce components for electric vehicles.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

*[Holding answer 13 September 2021]:* The Government has no role in setting the strategic direction or priorities of private sector businesses. As part of the mandatory consultation process on the future of the GKN Driveline factory in Birmingham, the government secured assurances from GKN Automotive that they would consider viable alternatives to closure, including repurposing the plant to produce components for electric vehicles.

Alternative proposals were submitted as part of the consultation. After careful consideration, GKN regrettably concluded there were no viable alternatives to closure.

The government is maintaining a dialogue about the site's future, actively marketing the site and is working with GKN and local partners to provide support and guidance to the GKN employees. Any potential future commercial propositions for the Birmingham site will be assessed on their own merits.

The Government remains fully committed to working in partnership with industry to support the automotive sector's transition to zero emission vehicles. Nearly £500m has been made available through the Automotive Transformation Fund to build an internationally competitive electric vehicle supply chain as part of my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan. This will create thousands of well-paid green jobs in our industrial heartlands, including the West Midlands.

## ■ Motor Vehicles: Environmental Protection

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

**[44195]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help ensure that retailers financially offset any environmental damage incurred through their operations, including through their vehicle fleets and emissions.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The Government welcomes the efforts of retailers in supporting our transition towards net zero and strengthening our resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The British Retail Consortium have published a Climate Action Roadmap which offers detail on the actions needed for decarbonisation across retail operations, logistics, and supply chains and products.

On 18 August, the Retail Sector Council launched a national online initiative to help small independent retailers (SMEs) cut their carbon footprint and become more environmentally friendly . [Green Street](#) is an informative and accessible Hub, built by retailers for retailers to encourage planet friendly shopping.

## ■ Post Offices

**Ronnie Cowan:**

**[44381]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what (a) steps his Department is taking to ensure effective provision of post office services across the UK and (b) funding his Department has provided to support that provision in each of the last five years.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government protects the branch network by setting minimum access criteria and protects services by setting minimum services to be provided at post offices across the UK. These criteria ensure that 90% of the population are within one mile of the nearest post office branch and that 99% of the population are within three miles of the nearest post office branch.

The Government invested £640 million in the Post Office between 2015 and 2018, £370 million from 2018 to 2021 and £227 million in 2021/22. This funding allows Post Office Ltd to safeguard services in the uncommercial parts of the network and invest for the future.

## ■ Procurement

**Owen Thompson:**

[44408]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to tackle supply chain delays and disruptions to industrial supply chains as a result of the (a) covid-19 outbreak and (b) UK's departure from the EU.

**Paul Scully:**

The Government is committed to supporting UK manufacturing businesses and recognises the vital role they play in the UK economy, by driving innovation, exports, job creation and productivity growth. Successful resolution of supply chain pressures will be a joint effort between industry and Government, and we will continue to engage with other departments to find practical solutions to these challenges, which are not unique to the UK.

## ■ Trade Unions: Membership

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[44308]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people in employment who are members of a recognised trade union.

**Paul Scully:**

The Trade Union Membership 2020 Statistical Bulletin, published by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021, reports that the number of employees in the UK who are members of a recognised trade union is 6.6 million.

## ■ Wind Power: Seas and Oceans

**Mr Steve Baker:**

[R] [46975]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the average capital cost per megawatt of capacity is for UK offshore wind farms that (a) were commissioned in the last five years, (b) are due to be commissioned in the next five years and (c) was assumed in his Department's 2020 Cost of Electricity Generation report.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**

The Department's 2020 Cost of Electricity Generation Report[1] presents forecasts from 2025 to 2040. In response to point (c), the capital costs assumed in the report are £1.95million per megawatt capacity, in 2018 prices, for a UK offshore wind farm commissioning in 2025. The above can also be taken as the Department's assumption for (b), wind farms that are due to be commissioned in the next five years.

The Department does not hold historic project data on (a), capital costs for UK offshore wind farms commissioned in the past five years.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beis-electricity-generation-costs-2020>

**CABINET OFFICE**■ **Cabinet Office: Written Questions**

**Angela Rayner:** [\[46995\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, when he plans to answer Question 38276 tabled by the hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne on 22 July 2021.

**Chloe Smith:**

I refer the Rt Hon Member to the answer given to [PQ 38276](#) on 10 September 2021.

■ **Coronavirus: Surveys**

**Mr David Davis:** [\[45041\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether polling by the Government related to public opinion on covid-19 was conducted on 1 February 2020.

**Mr David Davis:** [\[45042\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether polling by the Government related to public opinion on covid-19 was conducted on 2 February 2020.

**Mr David Davis:** [\[45043\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether polling by the Government related to public opinion on covid-19 was conducted on 3 February 2020.

**Mr David Davis:** [\[45044\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether polling by the Government related to public opinion on covid-19 was conducted on 4 February 2020.

**Mr David Davis:** [\[45797\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether polling by the Government related to public opinion on covid-19 was conducted on 5 February 2020.

**Mr David Davis:** [\[45798\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether polling by the Government related to public opinion on covid-19 was conducted on 6 February 2020.

**Mr David Davis:** [\[45799\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether polling by the Government related to public opinion on covid-19 was conducted on 7 February 2020.

**Mr David Davis:**

**[45800]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether polling by the Government related to public opinion on covid-19 was conducted on 8 February 2020.

**Mr David Davis:**

**[45801]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether polling by the Government related to public opinion on covid-19 was conducted on 9 February 2020.

**Julia Lopez:**

I refer the Rt Hon Member to the answer given to PQs [186126-186130](#) on 29 April 2021.

Covid-19 polling for the cross-government public information campaign has been conducted regularly since the start of the pandemic. This work allows the Government to optimise campaign messaging and maximise effectiveness, ensuring vital public health information reaches as many people as possible. The insight gathered continue to inform the Government's ongoing communications strategy and response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and so shall not be published at this time.

The Cabinet Office publishes details of all contracts over £10,000 on Contracts Finder and spend over £500, including on public information campaigns, on a rolling basis. This will include expenditure on this campaign and will be broken down by supplier.

## ■ Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[44286]**

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make it his policy to include representatives from the Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice group in the membership of the inquiry commission into the response to the covid-19 outbreak; and if he will make a statement.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

On 12 May, the Prime Minister confirmed the public inquiry into COVID-19 will begin in Spring 2022. The Government recognises that it must engage and consult with bereaved families and others, before the terms of reference are finalised. The terms of reference will set out the purpose and structure of the Covid-19 inquiry, including the exact areas that will be investigated.

The Government is aware of Bereaved Families for Justice' call to be represented during the COVID-19 Inquiry. Throughout the pandemic senior ministers, including the Prime Minister, have met and will continue to meet with bereaved families.

We also recognise the need for bereaved families to be represented on the UK Commission on Covid Commemoration. The Commission will carefully consider how communities across the country can remember those who have lost their lives and recognise those involved in the response in a fitting and permanent way. I want to

thank the Bereaved Families for Justice group for all their efforts in representing bereaved families throughout the pandemic.

■ **Earl Mountbatten of Burma: Disclosure of Information**

**Chris Evans:** [\[41841\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his Department had any involvement in the drafting of the Ministerial Direction dated 5 August 2011 under section 9 of the National Heritage Act 1980 vetting the Mountbatten Archive in the University of Southampton.

**Chris Evans:** [\[41842\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether there was any communication from his Department to the University of Southampton prior to 5 August 2011 which mentions (a) the diaries of Lord or Lady Mountbatten or (b) any of their letters to each other.

**Chris Evans:** [\[41843\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether an official in his Department informed any employee or official of Southampton University prior to 5 August 2011 that it would be unlawful for that university to give public access to any of (a) the private diaries of Lord or Lady Mountbatten and (b) their letters to each other.

**Chloe Smith:**

As the hon. Member will be aware, there are several FOI exemptions that remain in place for historic records. As I said in previous answers, this case is currently before the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights) and it would not be appropriate to make further comment whilst this is subject to ongoing legal proceedings.

■ **Zero Hours Contracts: Ellesmere Port and Neston**

**Justin Madders:** [\[45156\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people are employed on zero hour contracts in Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency.

**Chloe Smith:**

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

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA response PQ45146 [UKSA final response to PQ45156 ().pdf]

**COP26****■ Carbon Emissions****Rachael Maskell:**[\[43567\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, if he will ensure that the potential merits of a carbon border tax or carbon border adjustment mechanism is discussed at the COP26 summit.

**Alok Sharma:**

Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms (CBAM) are not on the agenda for discussion at COP26. The agenda at COP26 will be determined by mandates as agreed by Parties at previous COPs and adopted by consensus.

**■ Coal Fired Power Stations: Construction****John Spellar:**[\[40591\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, what recent discussions the Government has had with Chinese counterparts on the construction of new coal plants in preparation for COP26.

**Alok Sharma:**

We have made the global energy transition from coal to clean power a priority of our COP26 Presidency. I raised this issue most recently during my visit to China on 6 and 7 September with Vice Premier Han Zheng, Chinese Special Envoy for Climate Change Minister Xie Zhenhua and the Head of China's National Energy Administration, Minister Zhang Jianhua. Additionally, the British Embassy in Beijing regularly engage with their Chinese counterparts on this issue. The Foreign Secretary has also discussed the importance of ambitious action to tackle climate change with his counterpart, State Councillor Wang Yi.

We will continue to engage with China to provide further details on how it will implement President Xi's commitment at the US Leaders' Summit on 22 April 2021 to reduce domestic coal consumption. Internationally, we are also working with China, as well as other financiers of international coal, through our COP26 energy transition campaign in collaborating to make renewables more attractive than coal power for all countries. Together with the G7, we have committed to rapidly accelerate the transition away from unabated coal capacity to an overwhelmingly decarbonised power system in the 2030s; and to end new direct government support for unabated international coal power generation by the end of 2021.

**■ COP26: Welsh Government****Ruth Jones:**[\[43663\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, when he last met Ministers in the Welsh Government.

**Alok Sharma:**

I am working with the Welsh Government, alongside the other devolved administrations, to ensure an inclusive and ambitious COP26 for the whole of the UK. I chair a regular COP26 Devolved Administrations (DAs) Ministerial Group which the



Minister for Climate Change, Julie James MS, attends on behalf of the Welsh Government. Our last meeting was in June and our next meeting will be later this month.

The COP26 Unit also worked with the Welsh Government and other DAs to encourage proposals from stakeholders, such as the renewables industry, across the UK via the Expression of Interest process for events or showcasing in UK Government managed spaces at COP26.

## ■ Environment Protection

**Darren Jones:**

[\[42072\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, whether the (a) membership of and (b) terms of reference for the (i) Climate Action Strategy Committee, (ii) Climate Action Implementation Committee, (iii) Climate Change National Strategic Implementation Group, (iv) National Strategic Implementation Group Net Zero Sub-Group, (v) National Strategic Implementation Group Domestic Adaptation and Resilience Sub-Group and (vi) 25 Year Environmental Plan Board have been published.

**Alok Sharma:**

GOV.UK is updated regularly with the terms of reference and membership of Cabinet Committees, including the Climate Action Strategy Committee and Climate Action Implementation Committee.

The membership and terms of reference have not been published for the following officials' forums: the National Strategic Implementation Group Net Zero Sub-Group; the National Strategic Implementation Group Domestic Adaptation and Resilience Sub-Group; and the 25 Year Environment Board.

## ■ UN Climate Conference 2021

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[42115\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, what recent assessment he has made of the Government's preparedness for COP26.

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[42117\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, what recent assessment he has made of the Government's preparedness for the COP26 summit.

**Alok Sharma:**

COP26 is an event of global importance where the world must work together to secure a comprehensive and ambitious set of outcomes that accelerate climate action and keep 1.5C alive. This includes finalising the Paris Rulebook, supporting the full implementation of the Paris Agreement and addressing the gaps on ambition in reducing emissions this decade, mobilising finance, and adapting to our changing world.

COP26 logistical preparations are well established and we have a robust governance structure, involving close co-operation between Scottish, wider UK and international



partners to ensure we host a safe and secure event that meets our objectives. Our preparations include a thorough risk assessment and mitigation plan along with a robust testing and exercise programme.

In terms of COVID, the COP26 Unit has been working closely with public health officials, the Scottish Government, the WHO, the UNFCCC and all our partners to create a comprehensive set of COVID mitigations to ensure preparedness for the conference – the safety of participants and the local population is at the heart of all our planning. This includes a specific test, trace and protect regime, social distancing, enhanced ventilation, face coverings and vaccinations.

### ■ UN Climate Conference 2021: Schools

**Stuart Anderson:**

[\[42131\]](#)

To ask the President of COP26, what steps he is taking to ensure that schools are represented at COP26.

**Alok Sharma:**

All young people, including those of school-age, are an important voice and we recognise they are calling for urgent action, which is why we have established a dedicated COP26 youth engagement team in the Cabinet Office, who are ensuring youth voices are heard at COP26.

In the run up to the conference in November, the UK COP26 Presidency launched the Together for our Planet Schools Pack which was sent to approximately 30,000 schools across the UK. The pack is designed to engage students on climate action and help them to learn more about COP26.

At the conference itself, the UK COP26 Presidency is delighted to host Youth & Public Empowerment Day on Friday 5 November. We will also be reaching out to local school groups as part of our wider engagement activity to participate within a focused programme of activity in the UK-managed Green Zone at COP26.

## DEFENCE

### ■ Ajax Vehicles: Armed Conflict

**Mr Mark Francois:**

[\[46931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the oral contribution of the Minister for Defence Procurement of 9 September 2021, Official report, column 485, whether Ajax crews will only be permitted to engage enemy targets in battle with single round bursts of 40mm ammunition.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The vehicle is capable of firing a single round or burst engagement and it will be the decision of the vehicle commander at the time, which engagement is most appropriate for the tactical situation.

This capability provides us with enhanced resilience to meet future threats as armour and defence suites evolve.

■ **Ajax Vehicles: Armed Forces Compensation Scheme**

**Mr Mark Francois:** [\[46938\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the armed forces personnel injured during the trials of the Ajax Armoured Fighting Vehicle programme will be entitled to compensation under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) is a no-fault scheme which provides benefit for injury, illness or death caused wholly or predominantly by service on or after 6 April 2005. Personnel who have sustained injuries or illness whilst participating in the Armed Forces activities can make a claim under the scheme. Any award made is then offset by any successful common law damages settlement or vice versa to ensure there is no double recovery of compensation.

■ **Ajax Vehicles: Procurement**

**Mr Mark Francois:** [\[46932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the oral contribution of the Minister for Defence Procurement of 9 September 2021, Official report, column 485, whether he plans to publish the programmatic review of the Ajax programme.

**Jeremy Quin:**

I refer the Rt Hon. Member to the answer I gave on 8 June 2021 to Question 8558 to the Rt Hon. Member for North Durham (Mr Jones).

**Attachments:**

1. 8558 - Ajax Vehicles; Procurement [8558 - Ajax Vehicles Procurement.docx]

■ **Army: Recruitment**

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[45226\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will place in the Library a copy of the media buying brief for the 2021 army recruitment campaign, Fail. Learn. Win.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Media Buying Brief for the 2021 Army recruitment campaign, "Fail. Learn. Win" will be placed in the Library of the House shortly. It is currently being reviewed for any commercial sensitivities.

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[45227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will place in the Library a copy of the media buying brief for the 2021 A Soldier is a Soldier army recruitment campaign.

**Leo Docherty:**

The Media Buying Brief for the 2021 Army recruitment campaign, "A Soldier is a Soldier" will be placed in the Library of the House shortly. It is currently being reviewed for any commercial sensitivities.

**BOWMAN Combat Radio System****Mr Mark Francois:**[\[46934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the out of service date is for the Bowman tactical communications system.

**Jeremy Quin:**

I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave on 8 September 2021 to Question 40637 to right hon. Member for North Durham (Mr Kevan Jones).

**Attachments:**

1. 40637 - BOWMAN Combat Radio System [UIN 40637.docx]

**Challenger Tanks: Ammunition****Mr Mark Francois:**[\[44222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what is the cost of a Charm 3 round of 120mm armoured piercing ammunition used by the Challenger 2 Main battle Tank.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Charm 3 120mm armoured piercing ammunition used by the Challenger 2 Main battle Tank has not been manufactured since 2001. An estimated cost per round (Armour Piercing shot with necessary Propelling Charge and initiating TVE charge), based on latest prices, is approximately £2,762.

**Defence: Procurement****Owen Thompson:**[\[44409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to tackle potential supply chain delays and disruptions to defence supply chains as a result of the (a) covid-19 outbreak and (b) UK's departure from the EU.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) takes the health and resilience of its supply chains very seriously and we always work with suppliers to understand and take action on any threats that could result in their disruption. The initiatives that are in place include an extensive MOD-wide Supply Chain Resilience and Risk Programme, which aims to map our most critical supply chains to ensure that any potential impact on the delivery of Defence outputs is minimised.

The MOD is also active in the pan-government Global Supply Chains initiative to review those critical supply chains so that vulnerabilities can be assessed, and mitigations considered. In addition, we have worked closely together with industry at all levels and maintained an open dialogue, to identify and put in place the measures

needed to protect the supply chains of our key programmes, and to maintain the resilience of the UK's industrial and technology base.

Throughout the COVID crisis the MOD supported the Defence sector with increased government financial assistance including the Cabinet Office led initiative to support strategically important suppliers and the use of payments to maintain business continuity (commonly known as interim payments).

#### ■ Fleet Solid Support Ships: Procurement

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[44207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much public money has been spent on the tendering process of the Fleet Solid Support Ship contract.

**Jeremy Quin:**

Competitive Procurement Phase contracts have now been awarded to four consortia, all including UK companies, to mature their design proposals. The contracts are initially worth around £5 million each.

The majority of the remaining cost to the public purse for the tendering process for the Fleet Solid Support Ships is attributable to the personnel employed in the process, these are primarily existing Defence staff. The department is also supported by legal and professional services.

#### ■ LE TacCIS Programme: Staff

**Mr Mark Francois:**

[\[46933\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, who the Senior Responsible Owner for the Le Tacsis programme is; and whether that person is employed (a) part-time or (b) full-time on Le Tacsis.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the LE TacCIS programme is currently Major General Jonathan Cole. He combines his duties as SRO on LE TacCIS with being the Army's Chief information officer.

The SRO is supported by a dedicated Programme Director and programme team and, where appropriate, industry.

#### ■ Minesweepers: Sales

**Mr Mark Francois:**

[\[44209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the Sandown Class minehunters were first advertised for potential sale on the Defence Equipment Sales Authority website.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Sandown Class Minehunters were first advertised for potential sale on the GOV.UK website in their online brochure published on 6 September 2021.

## ■ Type 23 Frigates

**Mr Mark Francois:**

[\[40717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the location is of each of the 12 remaining Type 23 frigates in the Royal Navy.

**James Heapey:**

*[Holding answer 10 September 2021]:* As of 14 September 2021, HMS IRON DUKE, HMS SOMERSET, HMS SUTHERLAND and HMS ST ALBANS are in upkeep/refit at Devonport Royal Dockyard.

HMS RICHMOND and HMS KENT are supporting Carrier Strike Group 2021 in the Far East.

HMS MONTROSE is forward deployed to the Middle East.

The remaining five Type 23 Frigates (HMS ARGYLL, HMS LANCASTER, HMS NORTHUMBERLAND, HMS PORTLAND and HMS WESTMINSTER) are located in UK waters or the North Atlantic and are available for operations. Of these, HMS ARGYLL is supporting Defence at Security Equipment International (DSEI) in London.

## ■ Type 23 Frigates: Sales

**Mr Mark Francois:**

[\[44211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the latest Type 23 frigate to leave Royal Naval service was first advertised for potential sale on the Defence Equipment Sales Authority website.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The Type 23 frigate was first advertised for potential sale through the Defence Equipment Sales Authority on the Gov.UK website in their online brochure published on 6 September 2021.

## ■ Warrior Armoured Vehicle: Ammunition

**Mr Mark Francois:**

[\[44221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what is the cost of a single round of 30mm armoured piercing ammunition used by the Warrior Armoured Infantry Fighting Vehicle.

**Jeremy Quin:**

The last occasion the Ministry of Defence acquired such 30mm ammunition was in the early 1990's. I will write to my Rt Hon. Friend with further details and place a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ **Aerials: Middlesbrough****Grahame Morris:**[\[44296\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to protect television signal infrastructure following the Bilsdale transmitter fire and the time taken to restore television services.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

Arqiva - a private infrastructure company - operates the UK's terrestrial broadcast transmitter sites which carry BBC and commercial operators' TV services. We remain in close contact with Arqiva and broadcasters who are working as fast and as safely as they can to restore TV and radio services in the areas served by Bilsdale by using existing and new alternate transmission sites.

■ **Charities: Newport West****Ruth Jones:**[\[44448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps he has taken to support charities in Newport West to help them recover from the covid-19 outbreak.

**Matt Warman:**

Government recognises the dedicated charities and volunteers who have played a huge role in the national effort against coronavirus. From supporting the NHS, delivering food, tackling loneliness and social isolation and much more, they have delivered vital work throughout this pandemic.

That is why we provided an unprecedented multi-billion-pound package of support for charities and other civil society organisations and secured an exemption from the Covid-19 restrictions for essential volunteering.

Examples of DCMS funding awarded to registered charities in Newport West include:

- £1,900 to St David's Foundation Hospice Care
- £2,934 to Sparkle (South Wales) Limited
- £2,000 to Pillgwenlly Millennium Trust Limited
- £20,000 to Faith Christian Center UK

For more information on grants awarded, please see the COVID-19 Grants Tracker published by [360 Giving](#).

■ **Culture Recovery Fund: Applications****James Daly:**[\[45947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether his Department plans to provide support to smaller organisations that were unable to apply to

the third round of the Culture Recovery Fund as a result of the shorter application window of 11 days.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

Previous recipients of the Culture Recovery Fund in urgent need of CRF support who were unable to meet the deadline for Continuity Support can consider whether they meet the criteria for ACE's Emergency Resource Support - which has been designed so that any eligible organisation in urgent need can access support - and make an application to that programme if appropriate. This ACE route is open to previous recipients and non-recipients, who can request Permission to Apply until 30 September.

The question refers to Arts Council England's (ACE) application window, and therefore this answer likewise refers to ACE processes and to applicants who could have applied through ACE, rather than through the other DCMS Arms Length Bodies involved in delivering the Culture Recovery Fund. Different considerations apply for processes run by other Arms Length Bodies.

■ **Data Protection: EU Law**

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[44268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of plans announced on 26 August 2021 to change the UK's data regime on the continuation of the UK's EU data adequacy status.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

The UK regained autonomy over its domestic data protection laws on 1st January 2021. Exact alignment to EU law is not a requirement for EU data adequacy. Indeed, the thirteen EU 'adequate' countries, from Israel to New Zealand, each have data protection laws that are different to the EU's.

The UK can reshape its approach to regulation and seize opportunities with its new regulatory freedoms, helping to drive growth, innovation and competition across the country. The first step in delivering on that objective is the consultation that was announced on 26 August, which went live on 10 September.

In doing so, the UK intends to maintain its high standards of data protection and ensure that the UK data regime continues to be based on public trust in the responsible use of data. We will continue to engage with EU counterparts, as appropriate, on these issues.

■ **Football: Reviews**

**Lee Anderson:**

[\[45926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what progress his Department has made on delivering the fan-led review into football.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The Fan Led Review of Football Governance is moving at pace to reform our national game for the better.

The Review has heard over 100 hours of evidence from fan groups, clubs, and stakeholders - including from supporters representing over 130 football clubs; received over 170 submissions from groups, organisations and individuals; and over 20,000 responses from fans to an online survey seeking their views on what needs to change

The Review published its interim findings in July, and will publish its final report in the autumn.

**■ Gambling****Rachael Maskell:**[\[44390\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of taking a public health approach towards problematic gambling and the way in which relevant support is accessed.

**Rachael Maskell:**[\[44391\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether his Department is taking steps to prevent people from developing a problematic relationship with gambling by adopting a public health approach to that matter.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

The government views gambling-related harm as a public health issue. Gambling legislation and the requirements placed on operators by the independent regulator, the Gambling Commission, are intended to offer a wide range of protections, from those which make gambling safer for the population as a whole, such as controls on gambling products, to tailored protections for groups such as children and specific targeted interventions and support for those at most risk of harm. We are reviewing the Gambling Act to ensure that the protections in place are appropriate for the digital age.

In 2019, the government secured a commitment from industry to contribute £100m over four years to problem gambling treatment, alongside NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care continuing their work to improve and expand specialist treatment services. Up to 15 new clinics are set to open by 2023/24, 3 of which are already in operation.

**■ Gambling: York****Rachael Maskell:**[\[44389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 18 June 2021 to Question 10501 on Gambling: York, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people who have a problem with gambling in the city of York; and what steps he is taking to help tackle problem gambling in that city.



**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[44392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of people who have a problematic relationship with gambling that receive support to tackle that matter.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

Treatment and support for problem gambling is offered by a number of different treatment providers, including NHS England and third sector organisations such as the independent charity GambleAware. In its annual GB Treatment and Support survey for 2020, the independent charity GambleAware found that more than six in ten (63%) problem gamblers surveyed said they had used some form of treatment, advice or support in the past 12 months, compared to just over half (54%) in November 2019. The survey also found year-on-year increases in reported usage of treatment services (from 43% to 53%) and support and advice (from 39% to 48%) among problem gamblers.

While the government does not hold information regarding the numbers seeking help and/or support in the city of York, we remain committed to preventing gambling-related harm and ensuring those experiencing it are able to access the right treatment and support whenever and wherever they need it. The NHS Long-Term Plan, published in July 2019, announced the creation of up to 15 specialist problem gambling clinics by 2023/24, with up to £15 million of funding over the same period. Work continues on the phased expansion of these services, enabling the NHS to explore how best to use existing treatment models to reach those most in need of support.

While there is no specialist NHS gambling clinic based in York, individuals are able to access the Northern Gambling Service, based in Leeds with satellite clinics in Manchester and Sunderland, as well as national treatment services commissioned by GambleAware.

## ■ Internet: Repairs and Maintenance

**Owen Thompson:**

[\[44406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Government has made an estimate of the daily cost to the UK economy in the event of a potential internet outage.

**Matt Warman:**

Yes. The internet is essential to modern life and the government takes its security and resilience very seriously. DCMS works across government on a programme to ensure we understand the risks to, and the impacts of, disruption to our internet infrastructure. This work includes the assessment of the impacts on essential services, life, the economy and the functioning of the state.

## ■ National Lottery

**Anne Marie Morris:**

[\[46988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of new national lottery terminals offering additional services such as cash withdrawals.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

The Gambling Commission is responsible for regulating the National Lottery, including the operator of the National Lottery and the operation of National Lottery terminals.

The Gambling Commission in its role as overseer of the National Lottery licence must ensure that the National Lottery is run with all due propriety, the interests of every participant are protected and, subject to these two duties, that good cause returns are maximised.

There is a wide network of approximately 44,000 retailers that sell National Lottery products across the country, ranging from large chains of supermarkets to independent newsagents.

## ■ Television Licences: Non-payment

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[44371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the reasons for the gender imbalance in people prosecuted for TV licence evasion identified by the TV Licence Fee Enforcement Review conducted by David Perry QC.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

TV Licensing completed a review of the gender disparity in TV licence evasion prosecutions and published a Gender Disparity Report in 2017. The report explored some of the reasons why a gender imbalance exists but noted that there is no evidence of any discriminatory enforcement practices on the part of TV Licensing.

The government also noted its concern about the ongoing gender disparity of prosecutions for TV licence evasion in the consultation on decriminalisation of TV licence evasion launched in 2020.

The government is keeping the issue of decriminalisation under active consideration as part of the wider roadmap of reform of the BBC.

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[44373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he has taken to help ensure that the BBC change the tone and content of its written communications with households as recommended in the TV Licence Fee Enforcement Review conducted by David Perry QC.

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[44374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of changes implemented by the BBC in response to the recommendations in the TV Licence Fee Enforcement Review conducted by David Perry QC, including the recommendation that the BBC change the tone and content of its written communications with households.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

The BBC and TV Licensing are independent of the government and the government has no say over their day-to-day decisions, including the content and tone of their written communications with households.

Under the Royal Charter, it is for the BBC Board to ensure that arrangements for the collection of the licence fee are efficient, appropriate and proportionate.

As noted in the consultation on decriminalisation of TV licence evasion, the government remains concerned about the considerable stress and anxiety that TV Licensing communications and the criminal sanction can cause for individuals.

The government is keeping the issue of decriminalisation under active consideration as part of the wider roadmap of reform of the BBC.

**Kirsten Oswald:**

[\[45323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to David Perry QC's TV Licence Fee Enforcement Review, published 2015, what steps his Department took to implement the recommendation that gender disparity in TV licence prosecutions be the subject of investigation and consideration in the BBC Charter Review.

**Mr John Whittingdale:**

In the White Paper 'A BBC for the future: a broadcaster of distinction' published in 2016, the government considered the findings of the Perry Review and agreed with its assessment that the current regime represents a broadly fair and proportionate response to the problem of licence fee evasion and provides good value for money (both for licence fee payers and taxpayers).

The White Paper set out that, as part of the Charter Review process, the government saw evidence from the BBC that it was looking to address the recommendations from the Perry Review, including further work on gender disparity.

TV Licensing subsequently completed a review of the gender disparity in TV licence evasion prosecutions and published a Gender Disparity Report in 2017. The report explored some of the reasons why a gender imbalance exists but noted that there is no evidence of any discriminatory enforcement practices on the part of TV Licensing.

## ■ Tourism: Wales

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[44447\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps he has taken to support tourism businesses experiencing labour shortages in (a) Newport West and (b) Wales.

**Nigel Huddleston:**

The government understands that the tourism sector is currently facing significant skills gaps in some of England's most popular destinations. As stated in the Tourism Recovery Plan, we recognise the importance of building back better post-Covid with a more resilient tourism industry, employing more UK nationals in year-round quality jobs.

There is a significant amount of activity being undertaken by the government on skills which benefits the tourism industry. For example, the National Skills Fund represents a £2.5 billion investment in helping adults to gain the skills they need to improve their job prospects, while the Kickstart Scheme is providing funding to create hundreds of thousands of new job opportunities for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit.

We will continue to work closely with the industry-led Hospitality and Tourism Skills Board on a coordinated approach towards recruitment, retention and upskilling of the workforce.

## EDUCATION

### ■ Assessments

**Helen Hayes:**

[\[45216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what additional support his Department is providing to help schools and students prepare for exams in summer 2022 before Ofqual publishes final details of adjustments to those exams.

**Nick Gibb:**

It is vital that pupils, including those due to take exams, attend school to minimise the longer-term impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on their education, wellbeing, and wider development. Due to this, the Department has implemented a comprehensive attendance strategy to ensure absence as a result of COVID-19 is minimised. We continue to closely monitor absence levels and trends to ensure a focus on attendance remains throughout this academic year. The Department continues to work closely with local authorities and schools to help them re-engage pupils, including providing best practice advice. The Government's Supporting Families programme also continues to work with families where attendance issues are a significant concern.

The Department has also committed to an ambitious education recovery plan, including an investment of over £3 billion. This will provide direct and flexible support to schools through the introduction of the catch-up premium in academic year

2020/21 and the recovery premium in academic year 2021/22, as well as a significant expansion of the tutoring programme, to support children and young people to make up for education lost during the COVID-19 outbreak.

In addition, from Autumn 2021, schools and colleges will be able to access a grant to pay for senior mental health lead training, helping develop the knowledge and skills to implement an effective whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. An additional £7 million has been made available for local authorities to deliver the Wellbeing for Education Recovery programme.

### ■ **Breakfast Clubs: Disadvantaged**

**Robert Halfon:**

**[45103]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of breakfast club provision focused on disadvantaged children to help those children settle back into school following the summer break.

**Vicky Ford:**

The government is committed to continuing support for breakfast clubs, and we are funding up to a further £24 million to continue our programme over the next two years. This funding will support around 2,500 schools in disadvantaged areas meaning that thousands of children in low income families will be offered nutritious breakfasts.

The focus of the programme is to target the most disadvantaged areas of the country, including the Department for Education's Opportunity Areas. Schools will be eligible for the programme if they have 50% or more pupils within bands A-F of the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index scale. When schools join the programme, they will sign a partnership agreement that requires them to identify and target those children that are most in need of support.

The department has seen strong interest from eligible schools so far since we invited expressions of interest, and our programme will make a real difference in terms of children's health, attainment, wellbeing and readiness to learn. Our provider, Family Action, are currently recruiting schools on the programme through their enrolment process. The department is keen to encourage all schools to consider the benefits of breakfast provision, especially for those children who are most in need.

### ■ **Colour Vision Deficiency: Children and Young People**

**Mr Richard Holden:**

**[42192]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether supporting children and young people with colour blindness is covered in teacher training programmes.

**Nick Gibb:**

Quality of teaching is the most important in school factor for improving the outcomes for all children. This is particularly important for pupils with additional needs.

The Initial Teacher Training Core Content Framework (ITT CCF), published in November 2019, has been designed around how to support all pupils to succeed and seeks to widen access for all, including those pupils identified within the four areas of need set out in the special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice.

The ITT CCF is based on the best peer-reviewed evidence about what works and is designed to emphasise the importance of high quality teaching. The framework therefore deliberately does not detail approaches specific to particular additional needs, but what makes the most effective teaching.

In addition to the mandated minimum set out in the ITT CCF, the Department expects ITT providers and their partners to continue to tailor their curricula to the needs of their trainees and for the subject, phase and age range that the trainees will be teaching. Where relevant, this may include specific training for supporting children and young people with colour blindness.

#### ■ Education: Finance

**Helen Hayes:** [\[47023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the impact of the planned increase in NICs of the Health and Social Care levy on the budget for (a) early years providers, (b) schools, (c) FE colleges and (d) universities.

**Helen Hayes:** [\[47024\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the impact of the planned Health and Social Care levy on the budgets of (a) early years providers, (b) schools, (c) FE colleges and (d) universities.

**Nick Gibb:**

Further details on the approach to the planned increase in National Insurance contributions in relation to the health and social care levy, and its impact on nurseries, schools, colleges and universities, will be set out at the conclusion of the Spending Review on 27 October 2021.

#### ■ Immigration: Afghanistan

**Claudia Webbe:** [\[45303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether Afghan children who have recently arrived in the UK will be given educational support whilst waiting for their visas and full UK status to be processed.

**Vicky Ford:**

All children resident in the UK are entitled to access education irrespective of their immigration status.

We're working hard across government on a coordinated effort to resettle Afghan families, providing at least £12 million in extra education funding so Afghan children and young people get the best possible start in this country.

## ■ **Members: Correspondence**

**Rosie Cooper:**

[\[41754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he plans to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for West Lancashire of 21 July 2021 on a constituent's student finance decision, reference ZA56976.

**Nick Gibb:**

I can confirm that a response has been sent to the hon. Member for West Lancashire.

## ■ **National School Breakfast Programme**

**Kate Green:**

[\[45118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to (a) monitor and (b) publish data on (i) average food orders by schools supported through the National School Breakfast Programme this academic year, and (ii) the average percentage of students on roll that take up the offer of breakfast provision this academic year.

**Vicky Ford:**

The government is committed to continuing support for school breakfast clubs and we are further investing up to £24 million to continue our national programme for the next two years. This funding will support around 2,500 schools in disadvantaged areas, meaning that thousands of children from low-income families will be offered free nutritious breakfasts to better support their attainment, wellbeing and readiness to learn.

The focus of the programme is to target the most disadvantaged areas of the country, including the Department for Education's Opportunity Areas. Throughout the contract we will be working with our provider, Family Action, to monitor different aspects of the programme including the food ordering from schools, participation rates among children, and the benefits the programme is having on pupils who are attending. We will consider the best opportunities to share information on the programme as it progresses.

**Sally-Ann Hart:**

[\[45946\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans his Department has to monitor and publish data on the average (a) size of food orders by schools supported through the National School Breakfast Programme and (b) proportion of students enrolled on that Programme who take up the offer of breakfast provision during the 2021-22 academic year.

**Vicky Ford:**

The government is committed to continuing support for school breakfast clubs and we are investing up to £24 million to continue our national programme for the next two years. This funding will support around 2,500 schools in disadvantaged areas, meaning that thousands of children from low-income families will be offered free nutritious breakfasts to better support their attainment, wellbeing and readiness to learn.



The focus of the programme is to target the most disadvantaged areas of the country, including the Department for Education's Opportunity Areas. Throughout the contract we will be working with our provider, Family Action, to monitor different aspects of the programme including the food ordering from schools, participation rates among children, and the benefits the programme is having on pupils who are attending. We will consider the best opportunities to share information on the programme as it progresses.

■ **National School Breakfast Programme: Bexleyheath and Crayford**

**Sir David Evennett:**

[\[45804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether any schools in Bexleyheath and Crayford constituency will be supported by the new National School Breakfast Programme in the next academic year.

**Sally-Ann Hart:**

[\[45945\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether any schools in Hastings and Rye constituency will be supported by the new National School Breakfast Programme over the 2021-22 academic year.

**Vicky Ford:**

The government is committed to continuing support for school breakfast clubs and we are investing up to £24 million to continue our national programme for the next two years. This funding will support around 2,500 schools in disadvantaged areas meaning that thousands of children from low-income families will be offered free nutritious breakfasts to better support their attainment, wellbeing and readiness to learn.

The focus of the programme is to target the most disadvantaged areas of the country, including the Department for Education's Opportunity Areas. Schools' eligibility for the programme is based on the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) deprivation scale – a nationally recognised indicator of need – to ensure provision is directed where it is most needed. Schools will be eligible for the programme if they have 50% or more pupils within bands A-F of the IDACI scale.

The enrolment process for schools joining the programme is currently ongoing, and we have seen a strong interest so far from eligible schools since we invited the expressions of interest. Schools are currently still able to apply to join the programme. As we are still registering schools for the programme, it is too early to publish a list of participating schools. However, we will of course consider the best opportunities to share information on the programme as it progresses.

■ **Paramedical Staff: Training**

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

[\[45186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when his Department plans to publish the outcome of discussions with the Department of Health and Social Care on providing an exemption to the student finance equivalent or lower qualification rules for paramedicine.



**Michelle Donelan:**

The Department for Education continues to work closely with the Department of Health and Social Care on the possibility of extending the equivalent or lower qualification exemption to those studying paramedic science degrees.

**■ Pre-school Education: Enfield North****Feryal Clark:****[44460]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps his Department is taking to support (a) nurseries, (b) childminders and (c) other early years providers in Enfield North.

**Vicky Ford:**

The government has put unprecedented investment into the early years sector over the last decade, including over £3.5 billion in each of the past 3 years on our early education entitlements, as well as investing £44 million for the 2021/22 financial year, for local authorities to increase hourly rates paid to childcare providers for the government's free childcare entitlement offers.

In 2017 we introduced Tax-Free Childcare, which is available for parents of children aged 0-11 (or up to 16 if their child is disabled). Tax-Free Childcare uses the same income thresholds as 30 hours free childcare and contributes an additional 20% towards their childcare costs. This scheme can save parents up to £2,000 per year (or up to £4,000 for children with disabilities). In June 2021, 308,000 families used Tax-Free Childcare.

Working parents on a low income may also be eligible for help with up to 85% of their childcare costs (for children under 16) through Universal Credit Childcare. This is subject to a monthly limit of £646 for one child or £1108 for two or more children, payable in arrears.

We have also provided unprecedented support to early years providers during the COVID-19 outbreak, and settings have also had access to a range of business support packages, including the extended Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. As long as the staff in the nursery schools affected meet the criteria for the scheme, early years providers are still able to furlough their staff while that scheme remains in operation (for example, if settings have to close temporarily to manage local effects of COVID-19, such as infections).

We also have a number of government reforms to support the childminding profession and have made it easier to work as a childminder. These reforms include making it easier for childminders to access government funding, allowing them to work for up to half their time on non-domestic premises, and the creation of childminder agencies details for which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childminder-agencies-list-of-agencies>.

We continue to work with the early years sector and officials from the Department for Education regularly speak with Enfield Council's Early Years team to understand how they can best be supported to ensure that sufficient safe, appropriate, and affordable

childcare is available for those who need it now, and for all families who need it in the longer term.

■ **Pupil Premium: Arts**

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [\[44242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the answer on 24 June 2021 to Question 16805 on Pupil Premium: Arts, what recent progress he has made towards the allocation of the arts premium to secondary schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

Due to the need to focus on new priorities as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak last year, the arts premium is subject to this year's Spending Review. The Spending Review is due to conclude on Wednesday 27 October. The Government believes in a high-quality education for all pupils, and integral to this are music and the wider arts and creative subjects.

■ **Pupils: Food Poverty**

**Robert Halfon:** [\[44298\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support he is providing to schools to ensure child hunger is prevented as children return after the summer 2021 break.

**Robert Halfon:** [\[44299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the disruption caused to learning by child hunger on the return to school.

**Robert Halfon:** [\[44300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what support his Department is providing to schools to (a) understand and (b) tackle child hunger.

**Robert Halfon:** [\[44301\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what processes his Department has established to monitor levels of child hunger in (a) primary and (b) secondary schools in England and Wales.

**Vicky Ford:**

Schools are now fully open, and all children should be able to access a nutritious meal at school, free to those that are eligible for free school meals (FSM), helping to ensure they are well-nourished, develop healthy eating habits, and can concentrate and learn.

FSM eligibility is monitored through school census data. Currently, under the benefits-related criteria, 1.7 million of the most disadvantaged pupils are eligible for and claiming a FSM. An additional 1.3 million infants enjoy a free, healthy and nutritious meal at lunchtime following the introduction of the Universal Infant FSM policy in 2014.

Where pupils eligible for benefits-related FSM are required to stay at home due to COVID-19, schools should continue to work with their school catering team or food provider to offer good quality lunch parcels.

During 2021 the department is investing up to £220 million in our Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. Taking place in schools and community venues across the country, delivery began at Easter, has run across the summer and will run in the Christmas holidays. This programme supports disadvantaged pupils and their families with enriching activities, providing them with healthy food, helping them to learn new things and improving socialisation and well-being.

Beyond this, the Covid Local Support Grant continues to be available until the 30 September. This is being run by local authorities in England to support the hardest hit families and individuals with food and essential utility costs.

Since June 2020, the department has announced more than £3 billion to support education recovery, including over £950 million in flexible funding to schools and £1.5 billion for a national tutoring revolution. This will have a material impact in closing gaps that have emerged.

Recovery programmes have been designed to allow early years, school and college leaders the flexibility to support those pupils most in need, including the most disadvantaged and expand our reforms in two areas where the evidence is clear our investment will have a significant impact for disadvantaged children - high quality tutoring and great teaching.

Education is devolved, and it will be for the Welsh administration to respond regarding the position in Wales.

## ■ Schools: Coronavirus

**Clive Efford:**

**[41622]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish the scientific advice on which he based his decision to remove the requirement for wearing face coverings in secondary schools from 17 May 2021; and if he will make a statement.

**Nick Gibb:**

From 17 May, the Department no longer recommended face coverings for pupils in classrooms or communal areas in schools, or for staff in classrooms. In Step 4 of the roadmap, face coverings were no longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas.

The Department worked closely with Public Health England (PHE) and the Cabinet Office to consider a range of evidence, balancing both health and educational considerations. This included the latest available education data, latest data analysis on case rates in secondary school age children and the broader COVID-19 epidemiological position, as well as stakeholder intelligence from schools and further education colleges on their experiences of wearing face coverings in classrooms and any perceived effect on teaching, education, and communication.

As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education, particularly given that the direct clinical risks they face are extremely low and the wider success of the vaccine programme.

The reintroduction of face coverings for pupils, or staff, may be advised for a temporary period in response to particular localised outbreaks, including variants of concern. In all cases, any educational drawbacks should be balanced with the benefits of managing transmission.

The Department's policy on face coverings and other control measures is kept under review and is informed by the latest scientific and medical advice from PHE.

## ■ Schools: Finance

**Mr Toby Perkins:** [45094]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average funding per pupil is for each local authority in England by (a) secondary academies, (b) secondary local authority maintained schools, (c) primary academies and (d) primary local authority maintained schools.

**Mr Toby Perkins:** [45095]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the lowest average funding per pupil is for each local authority in England for (a) secondary academies, (b) secondary local authority maintained schools, (c) primary academies and (d) primary local authority maintained schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department produces published statistics on school revenue funding annually. The latest Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) publication, from January 2021, is available online and covers the average funding per pupil in the 2021/22 financial year for local authorities: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-2021-to-2022>.

The publication shows the average per pupil funding to schools for 5 to 16 year olds. There is no separate breakdown available for primary and secondary schools, nor for maintained schools and academies.

The publication does provide the primary unit of funding and secondary unit of funding, which can illustrate the breakdown of funding for primary and secondary schools. They are based on funding through the National Funding Formula (NFF) rather than the actual DSG allocations. Local authorities set their own local funding formulae, which means that the funding that schools receive, and how funding is split between primary and secondary schools, can differ from NFF allocations.

Maintained schools and academies are both funded on the same basis, based on their individual pupil and school level characteristics.

The attachment provides a table showing the average funding per pupil in 2021/22 for each local authority.

**Attachments:**

1. 45094 45095\_table [45094 45095\_table\_ 2021-22\_LA\_level\_average\_funding\_per\_pupil.xls]

**■ Schools: Pay****Feryal Clark:****[44466]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he plans to take to improve pay for (a) school staff, (b) teacher agency staff and (c) all other education and school workers.

**Nick Gibb:**

As set out in the 2020 Spending Review, there will be a pause to headline pay rises for the majority of public sector workforce this academic year. This is in order to ensure fairness between the public and private sector wage growth.

To protect the lowest earners, the School Teachers' Review Body has recommended a pay award of £250 for all teachers earning less than £24,000 (full time equivalent), with recommended equivalent values for those in the London pay areas, plus the reintroduction of advisory pay points on the Unqualified Teacher pay range. The Government has proposed accepting these recommendations.

Academies have the freedom to set their own pay policies.

The Department will assess the pay policy ahead of the 2022 pay round once the economic recovery is established and the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the wider labour market is clearer.

The Department remains committed to increasing the teacher starting salary to £30,000 to make teaching an attractive graduate option. Whilst pay restraint means that progress towards this commitment will be slower, the steps taken in recent years, including the 5.5% uplift to pay in September 2020, have already made a substantial difference to the competitiveness of early career pay.

The rate of pay depends on who employs a supply teacher. State maintained schools or local authorities who directly employ supply teachers must pay in accordance with the statutory arrangements for teachers laid down in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. If a supply teacher is employed by a non-maintained school, a multi-academy trust or agency, the employer can set the rates of pay and conditions of employment.

The Government gives schools the freedom to set terms and conditions for teaching assistants according to their own circumstances. Most local authority schools and academies choose to use the local government pay scales to pay their support staff in conjunction with National Joint Council terms and conditions, known as the green book. Given there is no requirement to do this, there is some variability in pay and conditions across the country.

The Government encourages employers to pay their workers more than the statutory minimum where they can afford to, although we recognise the ability to do so will vary across different sectors.

**■ Special Educational Needs**

**Justin Madders:** [45159]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 26 July 2021 to Question 35600 on Special Educational Needs, what data set is referred to in that Answer.

**Vicky Ford:**

We collect and publish data annually on children and young people with an education, health and care plan in England, which is available here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans>.

**Justin Madders:** [45847]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many Educational, Health Care Plans have been sought in each month of (a) 2021, (b) 2020 and (c) 2019.

**Vicky Ford:**

Monthly data on the number of Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) assessments is not available, but annual data is published at the following link: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans>.

The number of initial requests made for assessment for an EHCP in 2019 was 82,329 and 75,951 in 2020.

The department does not yet hold information on the number of EHCPs requested in 2021. This will be published in May 2022 at the link above.

**Rachael Maskell:** [45880]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he will make additional support available for SEND pupils from September 2021 to assist with (a) closing the attainment gap in accordance with their projected attainment and (b) wellbeing and mental health support.

**Vicky Ford:**

I refer the hon. Member for York Central to the answer I gave on 14 September 2021 to Question [43696](#).

Mental health and wellbeing are a priority for the government. Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, we have prioritised keeping schools open above all else, as long as it was safe to do so, because it is vital for children and young people's wellbeing, as well as their education.

In May, as part of Mental Health Awareness Week, we announced more than £17 million of mental health funding to improve mental health and wellbeing support in schools and colleges. This includes £7 million additional funding for local authorities to deliver the Wellbeing for Education Recovery programme. This builds on our £8 million funding for the Wellbeing for Education Return programme in the 2020-21 financial year, which provided free expert training, support and resources for staff dealing with children and young people experiencing additional pressures from the

last year – including trauma, anxiety, or grief. Wellbeing for Education Return has been used by more than 90% of councils since its launch last summer.

The £17 million funding will also support up to 7,800 schools and colleges in England, who will be offered funding worth £9.5 million to train a senior mental health lead from their staff in the next academic year, and is part of the Government's commitment to offering this training to all state schools and colleges by 2025. More information on this can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/senior-mental-health-lead-training#which-staff-can-get-the-training>.

Additionally, our Mental Health in Education Action Group, has worked to identify and put in place further specific help to education settings to provide support for children and young people's mental wellbeing at this critical time, and in the longer term.

This support for practice in schools is in addition to the £79 million boost to children and young people's mental health support we announced in March, which will include increasing the number of Mental Health Support Teams. The support teams, which provide early intervention on mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in schools and colleges, will grow from the 59 set up by last March to around 400 by April 2023, supporting nearly 3 million children. This increase means that millions of children and young people will have access to significantly expanded mental health services.

The department has brought together all of its sources of advice for schools and colleges into a single site, which includes signposting to external sources of mental health and wellbeing support for teachers, school staff and school leaders. This is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-in-schools-and-colleges#mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources>.

## ■ Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus

**Rachael Maskell:**

[45877]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the impact of the covid-19 outbreak on the on the attainment of SEND pupils.

**Vicky Ford:**

Understanding the impact of COVID-19 disruption on the attainment and progress of all pupils, is a key research priority for the government. The Department have commissioned Renaissance Learning to provide a baseline assessment of lost learning for pupils in schools in England and monitor progress over the course of the 2020/21 academic year. The latest interim findings from this research were published on 4 June and are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupils-progress-in-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year-interim-report>.

In Autumn 2020, primary aged special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) pupils experienced a learning loss of 14.8 scaled score points in reading, compared with 17.1 points for pupils without an identified SEND. There was no significant difference in learning loss between pupils with and without SEND in reading for secondary aged pupils, or maths for primary aged pupils. The Department will be using the research to further understand the continued impact of the COVID-19



outbreak on lost learning and education recovery. The next phase of the analysis will allow us to assess the impact of disruption to education between Autumn 2020 and Summer 2021 by pupil characteristics. The full report will be published once the study is completed in October 2021.

## ■ Special Educational Needs: Universities

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[44383\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to support people with learning disabilities wishing to study at university who do not meet the university's entry requirements as a result of their learning disability.

**Rachael Maskell:** [\[44384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to ensure mature students with learning disabilities receive support and encouragement to access higher education.

**Michelle Donelan:**

Higher education (HE) providers, as autonomous bodies independent from government, are responsible for their own recruitment decisions.

The government believes HE should be accessible for all and disabled students are entitled to support so they can study alongside fellow students on an equal basis. HE providers are responsible for providing a safe and inclusive environment for all disabled students.

The government expects all HE providers to fulfil their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, to make reasonable adjustments for all disabled HE students.

Where students are concerned that the appropriate support is not available, we expect student complaints and appeals processes to be operated flexibly, accessibly, and sympathetically by providers to resolve any concerns. If the student is not satisfied with the provider's final response to their complaint, and the provider is in England or Wales, they can ask the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education to consider the complaint.

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) helps students with the additional costs they may face in higher education because of their disability, including long-term health conditions, mental health difficulties, or specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

It can be used for the purchase of specialist equipment, for travel, or to pay for non-medical help.

DSA is not means tested, does not have to be repaid, and is available to full-time and part-time students at undergraduate, including mature students, and postgraduate level.



## ■ Summer Schools

**Mr Jonathan Lord:**

**[41863]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the 2021 summer schools programme.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Government made £200 million available this summer so that secondary schools could deliver face-to-face summer schools. Schools were able to fund provision based on the needs of their students, delivering a blend of academic activities and enrichment activities, including mental wellbeing support. This is alongside wider support funded through our Holiday Activities and Food Programme across the country, where £220 million was made available to local authorities.

Over 2,800 secondary schools signed up to participate in the summer schools programme. This is 74% of all eligible mainstream secondary schools and it means that over 500,000 pupils will have been invited to take part. This will help recover lost education and to give pupils the confidence they need to start the academic year. Schools will claim their funding for summer school places in October on the basis of pupil attendance.

As part of the Government's commitment to developing a longer-term education recovery plan, understanding the effectiveness and success of the 2021 summer schools programme is a key priority for the Department. We have designed a research study to help us to better understand the perceived impact of summer schools on children's wellbeing, transition to secondary school, and academic recovery. An independent research agency will carry out the analysis and reporting of this important research for the Department, and the evaluation will be published on [gov.uk](https://gov.uk).

## ■ Teachers: Vacancies

**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:**

**[44243]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Initial teacher training market review report published in July 2021, what plans his Department has made to tackle the potential shortfall in teacher trainee positions.

**Nick Gibb:**

The review has focused on producing recommendations aimed at increasing the quality, consistency, and coherence of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) for trainee teachers. Ensuring there are sufficient well-trained teachers in the subjects that schools want is one of the priorities of the review and the Department will be proceeding carefully to make sure this is maintained.

To deliver the quality requirements set out in the report, ITT providers would have to consider how they are going to do this successfully, and the Department anticipates that some market reconfiguration and the development of new capacity will be necessary in order to do so. We intend to respond to the report and its

recommendations this autumn. If the recommendations are accepted, the Department's priority during the transition period to any new configuration will be ensuring that the capacity continues to exist, in all parts of the country, to offer enough training places to meet the continuing teacher supply needs across the whole education system.

## ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

### ■ Agriculture: Free Movement

**Tim Farron:** [44277]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will publish the total amount spent by his Department on research of the impact of ending free movement on the agriculture industry.

**Victoria Prentis:**

Defra has not commissioned any external research on this topic.

### ■ Air Pollution

**Ruth Jones:** [44436]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he last had discussions with the Mayor of London on toxic air.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The Secretary of State met the Mayor of London on 5 July. Air quality was one of the topics that were discussed.

### ■ Air Pollution: Coronavirus

**Ruth Jones:** [44435]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential for a link between toxic air and covid-19 symptoms.

**Rebecca Pow:**

We published a report on 1 July 2020 outlining the findings from the recent rapid Call for Evidence we ran with our Air Quality Expert Group, to ensure we can more fully understand the impact the pandemic had on air pollutant emissions, concentrations and human exposure: [https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/reports.php?report\\_id=1005](https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/reports.php?report_id=1005).

In August 2020, we also published the findings of a study done by the Government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS), in collaboration with Defra, Public Health England and both air quality expert groups (Defra's Air Quality Expert Group and DHSC's Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants).

This research did not suggest a strong link between exposure to air pollution and mortality rates from Covid-19:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/methodologies/coronavirus/covid19relatedmortalityratesandtheeffectsofairpollutioninengland>

In line with previous studies, this report shows that people who are at greater risk of severe illness from Covid-19 are also at most risk of exposure to air pollution, but the evidence is not strong enough to suggest that air pollution is having a direct link to the spread or severity of Covid-19. Nevertheless, it is clear, that improved air quality is an important measure in helping us to reduce the burden placed on people's health.

## ■ Cats and Dogs: Imports

**Kenny MacAskill:**

**[47060]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many (a) dogs and (b) cats were imported under the Balai Directive in each month of 2021 to date.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The information the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) has provided below is a true reflection of the information that we have access to. APHA cannot guarantee the accuracy of this data, as we rely on information that has been input into IPAFFS and PIMS by traders.

### NUMBER OF CATS AND DOGS IMPORTED FROM EU UNDER THE BALAI DIRECTIVE

2021	Dogs	Cats
Jan	1399	87
Feb	5997	479
Mar	8103	554
April	8411	476
May	7383	432
June	6270	371
July	6767	538
Aug	6985	635

### NUMBER OF CATS AND DOGS IMPORTED FROM THIRD COUNTRIES UNDER THE BALAI DIRECTIVE

2021	Dogs	Cats
Jan	266	310
Feb	381	423

**NUMBER OF CATS AND DOGS IMPORTED FROM THIRD COUNTRIES UNDER THE BALAI DIRECTIVE**

Mar	340	552
April	430	494
May	474	449
June	527	474
July	397	464
Aug	485	398

**Kenny MacAskill:**[\[47061\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many (a) dogs and (b) cats were imported using the Pet Travel Scheme in each month of 2021 to date.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The data regarding the Pet Travel Scheme covers pets entering Great Britain and is based on information provided by checkers employed by approved carriers of pet animals.

**DOGS AND CATS IMPORTED INTO GB UNDER THE PET TRAVEL SCHEME**

2021	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug
Cats	1445	1526	1966	1841	1794	2668	2565	August 2021 data is not yet available
Dogs	6269	7908	10657	10052	10490	14873	12972	August 2021 data is not yet available

■ **Deposit Return Schemes****Jeremy Hunt:**[\[46958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress his Department has made on introducing a deposit return scheme.

**Rebecca Pow:**

A second consultation on introducing a deposit return scheme (DRS) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland was published earlier this year and is now closed. The

Government is analysing the responses to that consultation, with a view to publishing a Government response in due course.

## ■ Dogs: Imports

**Kenny MacAskil:**

[\[47062\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which countries exported dogs commercially into the UK in the first eight months of 2021.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The information the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) has provided is a true reflection of the information that we have access to. APHA cannot guarantee the accuracy of this data, as we can only rely on the information that has been input into IPAFFS and PIMS by traders.

APHA can only provide data for imports entering Great Britain.

### **DOGS COMMERCIALY IMPORTED INTO GB - COUNTRY OF ORIGIN.**

Argentina	Egypt	Lithuania	Russian Federation
Australia	Estonia	Macao	Saudi Arabia
Austria	Ethiopia	Malaysia	Serbia
Bahamas	Finland	Malta	Singapore
Bahrain	France	Mexico	Slovakia
Barbados	Germany	Namibia	Slovenia
Belarus	Greece	Nepal	South Africa
Belgium	Hong Kong	Netherlands	South Korea
Bermuda	Hungary	New Zealand	Spain
Brazil	Iceland	Nigeria	Sweden
Bulgaria	India	Northern Ireland	Switzerland
Canada	Indonesia	Norway	Taiwan
Cayman Islands	Israel	Oman	Thailand
China	Italy	Panama	Turkey
Colombia	Jamaica	Peru	Ukraine
Costa Rica	Japan	Philippines	United Arab Emirates
Croatia	Jordan	Poland	United States of America

**DOGS COMMERCIALY IMPORTED INTO GB - COUNTRY OF ORIGIN.**


---

Cyprus	Kenya	Portugal	Zimbabwe
Czechia	Kuwait	Qatar	
Denmark	Latvia	Republic of Ireland	
Ecuador	Lebanon	Romania	

■ **Food Supply****Stuart Anderson:**[\[44449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment he has made on the resilience of food supply chains to (a) supermarkets and (b) high street food stores.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The UK has a high level of food security built on diverse and robust supply chains, from strong domestic production and trade with a range of stable sources. The food industry is experienced in dealing with disruptions to food supply, as we have seen throughout the Covid-19 response.

In addition, the Government has well-established ways of working with the food industry to ensure that food supply, which is one of the UK's Critical Infrastructure sectors, can continue to operate. This includes extensive and ongoing engagement with food retailers in preparedness for, and response to, potential food supply chain disruptions and continuing to work with businesses to minimise disruption from the issue of staff having to isolate.

■ **Food: Labelling****Rachael Maskell:**[\[44387\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of introducing a carbon rating system on food labelling to indicate to consumers the carbon footprint of their food purchases.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The environmental impacts of food are complex, with the whole food chain having a role to play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and meeting both domestic and international climate targets.

Measuring emissions from food is therefore complex and no single metric can yet capture the full picture. A food carbon footprint is just one sustainability indicator which could be used to measure and improve sustainability across the food chain, from farm to fork.

The Government is supportive of work being done in this area and is working with academia and industry stakeholders. We have commissioned new research by WRAP to bridge the identified evidence gaps. We recognise the benefits of a standard approach in defining metrics and capturing, calculating, and recording data for greenhouse gas emissions reduction. This research aims to agree a common set of emission factors (reviewed by an expert panel with Government and industry representation), whilst also reviewing the pathway to robust data for supply chain emissions and governance.

Through our consumer insights work we are creating a solid evidence base to best understand both consumer and industry appetite for carbon and additional eco-labelling, along with understanding how consumers might use this information when in store. It will also help us understand whether such labelling leads to more sustainable supply chains.

We are continuing to investigate further opportunities to review other aspects of food labelling throughout the development of the forthcoming government Food Strategy White Paper.

## ■ Grasslands: Environment Protection

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

**[44273]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to protect and restore grasslands in the UK.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Species-rich grasslands are vital for biodiversity and their retention and management can play an important part in safeguarding carbon stores. Domestic biodiversity policy is devolved in the UK and so this response relates to England only.

Our 25 Year Environment Plan marked a step change in ambition for nature, and we are already putting in place new legislation and new investment to meet this ambition. Our Environment Bill requires a new, historic legally binding target to be set to halt the decline in species abundance by 2030. A domestic 2030 species target will not only benefit our species but the actions necessary to deliver it will also help to drive wider environmental improvements.

The Bill also introduces Local Nature Recovery Strategies which will identify priorities and opportunities for nature recovery and help drive investment and action to expand, improve and connect habitats, including grasslands, and establish a Nature Recovery Network.

We are committed to protecting 30% of our land for biodiversity. Our Sites of Special Scientific Interest protect our most important grasslands, and provide a wide range of other benefits including flood control, water purification, and carbon storage.

We are introducing three new environmental land management schemes which will support farmers and land managers to deliver a range of environmental benefits. These schemes will reward sustainable farming practices, reducing carbon

emissions, creating and preserving habitat, including grasslands, and making landscape-scale environmental changes.

We have also invested in nature restoration to tackle biodiversity loss and climate change and to safeguard green jobs, for example through our £80m Green Recovery Challenge Fund. Plantlife's 'Meadow Makers' project, which was awarded over £700,000 in the first round, is restoring 500 hectares of species-rich grassland at 100+ sites across seven landscapes.

The Government will publish a Green Paper before the end of the year which will set out our approach to driving nature recovery in England and provide the primary vehicle for developing and engaging on our future plans and proposals.

### ■ Horses: Animal Breeding

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[44274]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the prevalence of unregulated horse breeding in the UK; and whether he plans to bring forward (a) legislative or (b) regulatory proposals on tackling equine overbreeding.

**Victoria Prentis:**

To promote responsible ownership, there is clear guidance available to educate and remind horse owners of their responsibilities to provide for the welfare needs of their animal. The statutory Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses, Ponies, Donkeys and Their Hybrids makes clear that you should consider buying or rehoming a youngster before taking the decision to breed. The foal's individual future must also be considered before breeding from your equine, and the code highlights the UK's overpopulation problem at the time of publication. The Code can be found here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/700200/horses-welfare-codes-of-practice-april2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/700200/horses-welfare-codes-of-practice-april2018.pdf)

Further information on responsible breeding is available to the public, including World Horse Welfare's "Need to Breed" initiative which can be found here:

<https://www.worldhorsecelfare.org/advice/management/do-you-need-to-breed>.

The Government considers that the key issue at stake here is how well equines are cared for after they have been born, and existing protections address this. We continue to engage closely with key stakeholders in the equine sector about these issues. The Government currently has no plans to introduce additional legislation or regulation specifically relating to breeding levels themselves.

### ■ Horticulture: Free Movement

**Tim Farron:**

[44278]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will publish the total amount spent by his Department on researching the impact of ending free movement on the horticulture industry.



**Victoria Prentis:**

Defra has not commissioned any external research on this topic.

**■ Pest Control****Steve Reed:****[46992]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of pest control services provided by local authorities.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Depending on the cause of an infestation, local authorities have certain responsibilities where pest control is concerned and they have the flexibility to allocate resources to address local priorities, based on an assessment of risk. Local priorities will vary across geographical areas and might involve one or more type of pest ranging from wasps, rats, mice and bedbugs. Under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, local authorities have a duty to deal with infestations of rats and mice.

In order to help coordinate central Government's expectation of regulatory services in local government, including environmental health services, and to propose short and long-term options to support these essential services the Government is supporting regulatory services teams through the Regulatory Services Task and Finish Group.

**■ Pinnipeds: Animal Welfare****Dr Matthew Offord:****[44307]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of making the intentional disturbance of pinnipeds a criminal offence.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Both native grey seals and common seals species are currently protected in the UK under relevant wildlife legislation. Details can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protected-marine-species/seals>

The Government recognises that disturbance by members of the public can be detrimental and, on occasion, fatal to seals. Therefore, together with Seal Alliance, we launched a new Government-backed campaign, 'Give Seals Space', to help raise awareness of the impact that human disturbance can have on seals and to help reduce it.

Through the Marine Management Organisation, the Government has been supporting 'Operation Seabird' which aims to tackle increases in disturbance to marine wildlife, including seals, by providing education and guidance to prevent wildlife disturbances and to prosecute with the support of local police forces where necessary.

We will continue to identify opportunities to raise awareness and support efforts to minimise disturbance of seals. We are also investigating what other actions could be

taken to better protect seals, such as developing and distributing clear guidelines to boat operators, those partaking in recreational water sports, and the public.

## ■ Plastic Bags: Fees and Charges

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

**[44196]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps is he taking to ensure effective oversight of the plastic bag charge to ensure that proceeds are allocated to environmental causes.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Since 5 October 2015, large retailers (250 or more employees) in England have been required by law to charge 5p for all single use plastic carrier bags. The charge was increased from 5p to 10p and extended to all retailers from 21 May 2021. Large retailers are also required by law to report certain information to Defra every year including what they did with the proceeds from the charge.

While it is strongly encouraged that the net proceeds from the charge should be donated to good causes, especially environmental ones, this is not a legal requirement. Therefore, if retailers do choose to donate to charity, any decisions about this will be personal each individual business. Since the introduction of the charge in 2015, retailers that have reported their proceeds to us have donated nearly £190 million to their chosen good causes.

In the last reporting year of 2020 to 2021, 38% of retailers who reported gave additional information on how they chose to donate their proceeds from the carrier bag charge. These retailers donated a total of £10.9 million to good causes. Out of the total amount donated by retailers to good causes:

- £0.1 million (1%) went to health, environment and heritage
- £0.3 million (3%) went to charity or volunteering sectors
- £3.0 million (27%) went to causes just chosen by customers or staff
- £7.5 million (69%) went to a combination of more than one good cause (relating to education, arts, heritage, sports, environment, health, charity or volunteering sectors and causes chosen by customers or staff)

It is important to note that this data cannot be directly compared with that of previous years, due to unique circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The legal obligation for retailers to charge for single use plastic carrier bags supplied with online grocery deliveries was removed from 21 March 2020 to 21 September 2020, and during this exemption period the reporting requirement for large retailers was also removed.

The information is available on the most recent publication [Single-use plastic carrier bags charge: data for England 2020 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/single-use-plastic-carrier-bags-charge-data-for-england-2020-to-2021), which summarises all data collected by Defra for the reporting year from 7 April 2020 to 6 April 2021, including the donation information. We have previously published

summaries for earlier years and published the [full datasets on data.gov.uk](https://data.gov.uk), this includes all reporting details provided by each retailer.

## ■ **Plastics: Waste Disposal**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

**[44275]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, further to the Answer of 19 July to Question 30326, if he will make an assessment of the compatibility of the 30% recycled plastic content criterion in the plastic packaging tax with the Government's commitment to all plastic packaging on the market being recyclable, reusable, or compostable by 2025.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The world-leading Plastic Packaging Tax that is set to be introduced in April 2022 will increase demand for recycled plastic by encouraging the use of recycled plastic content in the manufacture of plastic packaging, addressing concerns raised by stakeholders that a lack of market demand for recycled plastics has held back recycling.

Our proposed collection and packaging reforms that will help us work towards our milestone of all plastic packaging placed on the UK market being recyclable, reusable, or compostable by 2025 are complementary to the tax. These include a Deposit Return Scheme for beverage containers, a requirement for a core set of materials to be collected from households and businesses for recycling and extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging. Packaging EPR will incentivise producers to make better design choices and to use plastic packaging that can be recycled or re-used. Collectively, these proposals will increase the supply of good-quality material for recycling, including for plastic packaging with recycled content. We have recently closed consultations on each and are analysing the responses and evidence submitted by consultees.

Our work towards achieving our plastic packaging commitment and the Plastics Packaging Tax are complementary measures and hence further assessment of the compatibility of the 30% recycled plastic content criterion and the commitment is not needed.

## ■ **Recycling**

**Steve Reed:**

**[46991]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department holds information on the number of recycling sites operated by each local authority in England.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Defra collects information on the number of Civic Amenity Sites (household waste recycling centres) operated by a local authority or its contractors. This information is only reported for quarter 4 (January to March) of each financial year. Two questions

are completed, one by waste disposal authorities for each district and the other is completed by unitary authorities and waste collection authorities.

The latest available data is for January to March 2020. This data can be found at the following link: [WasteDataFlow - Local Authority waste management on data.gov.uk](https://data.gov.uk/data/waste-data-flow-local-authority-waste-management)

The data can be filtered by setting the 'question column' to 'Q013' (Waste Disposal Authorities) or 'Q015' (Unitary Authorities and Waste Collection Authorities). Then the number of Civic Amenity Sites for each local authority will be presented in the 'data column'.

Data for the period Jan - March 2021 is currently being reported by local authorities, and is provisionally scheduled to be published in December 2021.

## ■ Slaughterhouses

**Chris Loder:** [44450]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will release the method of slaughter statistics for (a) 2019, (b) 2020 and (c) 2021.

**Victoria Prentis:**

The last method of slaughter survey was undertaken by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in 2018 and the results were published in February 2019 - [Farm animals: survey of slaughter methods 2018 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farm-animals-survey-of-slaughter-methods-2018).

The survey is not conducted annually and we are planning for it to be carried out again by the FSA in early 2022.

## ■ Sulphur Hexafluoride

**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [46922]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of (a) trends in SF<sub>6</sub> gas emissions and (b) the effect of the continued use of SF<sub>6</sub> gases in electrical switchgear on SF<sub>6</sub> gas accumulation in the atmosphere.

**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [46923]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent estimate he has made of the amount of SF<sub>6</sub> gas that is (a) manufactured in the UK, (b) imported in to the UK and (c) exported from the UK.

**Dr Alan Whitehead:** [46924]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of phasing out the use of SF<sub>6</sub> gas in electrical switchgear in response to its high global warming potential.

**Rebecca Pow:**

Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>) is a potent fluorinated greenhouse gas (F-gas) that contributes to climate change. F-gases currently represent about 3% of UK greenhouse gas emissions, with SF<sub>6</sub> emissions representing around 3% of those F-

gas emissions. The UK has made significant progress in reducing and controlling the use of F-gases, highlighted by the 34.3% reduction in UK emissions of all F-gases since 1995 levels.

Compliance with the F-gas Regulation 2014 is how the UK currently controls SF<sub>6</sub> emissions. Under the Regulation, equipment containing SF<sub>6</sub> is subject to requirements on leak reduction, checking and rapid repair using appropriately qualified personnel. The intentional release of SF<sub>6</sub> is also prohibited and steps must be taken to minimise unintentional release.

We are currently reviewing the provisions of the F-gas Regulation which we are required to complete by no later than 2022. As part of the review, we will consider how we can go further in support of the UK's net zero target. We will be assessing all parts of the Regulation, including the provisions relating to SF<sub>6</sub> use, in light of this.

## ■ Tree Planting

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

**[44310]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many hectares of trees have been planted by his Department in each of the last two years.

**Rebecca Pow:**

The latest statistics for new planting supported by central Government in England can be found in the [Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2020-21](#) on the gov.uk website. These most recent published provisional statistics are shown below:

YEAR (ENDING 31 MARCH)	GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED NEW PLANTING OF TREES IN ENGLAND (HECTARES)
2019-20	1,956
2020-21	1,892
2021-22 quarter 1 partial interim report	469

Source: Forestry Commission.

These statistics include new planting supported by the Government via the Rural Development Programme for England (Countryside Stewardship and the former English Woodland Creation Grant), the Woodland Carbon Fund, the High Speed 2 Woodland Fund, Forestry England, Natural England, the Environment Agency, the National Forest Company, in the Northern Forest, and by the Community Forests.

**FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE****■ Afghanistan: British Nationals Abroad****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[44429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of British nationals from Slough who are in Afghanistan.

**James Duddridge:**

We have worked tirelessly to safely evacuate the overwhelming majority of British Nationals and Afghans who worked for us. We have asked all British nationals who remain in Afghanistan to register their presence with us to give us a detailed picture of those remaining, and an additional means, beyond our publicly-available Travel Advice, for us to be able to send regular updates and advice on what they should do next. That process is ongoing. We continue to look at all possible avenues to ensure that any British Nationals are able to leave safely if they wish to.

**■ Afghanistan: Christianity****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[44227\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the right of Christians to practise their religion in Afghanistan.

**James Duddridge:**

Minister for Human Rights Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon addressed the UN Human Rights Council on 24 August to underscore the UK's commitment to protecting the human rights of all Afghan people, including Christians and others at risk of persecution, and holding the Taliban to account. The UK is formally launching a separate resettlement programme, the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, providing a safe and legal route for up to 20,000 Afghans in the region over the coming years, with 5,000 in the first year. This scheme will include Afghans who face a particular risk from the Taliban, for example because of their role in standing up for democracy and human rights or because of their gender, sexuality or religion.

**■ Afghanistan: Hinduism****Andrew Rosindell:**[\[44229\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps is his Department taking to help ensure the safety of Hindus in Afghanistan.

**James Duddridge:**

Minister for Human Rights Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon addressed the UN Human Rights Council on 24 August to underscore the UK's commitment to protecting the human rights of all Afghan people, including all religious minorities and others at risk of persecution, and holding the Taliban to account. The UK is formally

launching a separate resettlement programme, the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, providing a safe and legal route for up to 20,000 Afghans in the region over the coming years, with 5,000 in the first year. This scheme will include Afghans who face a particular risk from the Taliban, for example because of their role in standing up for democracy and human rights or because of their gender, sexuality or religion.

## ■ Afghanistan: Peace Negotiations

**Lisa Nandy:**

[\[46985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department made an assessment of the potential implications for (a) the UK and (b) Afghanistan of the Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan signed by the US Administration and the Taliban in February 2020 before that Agreement was signed.

**James Duddridge:**

The UK pushed hard for peace. We worked closely with international and regional partners, including the United States, to support Afghan peace efforts, including through diplomatic support and technical advice. Alongside international partners, we engaged with the Afghan government and Taliban negotiating teams.

## ■ Afghanistan: Politics and Government

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[44313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the implications for his policies of the announcement of a government in Afghanistan.

**James Duddridge:**

The 'caretaker' appointments announced by the Taliban on 7 September did not reflect the diversity of the country's regions and communities, or women. We call on the Taliban to pursue inclusive politics and an inclusive society. Our approach to the Taliban will be shaped by what they now do. We have made clear to the Taliban our expectations in areas such as counter-terrorism, humanitarian access, and human rights, and are working with our partners in order to seek to exercise a moderating influence on the Taliban where we can.

## ■ Afghanistan: Refugees

**Stephen Farry:**

[\[44481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will publish a breakdown by category of Afghans evacuated by the UK from Kabul since 15 August 2021 under the special cases provision.

**James Duddridge:**

As of 28 August, 8589 Afghans who worked for us have been evacuated and are being resettled under the ARAP scheme, taking the total to over 10,500 since the scheme was extended on 1 April. Between 15 and 29 August, the UK also evacuated around 500 special cases of particularly vulnerable Afghans, including Chevening



scholars, journalists, human rights defenders, campaigners for women's rights, judges and many others.

**Lisa Nandy:**

[\[46983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to facilitate the departure from Afghanistan of UK citizens and Afghan nationals eligible for relocation to the UK on international flights currently being allowed to depart from Kabul Airport.

**James Duddridge:**

We worked tirelessly during Operation Pitting to evacuate safely the overwhelming majority of UK nationals and eligible Afghan staff. We are continuing to explore all routes with neighbouring countries to support any remaining British nationals to return home, and Afghans to come to the UK, where the UK is their most appropriate destination. The former Foreign Secretary's visit to Pakistan and Qatar and Lord Ahmad's visit to Tajikistan focussed on regional diplomacy and secured cooperation to support Britons and their immediate families. 4 Rapid Deployment Teams consisting of 19 staff have been deployed to countries neighbouring Afghanistan and Qatar to ensure safe onward passage to the UK.

#### ■ **Afghanistan: Repatriation**

**Lisa Nandy:**

[\[46984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many people were helped to be evacuated from Afghanistan by the UK at the request of other countries or authority, broken down by requesting country or authority.

**James Duddridge:**

We do not have the specific data on numbers evacuated as a result of requests from other countries or authorities. However, we can confirm that between 15 and 29 August, the UK evacuated over 15,000 people from Afghanistan, including over 8,000 British Nationals. The former Foreign Secretary and Lord Ahmad have travelled to the region and continue to engage closely with neighbouring countries to support cooperation and the safe passage of Afghans and their immediate families. We have been in frequent contact with neighbouring countries and Rapid Deployment Teams (RDT) have been sent to Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Dubai to reinforce our Embassy staff to process arrivals from Afghanistan as well as provided assistance to third country nationals.

#### ■ **Afghanistan: Sikhs**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[44228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic step his Department is taking to help ensure the safety of Sikhs in Afghanistan.

**James Duddridge:**

Minister for Human Rights Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon addressed the UN Human Rights Council on 24 August to underscore the UK's commitment to



protecting the human rights of all Afghan people, including all religious minorities and others at risk of persecution, and holding the Taliban to account. The UK is formally launching a separate resettlement programme, the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, providing a safe and legal route for up to 20,000 Afghans in the region over the coming years, with 5,000 in the first year. This scheme will include Afghans who face a particular risk from the Taliban, for example because of their role in standing up for democracy and human rights or because of their gender, sexuality or religion.

## ■ Ascension Island: Airports

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[44311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what progress has been made on the reconstruction of the runway on Ascension Island.

**James Duddridge:**

The reconstruction of the Ascension Island runway is a critical project which will help secure future access to the island. The project, jointly funded by the UK and the United States, is an important priority for the UK Government and is being completed in two halves, with the runway operating at fifty percent capacity throughout the project. Contractors are currently on the island and have started construction works. The estimated runway completion date is late 2022.

## ■ British Overseas Territories: Coronavirus

**Dr Matthew Offord:**

[\[44312\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what support his Department is providing governments in the overseas territories to help tackle the covid-19 pandemic.

**James Duddridge:**

The UK continues to support the Overseas Territories in tackling COVID-19. The FCDO has coordinated support to the Territories, establishing testing facilities, ensuring at the outset that all had sufficient testing supplies, personnel protective equipment and medical equipment, with support ongoing to a number of Territories through the cross-government Conflict Security and Stability Fund. This includes the provision of further laboratory, testing and PPE supplies, access to remote medical advice and vaccines. The FCDO has also arranged the delivery of vaccines to Overseas Territories. Since January over 50 vaccine deliveries have been made across all the inhabited Territories and South Georgia, reaching some of the remotest island communities on earth. Over 80 per cent of the combined adult populations have now been fully vaccinated. In addition to health support, the UK Government has also provided the some of the OTs with security and, where needed, financial assistance to improve their resilience to the pandemic and support their citizens.

## ■ British Virgin Islands: Travel Restrictions

**Henry Smith:**

[\[43710\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if the Government will ease the restrictions on travel from the UK to the British Virgin Islands in response to the improving covid-19 situation and to support the recovery of the tourism industry in that country.

**James Duddridge:**

Currently there are no restrictions on travelling to the British Virgin Islands. Current entry requirements for entering are for the BVI authorities to decide. Those returning to the UK from BVI are subject to current Amber border restrictions as part of the current border measures. The UK Traffic Light System is led by the Department for Transport, as part of a cross-government effort, and reflects measures at the UK border that aim to mitigate the overall risk to UK public health relating to inbound travel to the UK. This operates separately from FCDO Travel Advice. Decisions on Red, Amber or Green (RAG) List and associated border measures are taken by Ministers, who take into account the JBC risk assessments, alongside wider public health factors. A summary of the JBC methodology is published on gov.uk, alongside key data that supports Ministers' decisions.

## ■ Developing Countries: Coronavirus

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[45902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to the G7 pledge to donate 870 million covid-19 vaccine doses to low income countries, how many doses have been donated to date; by which country have those doses been donated; how many doses he estimates to be donated by the end of 2021; and by which countries those forthcoming donations will be made.

**Wendy Morton:**

At the UK hosted G7 Summit in June 2021, member states committed to donate 870 million COVID-19 vaccines. This breaks down as: US (580 million), EU (42 million), Germany (30 million), France (60 million), Italy (15 million), Canada (13 million) and Japan (30 million). The Prime Minister committed the UK to donating 100 million vaccines by June 2022, of which 30 million will be donated by the end of 2021. This is in addition to significant financial support for the Access to Covid-19 Tools-Accelerator, of which the UK is among the leading donors, having committed up to £813 million to its various partners.

The vaccine donation picture is constantly evolving. Countries continue to announce new donations, with doses being released at different rates depending on the local context in each member state. To date G7 members have donated 121.7m vaccines to COVAX, with additional doses donated on a direct bilateral basis to recipient countries.

## ■ Developing Countries: Education and Family Planning

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

[\[45831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development, what steps he is taking to promote (a) girls' education and (b) family planning in developing countries in light of COP26 presidency.

**Wendy Morton:**

Climate change contributes to gender inequality, and disproportionately and differentially impacts on women and girls. The UK champions the right of all girls to twelve years of quality education, including through the new G7-endorsed global targets to get 20 million more girls reading by the age of 10, and 40 million more girls in primary and secondary schools in low and lower-middle income countries by 2026. The UK is also a strong defender of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) on the world stage and we advance progress on SRHR through global partnerships, such as the Global Financing Facility, FP2030 and UNFPA. We will continue to use the UK's leadership to highlight these important issues, as well as the critical role of climate resilient health and education systems, at COP26 and beyond.

## ■ Falkland Islands: Sovereignty

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[44232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of reports of proposals from Argentina's ruling party to criminalise opposition to Argentina's claim of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands.

**Wendy Morton:**

We are aware of the bill introduced by backbench MPs in Argentina, and we will continue to monitor the situation. The United Kingdom has no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, the South Georgia & South Sandwich Islands, and surrounding maritime areas. Nor do we have any doubt about the principle and the right of self-determination for the Falkland Islanders, as enshrined in the UN Charter and in article one of the two UN Covenants on human rights, by virtue of which they freely determine their political status, and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of democracy, and is a fundamental and well-established human right in Argentina.

## ■ Guinea: Politics and Government

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[44437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with the African Union on the political situation in Guinea.

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[44438\]](#)

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

**James Duddridge:**

The UK Government is concerned by the political and security situation in Guinea following the recent military coup. In my statement on 6 September, I [Minister Duddridge] set out the Government's condemnation of the removal by force of the President of Guinea, Alpha Condé. Our partners in the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union, the United Nations, and others have joined us in this condemnation.

We have called for the immediate release of the President and for all parties to engage in peaceful dialogue to ease tensions, to prevent any further violence and to uphold democratic principles, including the rule of law. We are engaging with our international partners, including the African Union, on the situation in Guinea. We continue to monitor events closely through our Embassy in Conakry.

**Iran: Capital Punishment and Human Rights****Bob Blackman:**[\[44302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make representations to the UN on launching an inquiry into the (a) 1988 executions of Iranian political prisoners and (b) Government of Iran's implementation of calls in the UN General Assembly Human Rights Council resolution 43/24 for justice and accountability for serious human rights violations in that nation.

**Bob Blackman:**[\[44303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will (a) recognise the 1988 massacre of 30,000 political prisoners in Iran as a crime against humanity and (b) assist people who are being persecuted for seeking justice and the truth about those extrajudicial mass executions.

**Bob Blackman:**[\[44304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he or officials in his Department have made of any historic involvement of Iran's president, Ebrahim Raisi, in the 1988 massacre of 30,000 political prisoners in Iran; and whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of a UN inquiry into that matter.

**James Cleverly:**

The British Government opposes the use of the death penalty in all circumstances and takes any allegations of extrajudicial killings seriously. The UK has designated Iran as a human rights priority country, and we continue to take action with the international community to press Iran to improve its poor human rights record. This will include using all opportunities during the upcoming United Nations General Assembly session.

We urge Iran to allow the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Iran access to the country, so that he can conduct research and investigations into human rights concerns reported there, including the events of 1988. Meanwhile, we have always

been clear that Iran must uphold its own international legal obligations, including conducting thorough and independent investigations into suspected human rights violations, both past and present.

We are in regular contact with the Iranian Government and expect to engage with President Raisi on a number of issues now he has taken office, including human rights. We call on President Raisi to set Iran on a different course and commit to improving human rights in Iran.

## ■ Iran: Human Rights

**Mr David Jones:**

[\[46949\]](#)

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 report of the United Nations' Secretary-General on the human rights situation in Iran published on 4 August 2021.

**Mr David Jones:**

[\[46950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government plans to take to help ensure compliance by Iran with the recommendations of the UN Secretary-General's report on the human rights situation in that country, published on 4 August 2021.

**Mr David Jones:**

[\[46951\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government plans to take in response to the recommendation by the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran for an independent inquiry into allegations of state-ordered executions of thousands of political prisoners in 1988 and the alleged role played by members of the current Iranian government.

**James Cleverly:**

The UK has designated Iran as a Human Rights Priority Country, and we continue to take action with the international community to press Iran to improve its poor human rights record. This will include using all opportunities during the upcoming United Nations General Assembly session. We urge Iran to allow the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Iran access to the country, so that he can conduct research and investigations into human rights concerns reported there, including the events of 1988 and those mentioned in the UN Secretary General's most recent report.

The British Government opposes the use of the death penalty in all circumstances and takes any allegations of extrajudicial killings seriously. We have always been clear that Iran must uphold its own international legal obligations, including conducting thorough and independent investigations into suspected human rights violations, both past and present. We call on President Raisi to set Iran on a different course. That includes committing to improving human rights in Iran.

**■ Military Aid****Emily Thornberry:**[\[44257\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many Overseas Security and Justice Assistance assessments logged with his Department in relation to overseas requests for case-specific assistance have been (a) approved and (b) rejected by the recipient Department or agency in (i) 2015-16, (ii) 2016-17, (iii) 2017-18, (iv) 2018-19, (v) 2019-20, and (vi) 2020-21.

**James Duddridge:**

In accordance with the publicly available guidance on Overseas Security and Justice Assistance (OSJA), approval for activity underpinned by OSJA assessments is made at different levels of authority, in line with the level of risk. The FCDO does not hold a record centrally of the number of times Ministers were consulted on OSJA cases, or the number of times a Minister decided whether assistance should be provided.

An estimate of the number of OSJAs completed each year is published in the Annual Human Rights Report.

**■ Nigeria: Fulani****Carla Lockhart:**[\[45949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what engagement he has had with his counterpart in the Government of Nigeria on tackling the (a) activity of Fulani militants and (b) attacks by those militants on non-Muslims in that country.

**James Duddridge:**

The UK Government condemns all incidents of intercommunal violence in Nigeria. The underlying drivers of intercommunal violence are complex, the perpetrators do not come from any one ethnic group, and the devastating effects are felt by communities of different faiths and ethnicities. It is inaccurate to attribute sole responsibility to one ethnic group, the Fulani, and terms like militia risk fuelling tensions between communities. We continue to encourage the Nigerian Government to take urgent action to protect all those at risk of violence, bring perpetrators to justice and address the root causes of the violence.

During my visit to Nigeria in April, I [Minister Duddridge] discussed insecurity with the Foreign Minister and the President's Chief of Staff, and raised the importance of protecting all communities. I [Minister Duddridge] met the Foreign Minister again in July, along with Nigeria's Minister of State Education, where we discussed the impact of insecurity on education. In addition, our High Commissioner and her team regularly visit states affected by violence to engage with state governments, civil society, faith and community leaders and affected communities.

## ■ Responsibility to Protect

**Stephen Farry:**

[\[44480\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to support the UN Responsibility to Protect doctrine.

**James Duddridge:**

The UK is committed to the UN principle of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). In September 2020, 121 UN Member States including the UK, voted in favour of R2P being a formal agenda item at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). In May 2021, 115 UN Member States including the UK, voted in favour of a resolution on R2P contributing to the further institutionalisation of R2P within the UN system. The resolution puts R2P on the annual agenda of the UNGA and formally requests the Secretary-General to report annually on the topic. The UK has also provided funding for the Global Centre for R2P and the joint UN Office on Genocide Prevention and R2P. More generally, we use our position at the UN, including as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to raise atrocity situations of concern and to support the deployment of all appropriate tools available to the UN in dealing with potential mass atrocities and conflict.

## ■ Sri Lanka: Counter-terrorism and Torture

**Sam Tarry:**

[\[44477\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many times his Department has officially discussed with its counterpart in Sri Lanka the repeal of Sri Lanka's Prevention of Terrorism Act and reports of potential ongoing torture in that country.

**James Duddridge:**

The UK Government remains concerned at the ongoing use of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and for many years has called on the Government of Sri Lanka to replace the PTA with human rights compliant counter terrorism legislation. The UK Government, alongside our partners in the Core Group on Sri Lanka, has led international efforts to promote accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka, including at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC). On 23 March the UNHRC adopted a new UK-led resolution, 46/1, which calls on the Government of Sri Lanka to review the PTA. The resolution also expresses concern at the use of torture and inhuman treatment. We have highlighted our concerns about the PTA in this case in a statement to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on 22 June. The Minister of State for South Asia, Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, has raised human rights on several occasions with the Sri Lankan High Commissioner and Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, G. L. Peiris, most recently during talks on 10 May and 9 September. The UK's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka regularly raises the importance of PTA legislation being aligned with international human rights obligations with the Government of Sri Lanka. We continue to engage with the Government of Sri Lanka on these important issues.



## ■ Sri Lanka: Generalised System of Preferences

**Sam Tarry:** [\[44478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions officials in his Department have had with their Sri Lankan counterparts on the UK General Scheme of Preferences.

**James Duddridge:**

The UK replicated the EU's General Scheme of Preferences (GSP) (a trade preferences scheme) from January 2021. Sri Lanka, as a member of the EU's GSP, was automatically enrolled into the UK's Enhanced Framework which requires countries to ratify and effectively implement the same 27 international conventions on human and labour rights, sustainability and good governance. Lord Ahmad spoke with the Sri Lankan Minister responsible for Money, Capital Markets and State Enterprise Reforms, Minister Ajith Cabraal, in June and raised the importance of good governance and the rule of law to ensure a positive business environment for increased trade.

## ■ Sri Lanka: Human Rights and Torture

**Sam Tarry:** [\[44476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has been made of the effectiveness of Police Scotland's training programme in Sri Lanka in reducing instances of torture and human rights violations.

**James Duddridge:**

The UK's police training programme has focused on developing community policing, supporting women in the Sri Lankan police service, and improving the response to sexual and gender-based violence. The UK's programme work in Sri Lanka is subject to regular and robust Overseas Security and Justice Assistance (OSJA) assessments that analyse the potential human rights, international humanitarian law, political and reputational risks of any proposed assistance to ensure that it supports our values and is consistent with our domestic and international human rights obligations. The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) programme in Sri Lanka is also subject to an annual review, which can be found by visiting <https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-3-CSSF-09-000003/documents>

## ■ Tigray: Armed Conflict

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[45054\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment his Department made of the effectiveness of US sanctions on the Ethiopian Government in relation to the conflict in the Tigray.

**James Duddridge:**

Since the conflict started, the UK, alongside international partners including the US, has consistently called for an end to fighting, and for all parties to the conflict to prioritise the protection of civilians. The UK will consider the full range of policy tools



at our disposal to protect human rights and deter violations of international humanitarian law. It is longstanding practice not to speculate on future sanctions designations as to do so could reduce the impact of the designations.

We continue to closely engage US counterparts on the full range of human rights issues.

### ■ **Tigray: Prison Sentences**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[44230\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of the accuracy reports of Tigrayan people in Ethiopia being imprisoned by the government of that country without a fair trial.

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[44231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of reports of the Ethiopian government closing the businesses of ethnic Tigrayans in that country.

**James Duddridge:**

Recent arrests of Tigrayans in Addis Ababa and elsewhere in Ethiopia are extremely worrying, and discrimination against or targeting of any group on the basis of their ethnicity is unacceptable including closure of businesses. We have consistently raised the importance of respect for human rights throughout this conflict. The Foreign Secretary and I have both raised this directly with the Government of Ethiopia - I did so most recently with the Minister of Peace in July. We will continue to raise these concerns directly with the Government of Ethiopia.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### ■ **Blood Tests: Bottles**

**Vicky Foxcroft:**

[\[42019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to increase the availability of blood test tubes.

**Edward Argar:**

We have secured tens of millions of additional blood test tubes, including importing additional supplies from the European Union and the United States of America, which are now in NHS use. There continues to be stock in place to ensure clinically urgent testing continues. The Department is working closely with NHS England, the devolved administrations and the National Health Service to minimise any impact on patient care.

**Helen Hayes:**

[43596]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the suspension of routine blood tests by GPs until mid-September on patients.

**Edward Argar:**

No specific assessment has been made. Guidance was issued to the National Health Service and all general practitioners (GPs) in England on 10 August, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/becton-dickinson-blood-specimen-collection-portfolio-supply-disruption/>

This recommends actions for medical directors, nursing directors, GPs and pathology laboratories to optimise resources for pathology laboratory work. Further communication was issued on 26 August advising of anticipated short term shortages on certain product types and provided guidance by sector on how to safely reduce demand of all tubes in order that clinically urgent testing can continue.

The measures put in place are temporary and that tests should only be delayed where it is safe to do so.

The assessment of whether it is safe to defer a test is a matter for the clinicians.

## ■ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

**Alun Cairns:**

[41860]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reasons the National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence postponed the publication of the guidelines on (a) myalgia encephalomyelitis, (b) chronic fatigue syndrome and (c) post viral fatigue syndrome.

**Jo Churchill:**

*[Holding answer 8 September 2021]:* The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) issued a statement on their decision to pause the publication of the guideline on myalgia encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome which is available at the following link:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/news/article/nice-pauses-publication-of-updated-guideline-on-diagnosis-and-management-of-me-cfs>

NICE is not currently developing a guideline on post viral fatigue syndrome.

## ■ Coronavirus

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[36724]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment the Government has made of the demographic breakdown of people who have been hospitalised with covid-19 after receiving (a) one and (b) two doses of a vaccine.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

*[Holding answer 6 September 2021]:* Public Health England publishes the age and sex breakdown of hospitalisations for COVID-19 for the most recent four week period on a weekly basis at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports-2021-to-2022-season>

The analysis is based on data from a sentinel network of acute National Health Service trusts contributing enhanced data.

PHE publishes technical briefings which provide the latest data regarding hospitalisations and deaths by variant, including the Delta variant, as well as data concerning those hospitalised with the Delta variant of COVID-19 who are vaccinated with one and both doses and unvaccinated. These data are retrospective and do not represent current hospitalisations. Data is available from 1 February 2021 at the following link:

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

**■ Coronavirus: Vaccination****Justin Madders:****[41912]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many people have died within 28 days of receiving the covid-19 vaccination in England.

**Nadhim Zahawi:**

The data requested is not held by the Department.

**■ Dementia: Research****Dr Philippa Whitford:****[45141]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to encourage diverse participation in dementia research.

**Edward Argar:**

*[Holding answer 13 September 2021]:* In partnership with the Alzheimer's Society, Alzheimer's Scotland and Alzheimer's Research UK, the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) delivers Join Dementia Research (JDR), an online platform recruiting people into dementia research studies, which is open to all who wish to participate. Through the Innovations in Clinical Trial Design and Delivery for the Under-served programme, the NIHR is actively seeking to improve participation in research by providing resources and examples of good practice to support researchers seeking to engage with and include under-served groups.

## ■ Department of Health and Social Care: Written Questions

**Angela Rayner:** [\[46994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to answer Question 31421 tabled by the hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne on 12 July 2021.

**Edward Argar:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer of 13 September to Question [31421](#).

## ■ Health and Social Care Act 2008

**Justin Madders:** [\[45860\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many section 31 notices under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 the Care Quality Commission has issued in each year since 2016; and how many of those notices have been subject to appeal proceedings.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The data regarding the number of Section 31 notices Care Quality Commission (CQC) has issued since 2016 in the following table

YEAR ACTION SERVED	TOTAL NUMBER OF REGULATORY ACTIONS
2016	165
2017	149
2018	111
2019	129
2020	103
2021	61
Total	718

The data regarding the number of appeals CQC has received against Section 31 notices is shown in the following table.

YEAR	NUMBER
2016*	4
2017	11

YEAR	NUMBER
2018	24
2019	30
2020	18
2021	17

Note:

\* The legal case management system came into place in 2017, and thus the accuracy of the figures for 2016 could not be verified.

Data correct as at 10 September 2021.

#### ■ Health Services Safety Investigations Body: Powers

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[40684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to extend the powers of the Health Services Safety Investigations Body to include the investigation of (a) cosmetic and (b) aesthetic malpractice.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

We do not plan to extend the powers of the Health Services Safety Investigations Body. The provisions in the Health and Care Bill mean that the Health Services Safety Investigations Body will have the power to investigate incidents which have or may have implications for patient safety. Its remit will cover healthcare provided in the National Health Service and healthcare provided in and by the independent sector.

In England cosmetic surgery may only be performed by doctors registered with the General Medical Council. Providers of surgery must also register with the Care Quality Commission and meet its fundamental standards of safety and quality. The Government is evaluating the existing education and qualification frameworks for practitioners of non-surgical cosmetic procedures operating in England and assessing options for improving standards. This includes consideration of whether increased oversight of practitioners performing the most invasive non-surgical procedures is needed and how to achieve a proportionate system of practitioner regulation that protects the public.

#### ■ Hormone Treatments

**Wendy Chamberlain:**

[\[41290\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his Department's policy is on the use of the hormone PMSG in medication.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

Pregnant mare's serum gonadotropin which is also referred to as equine chorionic gonadotropin (PMSG or eCG), is not used in any medicinal products in the United Kingdom. As such, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency do not have a specific policy on PMSG and would assess any authorisation requests for a medicine or products that contain PMSG on a case by case basis.

PMSG may be used in livestock management, which falls under the remit of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

**Hyperactivity****Thangam Debbonaire:**[\[45177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent estimate he has made of waiting times for access to NHS diagnosis and treatment services for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; what methodology is used to make that estimate; and whether those waiting times are within target.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

No recent estimate has been made. Currently there is no a single, established dataset to monitor referrals for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) assessments and treatments nationally or the provision of wider ADHD services as assessments, diagnosis and provision of support to people with ADHD may be undertaken in a variety of care settings. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence does not recommend a maximum waiting time standard from referral for an assessment of ADHD to the point of diagnosis.

**Infant Mortality****Julian Sturdy:**[\[40891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps his Department has taken to ensure that it remains on target to meet its aim of halving the number of stillbirths and neonatal deaths by 2025.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement are investing an additional £95 million in maternity services to support recruitment of 1,200 midwives and 100 consultant obstetricians. £26.5 million of this investment will go to multi-disciplinary training. The National Health Service (NHS) is investing £52 million to fast track its Long Term Plan commitment to ensure that all women will have access to all of their maternity notes and health promotion information through a smart phone or other device by 2023/24.

The Department announced a new £500,000 NHS maternity leadership training programme to address issues raised in the Ockenden review. Maternity and neonatal leaders across 125 Trusts and 44 local maternity systems are receiving support to help them lead improvements in workplace culture and facilitate greater collaborative working between nurses, doctors, midwives and obstetricians.

A refreshed national Maternity and Neonatal Safety Improvement Programme ensures that themes emerging from learning nationally are turned universally into changes to clinical practice, behaviour and service models locally.

## ■ Integrated Care Boards

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[33979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what role private sector companies have on shadow ICS boards.

**Edward Argar:**

Integrated care boards (ICBs) will be National Health Service bodies, bringing in representatives from a range of other bodies including NHS commissioners and NHS providers. ICBs will, as a minimum, include a chair, chief executive officer and representatives from NHS trusts, general practice and local authorities. Local areas will have the flexibility to determine any further representation on the board. This would be subject to local agreement and approval by NHS England. ICBs will be required to have clear and robust arrangements to declare and manage potential conflicts of interest.

## ■ Maternity Services

**Bim Afolami:**

[\[41161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to ensure that all hospitals allow expectant mothers to be accompanied when (a) attending antenatal appointments and (b) they are in labour.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement refreshed guidance on visiting restrictions for maternity services on 15 April 2021, asking all National Health Service providers to urgently complete any further action needed to ensure partners can accompany women to antenatal appointments. All maternity units should be allowing partners and support people to attend all scans and appointments.

All maternity units are allowing at least one birth partner who has no symptoms of coronavirus present with them during any type of labour and birth except some urgent emergency births or where a general anaesthetic is used.

## ■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People

**Justin Madders:**

[\[45171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the current waiting time is for CAMHS from referral to appointment in (a) Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency and (b) England.

**Justin Madders:**

[\[45172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many children and adolescents are waiting for CAMHS treatment in Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

The information requested is not available as a national access and waiting times standard for child and adolescent mental health services has not yet been defined.

## ■ Mental Health Services: Vacancies

**Wera Hobhouse:**

[\[42062\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when NHS England plans to ask NHS (a) trust chief executives, (b) chief operating officers and (c) HR directors to report details of potential staffing shortages in mental health care, in line with the recent similar request from NHS England to acute medical services.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement have no plans to do so. All mental health services providers are required to submit their plans, which also outlines measures to recruit and retain staff. In addition, all mental health providers take part in an annual workforce planning process, which captures vacancy rates.

## ■ Perinatal Mortality

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

[\[45053\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the outcome was of the national review by the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch into the reported increase in the number of still births.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

*[Holding answer 13 September 2021]:* We expect the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch's national review of intrapartum stillbirths during the COVID-19 pandemic to be published shortly.

## ■ Prisoners: Hyperactivity

**Steven Bonnar:**

[\[45268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the HMICFRS report, Neurodiversity in the Criminal Justice System report, published on 15 July 2021, what steps are being taken to implement the use of screening tools for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder to enable screening for adults upon entering prison.

**Ms Nadine Dorries:**

NHS England and NHS Improvement have been working closely with the Ministry of Justice to gather more evidence on the use of screening tools, including screening for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in adults within the criminal justice system in England. An action plan in response to the recommendations of Her Majesty's



Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services report, Neurodiversity in the Criminal Justice System, is due to be published in October 2021 and will address this recommendation.

■ **Royal Berkshire Hospital: Hydrotherapy**

**Anneliese Dodds:**

[\[34573\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of the proposed closure of the hydrotherapy pool at Royal Berkshire Hospital on (a) the treatment of (i) long-term health conditions, (ii) musculoskeletal conditions and (iii) people recovering from covid-19 and (b) post-injury rehabilitation.

**Edward Argar:**

*[Holding answer 21 July 2021]:* Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) ran a 12-week public consultation in 2020 to seek views on the future provision of hydrotherapy services in Berkshire West. At present, the CCG no longer routinely commissions the service. However, specialist hydrotherapy services will remain available via an Individual Funding Request (IFR) in certain clinical circumstances.

The IFR process will ensure that when patients, who may have a long-term condition, musculoskeletal condition, recovering from COVID-19 or in post-injury rehabilitation, would benefit from a particular treatment that is not usually funded by the National Health Service, their consultant is able to apply for funding for this treatment. In this case, a consultant or physiotherapist at the Royal Berkshire Hospital will determine if the patient would clinically benefit from hydrotherapy and make an application on their behalf.

■ **Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust: Private Finance Initiative**

**Ben Bradley:**

[\[45261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the impact of PFI repayments on the budget of the Sherwood Forest Hospital Trust; and what support is available to help the Trust with those repayments.

**Edward Argar:**

Sherwood Forest Hospital Trust has submitted a balanced financial plan, which takes into account its Private Finance Initiative (PFI) payments, for the first half of the year. Officials from the Department's PFI team are working closely with the Trust and NHS England and NHS Improvement to support their activities to manage the contract effectively.

**HOME OFFICE****■ Action Fraud**

**Daisy Cooper:** [44452]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her timeline is for the replacement of Action Fraud with an improved national fraud and cybercrime reporting system.

**Damian Hinds:**

City of London Police are designing and procuring the new service, working with the Home Office and the City of London Corporation. The invitation to tender closed at the end of August 2021 and we expect the contract will be awarded toward the end of 2022 with the new system going live from 2024

**■ Asylum**

**Holly Lynch:** [45212]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many caseworkers are responsible for processing asylum claims; and how many have been responsible in each of the last five years.

**Holly Lynch:** [45213]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how long on average a caseworker responsible for processing asylum claims is in post for.

**Chris Philp:**

The Home Office is unable to report how long on average a caseworker responsible for processing asylum claims is in post for or the number of staff who are responsible for processing asylum claims across each of the last five years, as this information is not recorded and held in a reportable format. To obtain this information would require detailed reporting against multiple cost centres and could only be obtained at disproportionate costs.

However, the Home Office can provide the number of asylum case working staff for each of the last five years. This data can be found in ASY\_04 of the published Transparency data:

[Immigration and protection data: Q2 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/data-requests/immigration-and-protection-data-q2-2021)

In support of increasing the number of initial asylum decisions, the Home Office has recruitment strategies in place to increase staffing to more appropriate levels. We are working to almost double the number of decision makers to c.1000 by March 2022.

**Stuart C McDonald:** [45846]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's statistical release entitled, How many people do we grant asylum or protection to?, published on 26 August 2021, which countries the 7 people who were

deemed inadmissible between January and June 2021 were deemed to have a connection to; and to which countries is their return being sought.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 14 September 2021]:* The Home Office holds this information however has obligations under data protection legislation and in law generally to protect personal data. Releasing the information at this time could lead to identification of the individuals, which would breach data protection principles in Article 5(1) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation and section 34(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018.

We continually review our statistical publications and it may be possible in future to list the countries involved without breaching data protection obligations. We will not however provide a running commentary on our negotiations with our international partners.

■ **Crime**

**Paul Blomfield:**

**[41844]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department's definition is of serious offences; and if she will provide a list of offences in that category.

**Damian Hinds:**

The definition of "serious offences" varies by context. The term is defined differently in different pieces of legislation. For Example: Schedule 1 to the Serious Crime Act 2007 is titled "Serious Offences" and includes a list of offences which are relevant to the Court's consideration of whether a Serious Crime Prevention Order should be imposed on a person. The Children and Young Persons Act 1969 defines a "serious offence" for the purposes of that legislation as "an offence punishable in the case of an adult with imprisonment for a term of two years or more".

This Government is steadfast in its approach to tackling crime. We have recently published the Beating Crime Plan, which reaffirms our manifesto commitment to cutting crime, protecting the public and increasing public confidence in the criminal justice system. It sets out our strategy for protecting the law-abiding majority, swiftly bringing criminals to justice and managing offenders with rigour and discipline. The full Plan is available on <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beating-crime-plan>

■ **Deportation: Jamaica and Zimbabwe**

**Paul Blomfield:**

**[46974]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 September 2021 to Question 41845 on Deportation: Jamaica and Zimbabwe, whether any of the people deported on the charter flight to (a) Zimbabwe on 21 July 2021 and (b) Jamaica on 11 August 2021 or any of those who were scheduled for deportation on those two flights but were not placed on the planes on the day were under the age of 12 when they came to the UK.

**Chris Philp:**

I refer the Honourable Member to my response of 8 September 2021 (UIN: 41845).

We do not routinely comment on individual cases. As stated in my previous response, a person's age upon arrival to the UK or their nationality are not automatic exceptions to deportation under the UK Borders Act 2007. These may be relevant factors when determining whether an exception applies and an Article 8 claim pursuant to the Immigration Rules. Those deported will have been provided with the opportunity to raise claims and all claims are fully considered and decided upon before deportation, including, where applicable, via the Courts. I will continue to remove dangerous criminals and those with no rights to be in the UK from the country.

**■ Drugs: Crime****Sir David Amess:**[\[45788\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to tackle drug dealing and drug houses in local communities.

**Kit Malthouse:**

This Government is committed to tackling the illicit drug trade, protecting the most vulnerable and helping those with a drug dependency to recover. That's why the Government have invested £65m to tackle drug supply and county lines so far, including £40m this year as part of the wider £148m package announced in January to tackle drugs misuse, supply and county lines.

Through our County Lines Programme investment we have expanded the National County Lines Co-ordination Centre; established dedicated county lines task forces in London, Merseyside, the West Midlands and British Transport Police; invested in new technology including Automatic Number Plate Recognition; and increased specialist support for victims of county lines. Since November 2019, this has already resulted in more than 1,100 lines closed, over 6,300 arrests, over £2.9 million in cash and significant quantities of drugs seized, and more than 1,900 vulnerable people safeguarded.

We recognise that the use of cuckooed addresses remains a feature of county lines gangs' activities which is why we work closely with law enforcement partners on this issue through the Home Office-funded county lines programme.

In addition, we have invested £59m until March 2023 on Project ADDER trail-blazing a whole-system response to combating drug misuse with the enforcement, diversion and treatment and recovery in areas hardest hit across England and Wales.

**■ Housing: Refugees****Kate Osamor:**[\[45223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people will be housed in each local authority under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement scheme.

**Chris Philp:**

The Afghan citizens' resettlement scheme (ACRS) will provide protection for people at risk identified as in need.

The government has committed to welcome around 5,000 people in the first year and up to 20,000 over the coming years. We will work with the United Nations and aid agencies to identify those we should help.

The scheme is not yet open yet, further details will be announced in due course.

**■ Immigration Bail: Merseyside****Kim Johnson:**[\[44467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people are on immigration bail covered by the Merseyside Reporting Centre, Capital Building, Liverpool; and how many of those people are subject to immigration bail reporting conditions.

**Kim Johnson:**[\[44468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people in Merseyside were subject to immigration bail reporting conditions in (a) 2019, (b) 2020 and (c) to date in 2021.

**Kim Johnson:**[\[44469\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people were detained when attending appointments at The Capital Building, Liverpool in (a) 2019, (b) 2020 and (c) to date in 2021.

**Kim Johnson:**[\[44470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will provide a breakdown of the reasons for imposing bail immigration reporting conditions for people reporting to the Capital Building in Liverpool in each of the last three years.

**Chris Philp:**

Bail conditions are imposed where individual without valid leave to remain in the UK comes into contact with Immigration Enforcement and are not imminently removable, (for example, where a legal barrier or lack of travel document prevents their return) they are placed on reporting.

This is a form of contact management, whereby individuals are required to attend a Reporting Centre (managed by IE) or a police station on a regular basis (rural areas). UKVI, Asylum, Criminal Casework, Removal Casework and ICE all feed cases into the reporting population.

The frequency at which an offender reports is based on their removability, risk they pose to the public and vulnerability.

There are 14 Reporting Centres throughout the UK and over 100 police stations where individuals are required to report. These are serviced by c210 FTE.

When attending a reporting event, an individual may be interviewed to gather information that allows Immigration Enforcement to apply for a travel document, make a decision on an outstanding application or promote a voluntary return.

When an individual becomes removable they may be detained at a Reporting Centre or a Police station when they next report.

Significant changes have been made to bail conditions, and in particular to reporting requirements, in light of the evolution of the current pandemic. We do not routinely publish the information you have requested, however, based on recent data only a very small percentage of the reporting population are currently required to report in-person as a condition of bail at this time.

Initially, there was a temporary suspension on in-person reporting for those who would otherwise be required to report, which was applied from 17 March 2020. Following the introduction of large-scale testing and a reduction in the rates of transmission, and in light of the scientific advice as to the measures that could be implemented to enhance public safety, reporting centres then re-opened, initially through two pilot schemes commencing on 20 July 2020, and then through other centres. COVID-19 risk assessments and safe systems of working were introduced, together with other safety measures, including, where appropriate, an adjustment of the time slots for reporting.

Following the introduction of further national restrictions in November 2020 and January 2021, the Home Office's approach was reviewed and revised again, as reflected in the latest COVID-19 interim guidance, "Reporting and offender management – interim guidance" (Version 3.0).

Currently only individuals within four priority cohorts are expected to report in-person at reporting centres, or in some locations Police stations, these groups are categorised as:

- foreign national offenders (FNOs)/High Harm/Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) or other security cases. Persons who are on Restricted Leave.
- those who have shown a willingness to return home voluntarily and where reporting will aid the process of return.
- those who have not returned home and who have not engaged with our Voluntary Return programme – including delivery of a Detention on Reporting (DOR).
- those identified for removal.

The position is kept under on-going review, having regard to public health considerations as well as the public interest in the maintenance of immigration control.

## ■ Immigration: Afghanistan

**Ms Harriet Harman:**

[\[44169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests she has received from hon. Members on behalf of Afghan citizens who wish to come to the UK since 15 August 2021 as at the date of answering.

**Chris Philp:**

*[Holding answer 10 September 2021]:* Since 15 August we have received 8978 emails and calls from hon. Members relating to Afghan citizens wishing to come to the UK.

## ■ Immigration: Fees and Charges

**Stuart C McDonald:**

[\[45845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the oral contribution of the Minister for Future Borders and Immigration, Official report, column 470WH, when her Department plans to publish the revised policy on overseas fee waivers.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 14 September 2021]:* The overseas fee waiver policy is being revised to include an assessment of the criterion of affordability for specified applications under the Article 8/human rights route. The revised policy is expected to be published by the end of 2021.

Applicants can still apply for an overseas fee waiver, but the application will be placed on hold pending the revised guidance. If an application is received and it is clear the applicant's need to travel to the UK is urgent, the application will be considered.

## ■ Members: Correspondence

**Robert Largan:**

[\[45313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the enquiry from the hon. Member for High Peak of 24 May 2021, referenced RL22748.

**Chris Philp:**

I apologise for the delay. UK Visas and Immigration, MP Account Management team responded on 10 September 2021.

## ■ Migrant Workers: Food

**Virginia Crosbie:**

[\[45953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the (a) potential merits of including (i) butchers, (ii) poultry technicians and (iii) other food production workers on the shortage occupation list to ensure food supplies are maintained, (b) potential merits of introducing a temporary suspension or moratorium on the restriction of freedom of movement for food production workers and (c) applicability of the points based immigration system to food production workers; and what assessment



she has made of the potential merits of expanding the seasonal worker scheme to include migrant labour in food production to support the meat processing industry.

**Kevin Foster:**

*[Holding answer 14 September 2021]:* The independent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) found some roles in the food production, supply and agricultural sectors, such as Butchers, meet the RQF3 skills threshold for the Skilled Worker route so are eligible to be sponsored for a Skilled Worker visa, whereas others do not. The threshold was previously set at degree-level jobs. Modelling by the MAC suggests the new, broader skills threshold of RQF3 (A-level or equivalent) strikes a reasonable balance between controlling immigration and providing business access to skills on a global basis.

The Government believes it is important to monitor the impact of the new Skilled Worker route, as well as how the economy recovers post-Covid 19, before making any wide-scale changes. Jobs do not need to be on the Shortage Occupation List to be recruited via the Skilled Worker route, but the relevant skill and salary thresholds must be met to qualify.

The Seasonal Workers Pilot will continue to operate specifically in the edible horticulture sector, to help farmers growing UK fruit and vegetables and ensure our nation's food security.

We will continue to monitor the labour needs of other sectors, however, specific work visas should not be seen as the only option for additional recruitment as immigration must be considered alongside our policies for the UK Labour market, not as an alternative to them.

Therefore business with recruitment issues should, in the first instance, engage with the Department for Work and Pensions about the support they can offer in recruiting from the existing UK labour market, which includes those who come to the UK through our Youth Mobility Schemes (which we are looking to expand), our new British National (Overseas) visa for those from Hong Kong, those who hold status under the Eu Settlement Scheme, dependants of those arriving under the expanded skilled worker route, and those who arrive through other routes, such as our family and humanitarian protection ones, who all have access to the UK labour market.

■ **Undocumented Migrants: English Channel**

**Andrew Rosindell:**

**[44237]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions her Department has had with French authorities on the recent increases in illegal crossings of the English channel.

**Chris Philp:**

My officials meet regularly with our French partners at all levels, with regional Prefet(e)s and with the Ministry of the Interior, to discuss these crossings. The Clandestine Channel Threat Commander and the Director General for Border Force met with their French counterparts last week as part of those regular meetings, and



my Right Honourable Friend, the Home Secretary, discussed Channel crossings with her counterpart at the G7 last week. We are clear, as are the French, that these crossings are dangerous, unnecessary, and often facilitated by criminals. We are committed to stopping them.

**Dr Julian Lewis:**

[\[46920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what comparative assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of (a) turning back illegal immigrants at sea in the English Channel and (b) picking up illegal migrants and returning them France; and if she will make a statement.

**Chris Philp:**

Managing the illegal crossings by migrants using small boats and disrupting the criminal enterprises that facilitate this deadly trade is a top priority for my officials. They have explored the different options open to the UK and their effectiveness in the context of both domestic and international law. Turning back migrant vessels at sea is one of a range of potential possibilities, and the new Borders Bill includes additional powers enabling Border Force to act in international waters and potentially return boats to their country of embarkation, where there are agreements in place to do so.

## HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Leisure: Older People

**Steve Reed:**

[\[46993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department holds figures on the amounts spent by local authorities in England on older people's leisure activities.

**Luke Hall:**

The Department does not hold figures on the amounts spent by councils in England on older people's leisure activities.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ Department for International Trade: Hotels

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[44260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will provide (a) at which location and (b) for how many people her Department incurred £621.08 of expenditure on hotel bills on 15 May 2021.

**Greg Hands:**

The expenditure of £621.08 was incurred in Greece for one member of staff for three nights. The Government is supporting Babcock in a maritime export opportunity and this visit is to progress final elements of the Hellenic Navy Future Frigate

requirement. For security reasons, the Department does not disclose the names or locations of hotels used.

■ **Department for International Trade: Public Expenditure**

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[44259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, for what reason her Department incurred £505.67 of expenditure at a catering appliance superstore on 27 May 2021.

**Greg Hands:**

The expenditure of £505.67 with the Catering Appliance Superstore was incurred to purchase catering supplies for meeting rooms and offices following the Department's move to the new offices in the Old Admiralty Building.

■ **Export Credit Guarantees**

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[44258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what was the value of outstanding loans to private sector bodies guaranteed by UK Export Finance at the end of (a) 2015-16 financial year, (b) 2016-17 financial year, (c) 2017-18 financial year, (d) 2018-19 financial year, (e) 2019-20 financial year, (f) 2020-21 financial year and (g) August 2021.

**Graham Stuart:**

The value of outstanding loans / facilities to private sector bodies guaranteed / directly funded by UK Export Finance (UKEF) was as follows:

FINANCIAL YEAR	BUSINESS ISSUED (£ MILLIONS)
2015/16	1,590
2016/17	1,120
2017/18	1,766
2018/19	1,828
2019/20	2,806
2020/21	9,614
2021/22 (to 31 July 2021)	684

The figures quoted represent the UKEF's Maximum Liability in respect of the transactions (i.e. the sums that UKEF has guaranteed) rather than the total value of the loans.

## ■ Overseas Trade: Sri Lanka

**Sam Tarry:** [\[44474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment her Department has undertaken of Sri Lanka's compliance with human rights criteria outlined in section 21(2)(a)(b) of SI No.1438 on Trade Preference Scheme Regulations 2020.

**Sam Tarry:** [\[44475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment her Department has undertaken of Sri Lanka's eligibility for the Scheme of Preferences outlined in SI No.1438 regarding Trade Preference Scheme.

**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**

The Department has not undertaken such an assessment.

## ■ Shipping: Exports

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[44262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will publish the (a) case for change, (b) target operating model and (c) benefits realisation model for her Department's newly formed Maritime Capability Campaign Office.

**Graham Stuart:**

The Department for International Trade is committed to the maritime sector and works closely with it on a wide range of export issues and opportunities. The Government is currently considering a range of options to support the sector's export potential further as part of the forthcoming Spending Review. It is not yet possible to comment on the outcome of this process which will be communicated in the normal way.

## ■ Trade Agreements: Australasia

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[40772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 27 May to Questions 6213 and 6214, whether the modelling for Scenario 2 in the scoping assessments published on 17 June 2020 assumes that there are currently effective tariffs in place on imports of bovine meat and sheep meat from (a) Australia and (b) New Zealand.

**Greg Hands:**

The scoping assessments published back in June 2020 for Australia and New Zealand assessed the potential impacts of a deal in advance of negotiations, under various illustrative scenarios.

Modelling for scenario 2 in the Australia scoping assessment assumes that there are currently effective tariffs in place on imports of bovine meat and sheep meat from Australia.

Modelling for scenario 2 in the New Zealand scoping assessment assumes that there are currently no effective tariffs in place on imports of bovine meat and sheep meat from New Zealand, as a result of an adjustment to the modelling detailed in section 10.3.

■ **UK Defence and Security Exports**

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[44261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if she will publish the latest edition of the brand guidelines for UK Defence and Security Exports.

**Graham Stuart:**

Brand guidelines are not normally published as they are internal design documents.

■ **UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement: Falkland Islands**

**Emily Thornberry:** [\[44263\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 12 July to Question 28135 on Department for International Trade: Treaties, whether she has (a) sought and (b) received legal advice on the possible extension of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement to the Falkland Islands.

**Greg Hands:**

Cabinet Office is HM's Government department responsible for the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The Secretary of State for International Trade has not, therefore, sought or received any legal advice on extension of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement to the Falkland Islands.

## JUSTICE

■ **Administration of Justice: Neurology**

**Steven Bonnar:** [\[45267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the HMICFRS report, Neurodiversity in the Criminal Justice System report, published on 15 July 2021, what steps his Department is taking to develop a strategy for neurodiversity in the criminal justice system.

**Lucy Frazer:**

We welcomed the Evidence Review Report on Neurodiversity in the Criminal Justice System, which has highlighted the importance of gaining a better understanding of the needs of people with neurodivergent conditions across the criminal justice system.

The report suggests that potentially half of the adult prison population has some form of neurodivergence. The report identifies current gaps in provision and areas of good practice, and it provides six recommendations as to how current provision might be improved.

The first recommendation is to develop a cross government overarching neurodiversity strategy across the criminal justice system. An action plan in response to the report is due to be published in October 2021 and my department is currently engaging in discussions with all of the relevant departments to identify appropriate steps to work towards this key recommendation.

## ■ Administration of Justice: Standards

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[44434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent steps he has taken to tackle the increase in the number of cases being withdrawn as a result of court delays and case backlogs.

**Alex Chalk:**

Recovering the courts from the impact of Covid is a key priority for this Government. We allocated over a quarter of a billion pounds on recovery last financial year, making court buildings safe, rolling out new technology for remote hearings, recruiting additional staff and opening Nightingale courtrooms. We are encouraged by the level of cases now flowing through the courts, with our most recently published data showing reductions in the Crown Court's outstanding caseload.

We are now focused both on increasing capacity and maximising use of that which we already have. There is no limit on the number of days Crown Courts can sit this financial year and we are supporting temporary changes to court operating hours, where the local judge wants to use this, to hear more cases. The relaxing of social distancing means around 60 existing courtrooms in the Crown Court estate have been reopened, and we are extending our 32 Crown Nightingale courtrooms until April 2022.

In further attempts to prevent cases from being withdrawn, we have increased funding for victim support services, with £151 million this year, including £27 million 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.

## ■ Berwyn Prison: Bullying

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

[\[45892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many bullying-related complaints have been reported by staff at HMP Berwyn each year since 2017.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The number of complaints from staff related to bullying at HMP Berwyn in each year since 2018 is provided below. We do not hold data for 2017. When submitting a grievance, staff are able to select multiply reasons. The data below includes where bullying has been chosen as a reason for the grievance alongside other reasons.

There has been a move to staff selecting multiple reasons for grievance in 2021. All grievance cases are fully investigated and acted upon as appropriate.

YEAR	NUMBER OF BULLYING-RELATED GRIEVANCES FROM STAFF
2018	*
2019	*
2020	*
2021	11

If a request is made for information and the total figure amounts to five people or fewer, the MoJ must consider whether this could lead to the identification of individuals and whether disclosure of this information would be in breach of our statutory obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation and/or the Data Protection Act 2018. We believe that the release of some of this information would risk identification of the individuals concerned. For this reason, MoJ has chosen not to provide an exact figure where the true number falls between one and five. However, it should not be assumed that the actual figure represented falls at any particular point within this scale; 'five or fewer' is used as a replacement value from which it would be difficult to isolate or extract any individual data.

#### ■ Berwyn Prison: Staff

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

[\[45891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent comparative assessment his Department has made of staffing levels at HMP Berwyn and required staffing levels as set by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

**Lucy Frazer:**

Staffing levels at all public sector prisons are reviewed regularly. A full review of resourcing was undertaken for HMP Berwyn in 2019, and a follow-up review took place in 2020.

Additional operational resources were allocated to Berwyn in June 2020, introducing enhanced gate security and search capability, and in May 2021, by extending professional visits and use of video courts. Staffing levels at HMP Berwyn were most recently reviewed in August 2021 following the transition of former Interserve employees into Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service. As with all reviews, these were agreed in accordance with HMPPS staffing procedures and signed off by the Governor and trade unions.

HMP Berwyn is working towards full staffing levels through continued recruitment, with HMPPS supporting by sending experienced staff on detached duty from other establishments, and offering opportunities for overtime. The prison is also looking

forward to receiving the support from the network of experienced staff in the Standards Coaching Team when this is re-mobilised later in the year.

## ■ Crimes of Violence: Females

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[44439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent steps he has taken to improve support in the justice system for the victims of violence against women and girls in (a) Newport West constituency, (b) Wales and (c) the UK.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The new Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy will help ensure that women and girls are safe everywhere - at home, online and on the streets. The commitments in the strategy include the introduction of a new full-time National Policing Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls. In addition, Section 28 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 has been rolled out to Crown Courts to enable pre-recorded cross-examination and re-examination for vulnerable witnesses

Also, for 2021-22, the Ministry of Justice will provide just under £151m for victim and witness support services. This funding includes: • £1m for rape support centres across Wales; • Over £6.6m for the four Police and Crime Commissioners in Wales - including Gwent, which covers Newport West; and • Investment in 36 new Independent Domestic Violence Advisors and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers posts across Wales

All of these services will help victims feel informed and supported at every stage of their recovery journey, including their interaction with the justice system.

## ■ Domestic Abuse: Legal Aid Scheme

**Mr David Lammy:**

[\[44174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many victims of domestic violence have had an application for legal aid denied in relation to an application for an occupation order in each year since 2010.

**Mr David Lammy:**

[\[44175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many victims of domestic violence have had an application for legal aid denied when applying for a non-molestation order in each year since 2010.

**Alex Chalk:**

Legal aid is available to obtain an injunction to protect survivors of domestic violence. This is not subject to any upper means limit; applicants cannot be found financially ineligible for this form of support. Applications are subject to a merits test to assess their suitability for legal aid funding. Please note that volumes relate to applications for legal aid and not individual applicants; an individual may submit more than one application for public funding. Less than 1.4% of applications for legal aid for a non-

molestation order were refused since 2010. Less than 7% of applications for an occupation order were refused since 2010.

Applications for legal aid for occupation orders and non-molestation orders:

#### OCCUPATION ORDERS

YEAR	APPLICATIONS	REFUSALS
2010-2011	715	27
2011-2012	524	21
2012-2013	600	35
2013-2014	208	15
2014-2015	215	8
2015-2016	243	13
2016-2017	354	27
2017-2018	301	25
2018-2019	373	44
2019-2020	332	42
2020-2021	321	32

#### NON-MOLESTATION ORDERS

YEAR	APPLICATIONS	REFUSALS
2010-2011	11,649	35
2011-2012	10,520	14
2012-2013	11,495	25
2013-2014	15,261	68
2014-2015	14,121	131
2015-2016	13,461	132
2016-2017	13,251	235
2017-2018	13,399	307
2018-2019	13,189	406



**NON-MOLESTATION ORDERS**

2019-2020	16,148	391
2020-2021	21,790	403

■ **Employment Tribunals Service: Standards****Mr David Lammy:**[\[44177\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the longest waiting time was between (a) an application for an employment tribunal and (b) the date of the first hearing in each of the last 10 years.

**Chris Philp:**

**The maximum time (weeks) from receipt to first hearing**

<b>PERIO</b>	<b>SINGLE CLAIMS<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>MULTIPLE CLAIMS<sup>2</sup></b>
1st April 2020 - 31st March 2021	685	743
1st April 2019 - 31st March 2020	528	629
1st April 2018 - 31st March 2019	560	407
1st April 2017 - 31st March 2018	406	682
1st April 2016 - 31st March 2017	330	704
1st April 2015 - 31st March 2016	1063	530
1st April 2014- 31st March 2015	374	426
1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014	953	390
1st April 2012 - 31st March 2013	281	573
1st April 2011 - 31st March 2012	869	865

The figures in the table are high but could be attributed to a handful of cases which have been incorrectly recorded. We are unable to do a manual check as files are only retained for twelve months.

NOTES relating to the above data

1 Single claims are made by a sole employee/worker, relating to alleged breaches of employment rights.

2 Multiple claims are where two or more people bring proceedings arising out of the same facts, usually against a common employer. In this instance the lead multiple claim would be listed for hearing. This table provides the maximum listing time for both single and lead multiple claim cases.

Data is taken from a live management information system and can change over time. Data provided is management information and therefore not subject to the same level of checks as official statistics.

The data provided is the most recent available and for that reason might differ from any previously published information.

Data has not been cross referenced with case files.

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the details are subject to inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale case management system and is the best data that is available.

## ■ Family Proceedings

**Bambos Charalambous:**

[\[47037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to tackle the backlog of cases in the family courts.

**Chris Philp:**

The protection of children, particularly those who are most vulnerable, is a priority for this government and this has never been more important than during this period. The family courts were quick to respond to the pandemic and I am extremely grateful for the dedication of family justice professionals at this unprecedented time.

In March, we launched the £1 million Family Mediation Voucher Scheme, to encourage and support separating parents to explore mediation before coming to court. We want to ensure that every parent coming to court is able to resolve their case in the most effective way, including through mediation where safe and appropriate. Last month, we invested a further £800,000 into the scheme, which is expected to help around 2000 more families.

We continue to focus on bringing down the outstanding caseload by investing in more judicial sitting days and increasing the overall level of disposals. Cases with the most significant safeguarding issues remain our priority, and where suitable, cases are being heard remotely to continue maximising our use of our estate.

**Bambos Charalambous:**

[\[47038\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to help ensure that accurate information is provided to the family courts by the criminal courts when allegations of abuse or criminal convictions are made in family court proceedings.

**Chris Philp:**

The '2013 Protocol and Good Practice Model' for disclosure of information in cases of alleged child abuse provides for the local authority to notify the police on issue of family court proceedings, if not before. This notification serves as a request for disclosure to the police.

In April 2021, amendments were made to rules 3.3 and 3.5 of the Criminal Procedure Rules. These changes imposed a duty on parties to criminal proceedings to alert the criminal court to any related family proceedings and encourage the exchange of relevant information with a court dealing with those proceedings. Information about criminal proceedings may be obtained from criminal courts under Part 5 of the Criminal Procedure Rules by those who are parties to the criminal proceedings and by members of the public generally.

The Government regularly considers how the join up between the criminal and family jurisdictions can be improved. In 2022, we aim to pilot a new "one family, one judge" approach to hearing cases where the same judge will hear the criminal and family court proceedings.

**Bambos Charalambous:**[\[47039\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to help ensure the prompt rectification of errors that are identified in reports submitted in family court proceedings.

**Chris Philp:**

The manner in which errors or alleged errors contained within a report submitted in family court proceedings are rectified is a matter for the court to decide, however in all cases the court will seek for such errors to be dealt with promptly and without undue delay.

Under the Family Procedure Rules 2010 (FPR) Part 1 "the overriding objective" requires the court to deal with cases expeditiously and fairly and for the parties to assist the court in this objective. This general obligation could require the court, or the parties, to act to ensure any issues with a report are rectified.

Depending on the nature of the error contained within a report, if the court considers that the error needs to be rectified in the written report, the court could use its general case management powers (FPR rule 4.1) to direct that an amended or addendum report be submitted to the court.

Where it is alleged by one or more of the parties that a report contains errors, the accuracy and veracity of the information included within the report can be tested during the court hearing, in order for the court to make a determination on this issue.

Proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth. (FPR, rule 17.6)

**■ Low Newton Prison****Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[46959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the finding of the Report on an unannounced inspection of HMP & YOI Low Newton by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, published on 7 September 2021, that the prison was not the appropriate place for six acutely mentally unwell women as it was not properly resourced to manage their risks and needs, if he will make an assessment of the reasons for those woman to be sent to that prison as a place of safety during the two months preceding the inspection.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The Government takes the mental health of people within the criminal justice system very seriously, including those who have been remanded to prison from court under the Mental Health Act, or under the 'own protection' clause of the Bail Act.

In January, together with the Department for Health and Social Care, we published a White Paper setting out proposals for landmark reform of the Mental Health Act and responding to the findings of the Wessely Review. Among other reforms, this includes commitments to support offenders with serious mental health needs to access the care they need as quickly and early as possible. We are accepting, and intend to take forward, the vast majority of the Review's recommendations, including a commitment to end the use of prison as a place of safety under the Mental Health Act. Work is underway between the MoJ and DHSC to introduce a Mental Health Act Bill.

The Bail Act also contains provision which enables the courts to remand an individual into custody for their own protection. We are currently internally reviewing this issue.

Regarding the particular findings of the chief inspector's recent report at HMP Low Newton, I take the findings seriously. As well as the important work referenced, an action plan is being prepared to address the recommendations made in this report and will be published by October.

**■ Prison Accommodation: Standards****Mr David Lammy:**[\[44187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the (a) number and (b) proportion of prison cells out of commission as a result of poor maintenance in each of the last 10 years.

**Lucy Frazer:**

Over the past decade, prison capacity has been taken out of use both temporarily and on a longer-term basis for a number of reasons, including deterioration in the standard and condition of the accommodation. Accommodation is also taken out of use for essential maintenance and refurbishment. It is not possible, however, to provide a reasonable estimate as to which of these decisions was a result of 'poor maintenance'.

We are investing £315m in capital funding over the next year to improve the condition of the existing estate. Some 1,900 places are currently out of use to enable this work along with more minor repairs. This will be supported by 1,000 temporary cells which can accommodate prisoners during maintenance and refurbishment work.

## ■ Prison Service: Dismissal

**Mr David Lammy:**

**[44181]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prison staff were dismissed for conducting inappropriate relationships with prisoners in each year since 2010.

**Lucy Frazer:**

HM Prison and Probation Service has conduct and discipline policies in place which set out the minimum standards of conduct expected of all civil servants. Staff must exercise particular care to ensure that their dealings with prisoners, former prisoners and their friends and relations are not open to abuse, misrepresentation or exploitation. Staff relationships with prisoners must be professional at all times, and the HMPPS Counter Corruption Unit proactively follows up on intelligence to detect and investigate potentially inappropriate relationships.

The table below shows the number of prison staff dismissed after conduct and discipline action due to inappropriate relationships with a prisoner/ex-prisoner from the years 2009/10 to 2019/20. The figure for 2020/21 will be available in November following publication of the 2020/21 HMPPS Staff Equalities Report.

**Table 1: Prison staff <sup>1</sup> dismissed <sup>2</sup> after conduct and discipline <sup>3</sup> action for inappropriate relationship with a prisoner / ex-prisoner <sup>4</sup> , for years 2009/10 to 2019/20**

	2009 -10	2010 -11	2011 -12	2012/1 3	2013/1 4	2014/1 5	2015/1 6	2016/1 7	2017/1 8	2018/1 9	2019/2 0
Prison staff dismissed due to inappropriate relationship with a prisoner / ex-prisoner	13	15	6	8	11	9	9	3	7	13	8

Notes to tables:

1. Prison Staff relates to anyone working in HM Prison Service or the Youth Custody Service (YCS). Therefore it excludes anyone working in HQ or National Probation Service.

2. Information on the outcomes of any appeal is not included.
3. Conduct and discipline cases are defined as where a penalty has been imposed on a member of HMPPS staff for a reason of conduct
4. Staff subject to at least one conduct and discipline that was concluded during the year. If an individual had multiple charges then they will be counted only once.
5. Figures for 2020/21 will be published on 25 November 2021 in Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Annual Staff Equalities Report.

## ■ Prisoner Escapes

**Mr David Lammy:**

**[44178]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners have (a) escaped from prison vans and (b) remain on the run set out by offences convicted and length of custodial sentence in each year since 2010.

**Lucy Frazer:**

A prisoner escapes when they are able to pass beyond the perimeter of a secure prison or the control of HMPPS escorting staff.

These offences are monitored closely to identify any trends and each incident is fully investigated to prevent future incidents and keep the public safe. Prisoners who escape or abscond can face extra time in prison.

Please see data below for (a) the number of prisoners who escaped from prison vans/vehicles and (b) remain on the run set out by offences convicted and length of custodial sentence in England and Wales from the 12 months ending 2011 to the 12 months ending March 2021. To note 'vehicles' includes all vehicles that an escape occurs from, not just prison escort vans.

**Number of Escapes<sup>1</sup> from Vehicles<sup>2</sup>, by main offence type at the time of escape, in England and Wales, 12 months ending March 2011 to 12 months ending March 2021**

### 12 MONTHS TO MARCH

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
<b>Offence Type</b>												
Violence against the person	2		1				1		1			5
Robbery	1		1	1			1		1			5
Theft offences	1		1					1				3
Miscellaneous crimes								1				1

**12 MONTHS TO MARCH**

against  
society

Summary non-motoring				1								1
Offence not recorded <sup>3</sup>	2	2	2	2			1	1		1		11
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>

Note:

1 There were 26 escapes from vehicles between April 2010 and March 2021. None of the escapees currently remain at large as a result of these incidents.

2 "Vehicles" includes all vehicles that an escape occurred from, not just prison escort vans.

3 Escapees who were untried at the time of the escape have their offence not recorded as they were not convicted at the time of the incident.

Data Sources and Quality:

These figures have been drawn from the prison-NOMIS and HMPPS Incident Reporting System. Care is taken when processing and analysing returns but the detail is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large scale recording system. Although shown to the last case, the figures may not be accurate to that level.

**Number of Escapes <sup>1</sup> from Vehicles <sup>2</sup> by custody type <sup>3,4,5</sup> in England and Wales, 12 months ending March 2011 to 12 months ending March 2021**

**12 MONTHS TO MARCH**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Remand</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>
Untried	1	2	2	2			1	1			1	10
Convicted unsentenced				1	1				1			3
<b>Sentenced</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>11</b>

12 MONTHS TO MARCH				
Determinate sentence	2	1	1	4
<i>Less than 6 months</i>	1			1
<i>6 months</i>		1		1
<i>Greater than 6 months to less than 12 months</i>				0
<i>12 months to less than 4 years</i>			1	1
<i>4 years or more</i>	1			1
Indeterminate Sentences	2		1	3
<i>IPP</i>	2			2
<i>Life</i>			1	1
Recalls		2	1	1
<b>Not recorded/unknown</b>	1		1	2

## Notes

1 There were 26 escapes from vehicles between April 2010 and March 2021. None of the escapees currently remain at large as a result of these incidents.

2 Vehicles includes all vehicles that an escape occurred from, not just prison escort vans.

3 This table shows the custody type and judicially impose sentence length for the prisoner at the time of the incident.

4 As administrative data is used to extract this information, it is not possible to calculate the amount of time the prisoner has or will serve in custody. Where an individual has been sentenced, the judicially imposed sentence length covers the full sentence length (in days) given to the prisoner, including any time spent on probation after the custodial part of the sentence has been served.

5 Data pre-2015 was taken from a different data source, and as such is not directly comparable with data for 2015 onwards.

Data Sources and Quality:



These figures have been drawn from the prison-NOMIS and HMPPS Incident Reporting System. Care is taken when processing and analysing returns but the detail is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large scale recording system. Although shown to the last case, the figures may not be accurate to that level.

## ■ Prisoners

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[44427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) men and (b) women were recalled to prison for 14 days or less in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020 and (iii) 2021 to date.

**Ellie Reeves:** [\[44428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) men and (b) women were recalled to prison for 14 days or less more than once in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020 and (iii) 2021 to date.

### **Lucy Frazer:**

The figures requested are set out below. These figures refer to the number of individuals recalled, so the figures may differ from published recall numbers which refer to instances of recall.

It should be noted that the figures for 2021 reflect the published statistics and refer only to the first quarter of the year and cannot therefore be compared to those provided for 2019 and 2020.

### **Total number of offenders recalled to prison for 14 days or less**

YEAR	FEMALE	MALE
2019	655	3,515
2020	407	2,709
2021 (Qtr1)	87	583

### **Total number of offenders recalled to prison for 14 days or less more than once**

YEAR	FEMALE	MALE
2019	183	821
2020	95	596
2021 (Qtr1)	10	71

Public protection is our priority. Offenders on licence are subject to strict licence conditions and supervision.

Where offenders are eligible for a fixed-term recall, they may be recalled to prison on a fixed-term basis, where that is a necessary and proportionate response to a breach

of licence conditions. If not, they will receive a standard recall, which is the only type of recall available for those offenders ineligible for a fixed-term recall (such as those on a life licence). Where they receive a standard recall, they are liable to serve the rest of their sentence in prison, unless the Parole Board, or the Secretary of State using executive powers, decide to re-release them.

Recall information is published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>

## ■ Prisoners on Remand

**Mr David Lammy:** [44183]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average time spent on remand was in each year since 2010.

**Lucy Frazer:**

Centrally held court data does not include the amount of time spent remanded in custody, and therefore obtaining this information would result in a disproportionate cost to the department.

Prison receptions data has enabled an approximation of the data that has been requested. The attached table provides information on the average time spent on remand by all prisoners entering custody after sentencing between January 2010 and March 2021.

**Attachments:**

1. Table for PQ 44183 [2021-09-15 PQ 44183 table.xlsx]

## ■ Prisoners on Remand: Ethnic Groups

**Mr David Lammy:** [44182]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the ethnic breakdown is of people held on remand in each year since 2010.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The decision to remand an individual in custody or to grant bail is solely a matter for the courts acting in accordance with the Bail Act 1976 and the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012, which provides a framework of remand in custody and creates a presumption in favour of bail for all defendants involved in criminal proceedings.

The Ministry of Justice holds information for remand outcomes broken down by ethnicity in the Magistrates' and Crown Court at the following links:

### **Remand Population and Total Population by Ethnicity in England and Wales 2015-2020**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1006270/Population\\_30June2021\\_Annual.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1006270/Population_30June2021_Annual.ods)

### **Remand Population by Magistrates Court**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/987718/remands-magistrates-court-tool-2020.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/987718/remands-magistrates-court-tool-2020.xlsx)

### **Remand Population by Crown Court**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/987720/remands-crown-court-tool-2020.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/987720/remands-crown-court-tool-2020.xlsx)

Research by the Youth Justice Board on Ethnic disproportionality in remand and sentencing in the youth justice system was published on 21 January 2021 and can be accessed via the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/952483/Ethnic disproportionality in remand and sentencing in the youth justice system.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/952483/Ethnic_disproportionality_in_rem_and_sentencing_in_the_youth_justice_system.pdf)

Routine Youth Justice Statistics 2019/2020 released on 28th January show remand broken down by ethnicity: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/youth-justice-statistics-2019-to-2020>

## ■ **Prisoners: Coronavirus**

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

**[45893]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many cases of covid-19 have been recorded among inmates at each prison in Wales in each month since 1 January 2021.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The information requested is provided in the attached spreadsheet.

We have worked closely with Public Health Wales throughout the pandemic and have well-developed policies and procedures in place to manage outbreaks and infectious diseases. This means prisons and probation services are well prepared to take immediate action whenever cases or suspected cases are identified. These measures so far have included restricting regimes, minimising inter-prison transfers, compartmentalising our prisons into different units to isolate the sick, shield the vulnerable and quarantine new arrivals, and introducing an extensive testing programme to test staff and prisoners.

We are also supporting the NHS to deliver the vaccination programme to staff and prisoners to reduce transmission risks and to protect the population from serious illness and fatalities. Our plan for easing restrictions in prisons and probation (and re-introducing them where necessary) are and will be guided by public health.

#### **Attachments:**

1. PQ 45893 Data [2021-09-14 PQ 45893 Data.xlsx]

## ■ **Prisons: Civil Disorder**

**Mr David Lammy:**

**[44179]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) charges, (b) prosecutions and (c) convictions there have been for the offence of prison mutiny in each year since 2010.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The offence of prison mutiny, contrary section 1 Prison Security Act 1992 is committed when two or more prisoners, on the premises of any prison, engage in conduct which is intended to further a common purpose of overthrowing lawful authority in that prison. The offence is aimed at behaviour intended to make a prison, or part of prison, ungovernable.

The Crime in Prison referral Agreement was published in May 2019 and includes riots, serious disorder, including prison mutiny as offences that mandate a referral to the police.

Please see below for the information on (b) prosecutions and (c) convictions for the offence of prison mutiny in England and Wales in each year from December 2013 to December 2020. Data from 2010 – 2013 is not readily available and would require additional work outside of the timeframe for a response.

VALUES	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Prosecuted	0	14	0	21	38	21	3	9
Convicted	3	11	1	1	5	8	16	13
Sentenced	3	11	1	1	5	8	16	13

The Ministry of Justice is not able to provide data on (a) charges for the offence of prison mutiny; this information is not held centrally on the court proceedings database.

**Mr David Lammy:**[\[44185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoner-on-staff hostage incidents there have been in each year since 2010.

**Lucy Frazer:**

Hostage incidents within prisons are rare occurrences and HMPPS has comprehensive contingencies in place to resolve them as safely as possible. We have trained negotiators and intervention staff who provide a range of tactical interventions to establishments experiencing incidents of this nature. If an immediate threat to life is identified HMPPS has an agreed protocol with the Armed Policing Portfolio to hand over control of the incident, however we have not needed to call on the protocol since 1989.

The table below provides details of hostage incidents, broken down by victim type each year from March 2010 to March 2021. We publish hostage data in the HMPPS annual digest, therefore we are unable to release data for the period from March 2021 to March 22 until the data is released in July 2022.

**PRISONER ON STAFF HOSTAGE INCIDENTS**

Year	Number
2010	0
2011	0
2012	2
2013	1
2014	3
2015	2
2016	3
2017	1
2018	9
2019	3
2020	0
2021	0
Grand Total	24

Note: These figures have been drawn from the HMPPS Incident Reporting System. Care is taken when processing and analysing the returns but the detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large scale recording system. Although the figures are shown to the last case the figures may not be accurate to that level.

**■ Prisons: Firearms****Ms Lyn Brown:****[44269]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) functional and (b) imitation firearms have been discovered (i) during entry security procedures and (ii) within a prison unconnected to entry security procedures, in each of the last five years.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The table below provides details of firearms incidents, broken down by year from March 2016 to present and the number attributable to point of entry and in prison discoveries. It is important to note that during the period we only discovered one ballistic weapon in 2020, with the remainder of incidents relating to the discovery of air guns, Taser and CS spray. The vast majority of in prison discoveries were made during routine searches of prisoner accommodation or through acting on intelligence processed through our systems.

**FIREARMS INCIDENTS**

Year	Imitation	Real	At point of entry	Within prison
2016	0	1	1	0
2017	2	1	2	1
2018	4	2	1	5
2019	3	3	3	3
2020	1	2	0	3
2021	1	1	1	1
Totals	11	10	8	13

■ **Prisons: Overcrowding****Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[45826\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Chapter 9 Table 2.2 of the HMPPS Annual Digest, April 2020 to March 2021, published on 29 July 2021, what assessment he has made of the reasons for the higher crowding rate in contracted out prisons than in public prisons.

**Ms Lyn Brown:**[\[45827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Chapter 9 Table 2.2 of the HMPPS Annual Digest, April 2020 to March 2021, published on 29 July 2021, what steps he is taking to reduce crowding over the next two years.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The 2020/21 HMPPS Annual Digest shows that, compared to 2019/20, levels of crowding decreased across the prison estate, within each category of prison, and in both the public sector prison (PSP) and privately managed prison (PMP) estate. It is not unusual for the PMP estate to have higher levels of crowding than the PSP estate and it has done so since 1999. The main reason for this is that the PMP estate contains a higher proportion of Reception prisons than the PSP estate. The HMPPS 2020/21 Annual Digest shows that these prisons, regardless of their operator, are the most likely to be crowded, and they are therefore over-represented in the smaller sample of PMPs.

We are investing more than £4 billion to make significant progress in delivering 18,000 additional prison places across England and Wales by the mid-2020s. This includes creating four new prisons over the next six years whilst also expanding a number of other prisons over the next three years. Additionally, construction is well underway on HMP Five Wells, the new prison in Wellingborough in

Northamptonshire, and Glen Parva in Leicestershire, creating more than 3,300 places.

This additional capacity will have a positive impact on lowering the proportion of crowding within the prison estate. However, the extent to which the proportion of prisoners held in crowded accommodation will reduce will always be dependent on levels of demand in the system.

## ■ Prisons: Seized Articles

**Mr David Lammy:**

[\[44180\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) knives, (b) guns, (c) other weapons and (d) illicit substances were seized from people visiting prisoners in (i) total and (ii) each prison in each year since 2010.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The [HMPPS Annual Digest](#) for the relevant years, where available, contains information in relation to weapons and illicit substances found within the estate. It does not contain data broken down into different classes of weapon. There is no available data in relation to the proportion of finds attributable to individuals visiting the prison estate.

The Government takes seriously the conveyance of weapons and other illicit items and substances into prisons.

In August 2019, the Government committed to invest £100 million in prison security in an ambitious new Security Investment Programme. One of the aims of the Programme was to reduce illicit items entering the prison estate.

Since then, we have installed 73 X-ray body scanners across the prison estate and to date have had over 9000 positive indications. The roll out of Enhanced Gate Security (EGS), replicating the tough measures used in airport screening, has resulted in hundreds of illicit items prevented from entering prisons.

## ■ Probation: Procurement

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[46962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made for the implications of his policy of the independent review of the Dynamic Framework of the National Probation Service, published by Richard Oldfield on 23 August 2021; and if he will make a statement.

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[46963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the independent review of the Dynamic Framework of the National Probation Service, published by Richard Oldfield on 23 August 2021, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the finding that 85 per cent of approved organisations did not bid for any Day 1 contracts.

**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[46964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the independent review of the Dynamic Framework of the National Probation Service, published by Richard Oldfield on 23 August 2021, what estimate he has made of the average cost to (a) an applicant organisation of making an application for Dynamic Framework approval and (b) his Department of vetting an application for Dynamic Framework approval; and what estimate he has made of the total cost to his Department of the Day 1 Dynamic Framework vetting process.

**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[46965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the independent review of the Dynamic Framework of the National Probation Service, published by Richard Oldfield on 23 August 2021, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the finding that in more than half of the competitions held there was initially either one or zero bidders.

**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[46966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter from the Director General of Probation and Wales, HMPPS, to Clinks, in response to the publication of the independent review of the Dynamic Framework of the National Probation Service, published by Clinks on 23 August 2021, what his timetable is for the (a) publication of and (b) consultation on the new set of competition documents.

**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[46967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter from the Director General of Probation and Wales, HMPPS, to Clinks, in response to the publication of the independent review of the Dynamic Framework of the National Probation Service, published by Clinks on 23 August 2021, what his timeframe is for the comprehensive lessons learned exercise to aid future commissioning and procurement.

**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[46968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter from the Director General of Probation and Wales, HMPPS, to Clinks, in response to the publication of the independent review of the Dynamic Framework of the National Probation Service, published by Clinks on 23 August 2021, what his timetable is for publication of the new criteria for the presumptive use of grants rather than contracts for awards less than £1 million in value.

**Ms Lyn Brown:** [\[46969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter from the Director General of Probation and Wales, HMPPS, to Clinks, in response to the publication of the independent review of the Dynamic Framework of the National Probation Service, published by Clinks on 23 August 2021, how the Government plans to monitor the proportion of Dynamic Framework contract values that are subcontracted to (a) voluntary community and social enterprises and (b) small and medium-sized enterprises.



**Ms Lyn Brown:**

**[46970]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter from the Director General of Probation and Wales, HMPPS, to Clinks, in response to the publication of the independent review of the Dynamic Framework of the National Probation Service, published by Clinks on 23 August 2021, what proportion of the Dynamic Framework awards in future years he plans to take the form of (a) grants and (b) contracts.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The government welcomes the findings in Richard Oldfield's report, in which he recognises the progress made in establishing the Dynamic Framework to commission rehabilitative services as part of the new unified probation model. As outlined in the letter from the Director General of Probation and Wales to Clinks, the report's primary conclusion that we can do more to encourage participation of small and medium-sized organisations, is accepted and we are taking forward work to implement most of the recommendations made.

The Framework will exist for at least 7 years, and the procurement of Day 1 contracts represents just a small part of the total volume of services that will be commissioned through it. It is therefore to be expected that only a relatively small proportion of the organisations that had qualified on to the Dynamic Framework then went on to bid in the call off competitions for Day 1 contracts. Active encouragement has been given to all organisations interested in delivering services in the new probation operating model to qualify for the Dynamic Framework, regardless of whether they had expressed an interest in directly bidding for Day 1 contracts.

It is not unusual in running a large number of concurrent competitions, some of which were run below probation region level at a more local PCC level, that there will be fewer organisations with the capacity and capability to bid in some areas than others. It is a significant achievement that all 110 contracts could be successfully awarded.

It is not possible to produce a meaningful estimate of the cost an organisation may incur in participating on the Framework, as that depends on a range of factors, including how many competitions an organisation chooses to bid in, what the organisation's starting point is in terms of understanding of staff transfer and information security requirements, what their existing staffing and estates footprint looks like. A standard selection questionnaire is used as the method by which organisations seek to qualify for the Dynamic Framework, and efforts have been made to make the call off competition process proportionate to the value of the contracts being awarded, whilst ensuring all processes remain in line with procurement regulations and established good commercial practice in government.

Evaluating (or vetting) the Day 1 competitions formed just one part of the workstream of activity to establish the Dynamic Framework, qualify bidders, run competitions, oversee mobilisation of successful bidders (which over an average 3 month mobilisation window included assessing readiness of staff, systems and premises) and implement new contract management processes and structures. It is not possible

to separate out the cost of evaluating; the monthly cost of the overall workstream was c. £220k in FY2020/21, this cost covered all of the above activity.

Looking ahead, consultation has begun with market participants on the changes that are being proposed to the various procurement and competition documents. As Richard Oldfield recognises in his report, it was always the intention to learn lessons from this first round of competitions, and that work began even before transition to the new operating model had been completed. All aspects of the documentation are being considered, from the selection questionnaire to call off competition documents and the Framework Agreement itself. Changes will be implemented over the coming weeks and months in a staged manner and consultation will continue as this progresses. We will continue that approach to reviewing and learning lessons throughout the life of the Dynamic Framework.

Work is underway to prepare guidance and criteria for when grants should be the presumptive first choice of funding mechanism. Richard Oldfield's recommendation is that this should be for all awards under £1million; arguably other factors, such as type of service, also need to be taken into consideration. Market participants will be consulted as this guidance and criteria is developed further. Whilst work on delivery has commenced, detailed timescales have yet to be determined. It is therefore too early to say what proportion of future awards may take the form of grants or contracts.

Finally, the monitoring of the proportion of contract values that are subcontracted to VCSEs and SMEs will be reviewed through contract management governance and the analysis of annual financial returns made by lead providers.

#### ■ Probation: Vetting

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

**[43462]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of new police vetting requirements for probation staff on (a) socioeconomic background diversity, (b) inclusion of domestic and financial abuse victims and (c) inclusion of people with lived experience of the criminal justice system within the Unified Probation Service workforce.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The Ministry of Justice will continue to work with the Police and all parties represented on the Disproportionality in Vetting Working Group. This group is currently benchmarking protected characteristics in order to accurately measure those groups which may have disproportionate negative outcomes with Non-Police Personnel Vetting.

Vetting Personnel consider individual circumstance, if disclosed, when considering an applicant's financial status and history, and are aware to the reasons an applicant may find themselves in financial difficulty through no fault of their own. The MoJ and HM Prison and Probation Service already have staff with lived experience, many of

whom have previously generated a “hit” on vetting systems and subsequently attained a positive vetting outcome.

#### ■ **Television Licences: Non-payment**

**Kirsten Oswald:**

**[44372]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many and what proportion of people prosecuted for TV licence evasion in each year since 2015 were women.

**Chris Philp:**

The Ministry of Justice has published information on prosecutions for TV licence evasion in England and Wales, up to December 2020, available in the ‘Outcomes by Offence’ data tool, which can be found here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/987715/outcomes-by-offence-2020.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/987715/outcomes-by-offence-2020.xlsx)

For prosecutions of women for this offence, follow the steps below.

- Select ‘191A Television licence evasion’ in the Offence filter
- To view male and female prosecutions, click anywhere in the table to bring up the pivot table field list and drag ‘sex’ into the rows field.
- The number of males prosecuted will be found on Row 24 and the number of females prosecuted will be found on Row 25.

#### ■ **Wormwood Scrubs Prison: Inspections**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

**[46961]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to sections six and seven of Report on an unannounced inspection of HMP Wormwood Scrubs by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, published on 9 September 2021, what steps he is taking to help ensure that progress is made against the recommendations made in that report.

**Lucy Frazer:**

The Governor of HMP Wormwood Scrubs and Prison Group Director for London Prisons have received and reviewed the report from the HMIP inspection from 7 to 17 June 2021.

There were 42 recommendations made on this inspection and this included 4 repeat recommendations from the last inspection in 2019. The Governor and his team have carried out a detailed review of the recommendations and are preparing their draft action plan to submit to the Prison Group Director for sign off this week. The action plan will provide responses to each recommendation and will identify the work that will be taken to address them.

It should be noted that some of the recommendations relate to COVID measures that have been implemented in prisons during the pandemic and we will naturally expect to see progress against these as regimes are opened up again in line with our recovery planning. For example, this will apply to recommendations regarding time

out of cell, library attendance, staff contact with prisoners and the education provision.

■ **Wormwood Scrubs Prison: Prison Accommodation**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[46960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to Report on an unannounced inspection of HMP Wormwood Scrubs by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, published on 9 September 2021, for what reason approval to convert cells designed for one into single accommodation has not been granted by HMPPS.

**Lucy Frazer:**

Despite a fall in the national prison population of around 5,000 since March 2020, and fewer prisoners sharing cells as a result, prisoners at HMP Wormwood Scrubs will continue to share cells where necessary, as the latest population projections indicate demand will return to pre-Covid-19 levels.

We are investing more than £4 billion, and making significant progress, in delivering 18,000 additional prison places across England and Wales by the mid-2020s. This includes creating four new prisons over the next six years while expanding several other prisons over the next three years. Additionally, construction is well underway on HMP Five Wells, the new prison in Wellingborough in Northamptonshire, and Glen Parva in Leicestershire, creating more than 3,300 places.

We expect this additional capacity to lower the proportion of crowding within the prison estate, however, decisions to convert cells to single accommodation are dependent on demand within the region.

■ **Youth Custody**

**Ms Lyn Brown:**

[\[45825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 8 September 2021 to Question 38219, which nine sites have been selected to develop approaches to improve their offer for young adults; and what progress has been made on the identification of such approaches for each site.

**Lucy Frazer:**

I can confirm that nine sites have been selected, six of which the National Young Adults Project Team are currently developing, and three that the HM Prison and Probation Service, Long Term High Security Estate (LTHSE) Young Adults project are developing.

The six adult estate sites are HMP Berwyn, HMP Hull, HMP Nottingham, HMP Portland, HMP Isis, and HMP Wandsworth and visits to these six sites have taken place in July 2021. Two of these sites have definitive plans for the projects they will be working on to better support young adults, and project plans are currently being developed. The remaining four sites are considering their options in order to develop a more bespoke approach to working with young adults and follow up meetings are taking place to developing project plans throughout September and October.

The three LTHSE sites are HMP Manchester, HMP Woodhill and HMP Swaleside and each of these establishments have either had site visits or online discussions. Detailed work plans for these sites will be completed by the end of October. The young adult work is also represented in the regime recovery work and Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) keyworker work, both of which support the needs of young adults in LTHSE sites at this time. All sites have been invited to attend a series of mini-seminars that commenced in July 2021 to discuss a range of themes that are relevant to working with young adults.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### ■ Air Pollution: Northern Ireland

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[42123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, when he last discussed air quality with the First Minister and Deputy First Minister of the Northern Ireland Executive.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

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

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

We will deliver this action across the whole United Kingdom, and Northern Ireland has an important role to play in that. Northern Ireland has great potential to become a leader in hydrogen technology, and the UK Government has supported this including providing £11.2m to Wrightbus to develop and manufacture low-cost hydrogen fuel cell technology for buses and create a hydrogen centre of excellence. In addition, through the New Decade, New Approach agreement the UK Government has provided £50m over two years to support the rollout of ultra-low emission public transport.

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

### ■ Climate Change: Northern Ireland

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[42122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Northern Ireland Executive in tackling climate change.

**Mr Robin Walker:**

The UK Government is committed to delivering action on climate change at a global scale through its leadership at COP26. The UK Government has committed to reduce

emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels, ahead of achieving Net Zero by 2050. This will deliver cleaner air, as well as jobs, prosperity, and a brighter future.

The UK Government works alongside the Northern Ireland Executive in tackling climate change, as working together both domestically and internationally is how we can collectively achieve our goals. We will continue to work together, including with the COP26 Devolved Administrations Ministerial Group, Chaired by the COP26 President, which meets quarterly.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Aircraft: Noise

**Ruth Cadbury:**

[\[44368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to make aircraft noise a statutory nuisance.

**Robert Courts:**

The government is supportive of the need to protect communities from the adverse effects of aircraft noise. However, noise from general transport, including aircraft, is not included as a statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 as we believe it is not practical for local authorities to enforce these rules. Aviation noise is better managed through specific government policies tailored to individual noise sources, and we believe there are sufficient mechanisms in place to protect communities from the effects of aircraft noise.

**Ruth Cadbury:**

[\[44369\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will amend Section 70 of the Transport 2000 Act to ensure the Civil Aviation Authority can take action to reduce the impact of aircraft noise.

**Robert Courts:**

Section 70 (2)(d) of the Transport Act 2000 requires the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to take account of any guidance on environmental objectives given to it by the Secretary of State. These environmental objectives, including with respect to aircraft noise, are set out in the revised Air Navigation Guidance presented to the CAA in October 2017 and which followed an extensive public consultation. This Guidance is kept under review by the Department.

The Air Navigation Guidance requires airspace change sponsors to undertake noise impact assessments in accordance with the Department's Transport Analysis Guidance tool. These requirements are reflected in the CAA's CAP1616 airspace change process and the CAA takes account of them when assessing an airspace change proposal.

An independent review of the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN) conducted earlier this year, recommended improved consultation with Government to align work with policy needs and give greater clarity on priorities.

ICCAN will be wound down later in September, followed by a transitional phase during which the Department for Transport will work with the CAA, which will take on the majority of ICCAN's former functions no later than April 2022. The CAA has world-renowned expertise in noise and is well placed to advise the Government on aviation noise management.

## ■ Aviation: Recruitment

**Justin Madders:**

[\[45162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of trends in the retention and recruitment of commercial pilots in the UK.

**Robert Courts:**

The most recent data from the Annual Population Survey – Employment, provided by the Office of National Statistics, shows that the number of aircraft pilots and flight engineers employed reduced from 26,100 in 2019 to 24,000 in 2020. This latter figure includes pilots who may have been furloughed by their employers and experienced support under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS).

Skills retention and skills fade for highly trained jobs needs to be a key element of the sector's recovery plan. To support this, we introduced the Aviation Skills Retention Platform (ASRP) in February 2021 to support the retention of skills within the sector, including for pilots, by offering increased visibility of opportunities across the sector. We are also looking to better understand employment trends through vacancy data submitted to the ASRP by employers.

The Department is also working with industry on maximising use of the existing support measures such as DWP's Flexible Support Fund and Rapid Response Service to support aviation workers at risk of redundancy to stay in employment or move between sectors.

**Justin Madders:**

[\[45163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with commercial airline companies on the impact of the UK leaving the EU on employment opportunities for UK registered pilots.

**Robert Courts:**

The Secretary of State regularly meets with airlines (and other stakeholders in the sector) and listens to issues raised.

The Department also regularly engages with industry to discuss concerns and update industry about developments, for example through the Aviation Safety Industry Engagement Forum.

## ■ Aviation: Renewable Fuels

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[45121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department has plans to amend the definition of non-road mobile machinery in the Energy Act 2004 to limit the eligibility of



biofuel suppliers that claim Renewable Transport Fuel Certificates on biofuel supplied to diesel powered generating sets for the purpose of increasing the availability of renewable fuels for use by the UK aviation sector.

**Jim Shannon:** [\[45122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK aviation sector's demand for renewable fuels on the levels of (a) availability of renewable diesel for use in non-road mobile machinery and (b) demand for fossil diesel for use in non-road mobile machinery and diesel road vehicles as a result of a lack of available supplies.

**Jim Shannon:** [\[45123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK aviation sector's demand for renewable fuels on the number of operators of (a) non-road mobile machinery and (b) diesel road vehicles switching to fossil diesel as a result of lack of available supplies of renewable fuels.

**Jim Shannon:** [\[45124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits to the UK public of improved air quality in international airspace resulting from the UK aviation sector increasing its use of renewable fuels.

**Rachel Maclean:**

Under the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) renewable fuel used in mobile generators is eligible for Renewable Transport Fuel Certificates (RTFCs). Suppliers of fossil fuel used in mobile generators and other forms of non-road mobile machinery are also subject to an obligation to ensure renewable fuels are supplied in the UK. Suppliers of fossil fuels used in aviation are not currently obligated under the RTFO, but renewable fuels used in the sector are potentially eligible for RTFCs. The Department has no plans to limit the supply of renewable fuel to mobile generators for the purposes of increasing the availability of renewable fuels in the aviation sector.

In July the Department launched a consultation on proposals for a UK sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) mandate requiring jet fuel suppliers to blend an increasing proportion of SAF into aviation fuel from 2025. The consultation closes on 19 September. The modelling supporting the consultation has taken into consideration the interactions between fuels needed for road, non-road mobile machinery and aviation, and the availability of sustainable feedstocks and renewable fuels. A summary of responses including next steps will be published in due course and the modelling will be updated considering evidence from the consultation.

Policy development on the RTFO takes into account competing demands for renewable fuel resources across different transport sectors. It is also informed by regular reviews to ensure the scheme is delivering cost effective carbon savings in support of UK carbon budgets. It is widely understood that the availability of biomass used to produce biofuels is limited. So, these finite resources need to be deployed in sectors of the economy where greater greenhouse gas savings can be achieved, or



sectors that have fewer decarbonisation options, such as aviation. The renewable fuel market will transform and adjust through this decade and beyond. As we transition to electric vehicles, some biomass and other sources of renewable fuel will be freed up to accommodate increased use in SAF.

Biofuels are traded in a competitive global market and the RTFO certificate trading scheme includes several measures to ensure costs passed on to the consumer are minimised and targets for the supply of renewable fuels are met. For example, the RTFO scheme includes a buy-out mechanism. The buy-out price, which was reviewed and updated last year, is set at a level which ensures that in normal market conditions there is a strong commercial incentive for suppliers to discharge their obligation through the supply of renewable fuels. Suppliers of fossil fuels to the non-road mobile machinery and diesel road vehicle sectors therefore have a strong incentive to meet their obligations under the RTFO through ensuring the supply of renewable fuels.

There are no direct benefits to the UK public of improved air quality in international airspace, defined as airspace which is outside of the standard state territorial limits. Studies have shown that NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from aircraft above 1,000 feet are unlikely to have a significant impact on local air quality. However, on top of the carbon emissions reductions and economic benefits associated with SAF use and production, there is growing evidence that SAF also reduces sulphur dioxide and particulate matter emissions. Thereby improving local air quality during take-off and landing, as well as other non-CO<sub>2</sub> impacts of aeroplanes, including contrails.

## ■ **Bus Services: Regulation**

**Sam Tarry:**

**[44473]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to Philip Alston's report, *Public Transport, Private Profit: The Human Cost of Privatizing Buses in the United Kingdom*, published in July 2021, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of that report's conclusions on the effect of the deregulation of the bus network on the (a) effectiveness of the transport system and (b) climate change objectives.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The National Bus Strategy sets out how we will reform the way in which bus services across England outside London are provided. Instead of services being planned on a purely commercial basis with little or no engagement from local transport authorities, we want to see the important skillsets and contributions of local transport authorities and bus operators brought together in either Enhanced Partnership or franchising arrangements, to deliver ambitious local visions for better buses. This is backed by our £3 billion of investment. This approach can deliver the bus services that passengers deserve and support our decarbonisation goals by making the bus an attractive alternative to the car for far more people.

**■ Cathay Pacific: Heathrow Airport****Thangam Debbonaire:** [\[45179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions the Government has had with representatives of (a) Cathay Pacific Airways and (b) the Aircrew Officers Association Europe on Cathay Pacific's proposal to close its Heathrow pilot base.

**Robert Courts:**

I have met with representatives from Cathay Pacific Airways to understand the rationale for the base closure and discuss alternative options, including what support could be offered to the pilots who may be affected by the commercial decision the airline is proposing. Moreover, I met with representatives of the Aircrew Officers Association Europe, including pilots who may be directly affected by the closure of the Heathrow pilot base.

**■ Civil Aviation Authority****Ruth Cadbury:** [\[44367\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will review the statutory duties of the Civil Aviation Authority.

**Robert Courts:**

The functions of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) evolve over time as Parliament sees fit to confer new functions on it. Recent examples have been the regulation of both remotely piloted aerial vehicles and space flight from the UK, and certain aspects of enforcing health protection operator liability regulations. Due to the significant impact that the COVID-19 crisis has had on both our aviation industry and the CAA, we do not consider it appropriate at this time to review the statutory duties of the CAA overall. However, we will consider changes to the CAA's powers and duties where necessary.

**■ Civil Aviation Authority: Environment Protection****Ruth Cadbury:** [\[44366\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to strengthen the environmental remit of the Civil Aviation Authority.

**Robert Courts:**

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) already has a number of environmental responsibilities, including certifying aircraft for noise and emissions standards and the obligation to take fully into account the Government's objectives on noise, emissions and air quality when exercising its air navigation functions. It also has legal powers to provide information about the environmental impact of aviation where it would help passengers make more informed decisions. We do not currently plan to extend its legal duties on the environment, as these are deemed sufficient.

We have recently asked it to take on some of the noise advisory functions of the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise from April 2022. The CAA also

plans to establish a new Environment Panel to provide it with independent expert advice on a range of environmental issues including carbon, air quality and noise.

#### ■ **Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Standards**

**Stuart Anderson:**

[\[45925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to help ensure that the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency respond to enquiries in a timely manner.

**Rachel Maclean:**

Throughout the pandemic the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's contact centre has actively managed its operation and flexed the services for customers in line with the available resources. This has included procuring the use of an additional building to increase the number of staff able to take calls within the social distancing guidelines. To help respond to more enquiries, remote working has been increased with staff handling email, webchat, social media and more recently, telephone customer contacts.

#### ■ **Driving Licences: Foreign Nationals**

**Sir Desmond Swayne:**

[\[46921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will extend the period in which the holders of foreign driving licences may drive lawfully in the UK to reflect delays in availability of driving tests.

**Rachel Maclean:**

There are no plans to extend the period for which holders of international driving licences can drive in GB using that licence.

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is adding new capacity to the system all the time and shorter notice tests do become available as customers cancel booked tests.

#### ■ **Electric Vehicles: Charging Points**

**Daisy Cooper:**

[\[45272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to enable tenants in blocks of flats to install electric vehicle charging points in allocated parking spaces on a presumptive basis in the event that landlords repeatedly ignore requests for the installation of those points, rather than requiring a landlord's explicit permission.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The government recognises that more needs to be done to help drivers living in blocks of flats realise the benefits of electric vehicle ownership and we are taking steps to address this. The Government consulted in 2019 on requiring new homes and non-residential properties to have chargepoints. We will respond to the consultation soon and aim to have the regulations laid in parliament later this year. Additionally, the government is reforming the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme

so that building owners can also apply in the future. We recognise that more needs to be done in this area and we will be considering what further measures we can take to help both renters and leaseholders.

We will publish an EV Infrastructure Strategy to set out the vision and action plan for charging infrastructure rollout needed to support the 2030/35 phase out. This will set expected roles for different stakeholders and how government will intervene to address the gaps between the current market status and our vision.

**Martyn Day:**

**[45886]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to increase the (a) availability and (b) reliability of electric car charging points.

**Rachel Maclean:**

Government and industry have supported the installation of over 25,000 publicly available charging devices including more than 4,700 rapid devices. On average, over 500 new chargers are being added to the UK's road network each month. A recent study found that the UK now has more rapid chargers every 100 miles of key strategic road than any country in Europe. In November 2020, we announced we will invest £1.3 billion in accelerating the roll out of charging infrastructure over the next four years for rapid chargepoints and installing more on-street chargepoints near homes and workplaces to make charging as easy as refuelling a petrol or diesel car.

By 2023, we aim to have at least six high powered, open access chargepoints at motorway service areas in England, with some larger sites having ten to twelve. By 2030, we are planning for there to be around 2,500 high powered chargepoints across England's motorways and major A roads, and, by 2035, we expect the number to increase to around 6,000. Government is working with the private sector to deliver this wherever possible.

For example, there are plans for further investment into the Electric Highway along the Strategic Road Network giving drivers more confidence when making longer journeys. GRIDSERVE are undertaking a programme of upgrades to the existing hardware, which will include the option to pay by contactless methods at the chargepoint and they are on track to complete upgrades to all existing 50kW chargers before the end of the year. Tesla also recently confirmed plans to open the Tesla Supercharger network up to vehicles from other manufacturers. The government has welcomed these developments.

For motorists who do not have access to off-street parking, the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) is available to all UK local authorities to provide public chargepoints for their residents without access to private parking. The ORCS has supported 49 different local authorities to install over 1,400 chargepoints. A further 88 local authorities have also been awarded grant funding, providing more than 3,200 on-street public chargepoints with their installations yet to be completed. This year, £20 million is available under ORCS to ensure more local authorities and residents can benefit from the scheme. Government also committed at Spending Review the

£90 million Local EV Infrastructure fund, to support the roll out of larger, on-street charging schemes and local rapid hubs in England.

In Spring 2021 we consulted to improve the consumer experience at public chargepoints. We included a section to improve the reliability across the charging network to ensure that consumers can rely on chargepoints wherever they are travelling in the UK. We will publish our government response in Autumn and lay legislation in early 2022.

## ■ Electric Vehicles: Grants

**Justin Madders:**

[\[45165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many plug-in car grants have been approved by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles for households in (a) England and (b) Ellesmere Port and Neston constituency.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Department holds data on plug-in car grants but this database does not provide the geographic breakdown required. By the end of 2020, the total number of plug-in car grant eligible models registered for the first time was as follows:

England 274,222 Ellesmere Port and Neston 193

Not all of these would necessarily have received a grant.

**Justin Madders:**

[\[45166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many applications for the plug-in car and plug-in taxi grants have been received in each month since the start of those schemes; and how many of those applications have been approved.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Plug in Car Grant has supported over 350,000 vehicle applications since it was launched in December 2010. The following tables list the number of vehicles that have been approved. The Plug in Car Grant eligibility criteria and the amount of the grant has changed over time and the impact of those changes is reflected in uptake figures. Key changes are listed below:

- In March 2016, minimum electric range and CO2 emission requirements were introduced and the grant rate for plug in hybrids reduced to significantly below rates for zero emission cars.
- In October 2018, a further change was made to raise the minimum electric range to 70 miles to focus the grant on the cleanest vehicles. This excluded all available plug-in hybrids from eligibility for the grant.
- In March 2020, the Department announced changes to the Plug in Car Grant rate and introduced a £35,000 price cap on grant eligibility, to focus the grant on where it is most likely to have an impact.

There are several reasons why orders placed may not eventually be approved. The main reason is order cancellations. Order numbers since April 2021 have not been

included as they are commercially sensitive for Government until the financial year has been completed.

It is important to note that orders are allowed 9 or 12 months to complete – the point at which the car is registered and delivered to the customer and the grant subsequently paid. For this reason the number of approved car placed in the November to March 2021 period is likely to increase.

**CARS -  
ALL**

ORDERS	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2010												16
2011	22	84	367	96	58	115	45	59	49	30	32	57
2012	80	101	248	124	201	125	337	218	169	352	232	146
2013	111	185	342	185	440	325	384	330	436	273	335	470
2014	690	496	940	514	778	1391	1372	1177	2485	2094	1968	2115
2015	1927	2695	4223	1746	2790	2835	2535	1775	2963	2427	2416	4174
2016	6314	12555	1693	1490	1328	1841	1590	2743	3383	1707	2405	2647
2017	3353	3884	5608	2899	3908	4542	4007	4175	5895	4056	4787	4170
2018	4388	5038	6469	3587	3890	4129	3897	4526	5365	14388	1232	1464
2019	1344	1395	2912	2083	2548	4538	5719	5091	5776	4832	4514	6757
2020	8238	11825	35912	1083	1168	4555	5822	6318	13646	8637	7500	13465
2021	6927	9932	17908									

**CARS -**

APPROVED	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2010												16
2011	21	72	297	81	56	83	44	55	47	28	25	57
2012	72	88	213	82	187	72	300	204	158	340	218	145
2013	103	178	333	177	435	305	354	317	412	264	328	432
2014	623	450	856	470	732	1325	1312	1104	2385	1994	1887	2011
2015	1833	2620	4096	1629	2582	2584	2257	1638	2809	2242	2244	3744
2016	5053	9553	1506	1248	1111	1519	1279	2541	3100	1569	2232	2486

**CARS -**

<b>APPROVED</b>	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2017	3103	3537	5240	2577	3507	4050	3486	3581	5223	3459	4195	3527
2018	3836	4414	5840	3082	3431	3724	3482	4096	4890	10661	1011	1204
2019	1142	1160	2532	1461	2075	3788	4685	4376	5067	4063	3569	5369
2020	6801	9063	22720	797	963	3911	5004	5553	11920	7691	6624	11683
2021	5535	8147	13286									

The Plug-in Taxi Grant was introduced in January 2018 and the numbers of vehicles which have received funding from the scheme are as follows.

**TAXIS -****ALL**

<b>ORDERS</b>	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2018	82	134	46	42	75	125	117	125	98	220	190	159
2019	107	96	252	157	193	183	204	204	234	301	204	145
2020	197	279	119	4	5	49	71	78	166	65	58	42
2021	11	28	125									

**TAXIS -**

<b>APPROVED</b>	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2018	60	87	40	35	65	102	102	115	85	199	160	149
2019	83	93	238	146	190	162	195	189	220	260	197	141
2020	190	212	48	3	5	43	65	75	160	60	56	36
2021	11	23	111									

■ **Ferries: Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

**Jim Shannon:**

**[45120]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on what date he last met operators of UK inland waterway ferry services to discuss how the sector can reduce its net greenhouse gas emissions.

**Robert Courts:**

Ministers and officials in the Department for Transport regularly engage with shipping operators, including operators of inland waterway ferry services, to discuss how the sector can reduce its net greenhouse gas emissions.

**Freight: Conditions of Employment and Pay****Ruth Jones:**[\[45917\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to promote better pay and conditions in the haulage sector in the context of the shortage of HGV drivers.

**Rachel Maclean:**

It is for the road freight industry to do all they can to make employment more attractive to UK workers through offering training, careers options and wage increases.

We recognise the concerns expressed about the provision, quality and value of lorry parking in the UK. We are looking at ways to increase the provision of high quality overnight lorry parking.

**Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Pay****Ruth Jones:**[\[45916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on pay and conditions in the haulage sector in the context of the shortage of HGV drivers.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Government is taking action to increase the number of drivers able to enter the industry, it is for the sector to improve rates of retention.

We are working across government to address the concerns expressed about the provision, quality and value of lorry parking in the UK. We are looking at ways to increase the provision of high quality overnight lorry parking.

**Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Recruitment****Daisy Cooper:**[\[45275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an urgent assessment of the potential merits of the recommendations for recruiting HGV drivers contained in the Grant Thornton Report on Labour Availability; and if he will make a statement.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Department for Transport has regular discussions with the road haulage industry on the issues raised in the report. The HGV driver shortage is an international problem with shortages being reported in a number of EU member countries and in the US. It is clear that our focus needs to be on developing domestic talent.



That is why the Government has already provided a 50% increase in HGV driver testing compared to pre-pandemic levels, and on 10 September announced measures to further increase HGV testing by up to 50,000 tests a year. This builds on existing actions including training for jobseekers and additional funding for apprenticeships.

## ■ Members: Correspondence

**Paul Maynard:**

[\[45092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plan to reply to the letter of 29 June 2021 from the hon. Member for Blackpool North and Cleveleys on excessive vehicle exhaust noise.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Department's records indicate that a response to your letter of 29 June 2021 on excessive vehicle exhaust noise was issued on 5 July 2021 from Baroness Vere of Norbiton.

## ■ Public Transport: Finance

**Sarah Olney:**

[\[47033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the ICE discussion paper: public transport funding post-covid, published on 21 June 2021, what plans he has to transition future (a) investment and (b) spending on public transport post-covid-19.

**Rachel Maclean:**

My department noted the ICE's discussion paper with interest, in particular its observations that high quality public transport has a key role to play in reducing emissions, improving air quality and tackling congestion. Ensuring the long-term strength of the transport system post-Covid-19 is critical to our recovery.

We have continued to support the transport sector through Covid-19, providing additional funding to keep critical services running. We recognise there is uncertainty about the future level of transport demand, including changes in peoples' behaviour post pandemic, and we continue to monitor these trends. However, we are confident that through our reforms and investment in areas such as buses, cycling and walking, as well as rail, we can increase public transport demand and provide people with better access to jobs and opportunities. This will boost the whole of the UK economy as we build back better from Covid-19.

We will continue to engage experts from across the transport sector, such as the ICE, as we develop our approach.

**■ Restoring Your Railway Fund**

**Justin Madders:** [\[45850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 16 July to Question 29812, what the planned timetable is for the successful Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund bid to be announced.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

We are assessing the bids and currently expect to announce the outcomes later this year.

**■ Roads: Bridges**

**Steve Reed:** [\[46990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what information his Department holds on the number of checks undertaken by local authorities of road bridges.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Department encourages adoption of an effective, integrated asset management approach to highway infrastructure including bridges through the UKRLG Code of Practice 'Well-managed highway infrastructure'.

There is a duty placed on highway authorities, by Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended) to maintain the highways network in their area, including the road bridges that they are responsible for. The Act does not set out specific standards of maintenance, as it is for each individual local highway authority to assess and keep records of which parts of its network need repair and what standards should be applied, based upon their local knowledge and circumstances.

**■ Taxis: Licensing**

**Sarah Olney:** [\[47036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will bring forward legislative proposals on national minimum standards for taxi and PHV licensing to improve safety for passengers.

**Rachel Maclean:**

The Government will continue to engage with the taxi and private hire vehicle sector on our plans for reforming regulation, including options to introduce new legislation.

The Department is supporting licensing authorities to make use of their extensive existing powers through the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards issued last year and will consult on updated best practice guidance for licensing authorities later this year.

**Mr Richard Holden:** [\[47077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which local authorities are members of the National Register of Taxi and Private Hire Licence Revocations and Refusals scheme (NR3).

**Rachel Maclean:**

As at 31 March 2021 48% of authorities submitted data to the National Register of Taxi and Private Hire Licence Revocations and Refusals scheme (NR3), and 50% used NR3 when making licensing decisions. Table TAXI0112 of the Department's 'Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Statistics, England: 2021' release provides the responses from all licensing authorities and is available on the GOV.UK website at the following link: [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-statistics-england-2021](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-statistics-england-2021).

**Travel Restrictions: Bangladesh and Pakistan****Rachel Hopkins:****[45322]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when his Department plans to next review the covid-19 travel restrictions placed on (a) Pakistan and (b) Bangladesh.

**Robert Courts:**

The government keeps data for countries and territories under regular review, and country allocations under the traffic light system are reviewed every three weeks, unless concerning evidence means we need to act faster to protect public health. The next review of country allocations will happen before 1 October 2021.

**Travel Restrictions: Coronavirus****Mr Steve Baker:****[R] [46980]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will remove Pakistan from the covid-19 red list of countries; and if he will make a statement.

**Robert Courts:**

Decisions on Red, Amber or Green List assignment and associated border measures are taken by Ministers, who take into account Joint Biosecurity Centre risk assessments of countries and territories, alongside wider public health factors.

Further engagement is planned between senior officials and Pakistan's officials. This is in part to further understand the strategies employed by Pakistan, and to establish stable and long-term access to the outcome of Pakistan's in-country genomic surveillance and sequencing.

These are intended to be temporary measures and the government keeps data for countries and territories under regular review.

**Travel: Economic Situation****Justin Madders:****[45164]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what economic assessment he has made of the effect of the UK leaving the EU on the travel sector in the UK.

**Robert Courts:**

The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement allows the vast majority of journeys between the UK and the EU to continue as they did before the end of the transition

period, giving people the freedom to travel to and from the EU for work, holidays and to visit loved ones, Covid-19 restrictions allowing.

## ■ Travel: USA

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[44238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken re-opening transatlantic travel between the UK and the US following the establishment of the US UK transatlantic taskforces in June 2021.

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[44239\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with his American counterparts in the US on re-opening trans-Atlantic travel between the US and UK.

**Robert Courts:**

Prime Minister Johnson and President Biden made clear the importance of bringing about the return of safe trans-Atlantic travel as soon as possible. The Government continues to work closely through the joint UK-US Experts' Working Group to develop meaningful options to ensure the return of safe and sustainable international travel.

The reopening of transatlantic travel to fully vaccinated US passengers travelling to the UK from amber countries reflects the government's clear ambition to reopen travel and kickstart the economy as we recover from the pandemic.

## ■ Veterans: Railways

**Stephen Morgan:** [\[47042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many veterans' railcards have been issued since the launch of that railcard.

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

As of September 2021 nearly 28,000 Veterans' Railcards have been sold.

## TREASURY

## ■ Cash Dispensing: Fees and Charges

**Feryal Clark:** [\[45291\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with the Financial Conduct Authority on free access to the UK cash network.

**John Glen:**

The Government remains closely engaged with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) in developing its cash access proposals, including through the Joint Authorities Cash Strategy Group, which provides a forum for the public bodies to formally co-ordinate respective approaches to access to cash. The Group is chaired by HM

Treasury and attended by the Bank of England, Payments Systems Regulator and the FCA.

The Government has published a consultation on proposals for protecting access to cash for the long term. The Government proposes that the FCA becomes the lead regulator for oversight of the retail cash system with responsibility for monitoring and enforcing cash access requirements. Under the proposals, the FCA would be responsible for ensuring that facilities provide reasonable access in order to qualify for meeting geographic requirements. The FCA would be expected to take into account factors that reflect existing standards of cash access, including the appropriateness of facilities for vulnerable users, such as costs for end users, security, hours of availability and accessibility.

The consultation is open until 23 September 2021 and is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/access-to-cash-consultation>

## ■ Collateral (UK): Insolvency

**Daisy Cooper:**

[44451]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions his Department has had with the Financial Conduct Authority on the collapse of Collateral (UK) Limited.

**John Glen:**

Ministers and officials have had no recent discussions with the FCA on the collapse of Collateral (UK) Ltd.

The FCA is an independent regulator responsible for overseeing the peer to peer lending sector and preventing firms from carrying out unauthorised activity.

Investigations into individual firms' activities are a matter for the FCA.

## ■ HIV Infection

**Feryal Clark:**

[45292]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on funding for the Government's HIV Action Plan.

**Steve Barclay:**

The Government remains fully committed to achieving zero new HIV transmissions in England by 2030.

In March 2020, we announced that the HIV prevention drug PrEP would be routinely available across England. New funding of £11m was made available in 2020/21 and an additional £23m was added to the public health grant in the current financial year.

The Department of Health and Social Care is currently developing a new Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy and an HIV Action Plan, both of which are planned for publication later this year.

**■ No-interest Loans Scheme****Carla Lockhart:** [45950]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 18 May 2021 to Question 1224 on No-interest Loans Scheme, what recent progress he has made towards the pilot of a no-interest loan scheme.

**John Glen:**

On 6 September, Fair4All Finance announced they had been appointed to deliver the pilot and further details of their plans. This included that the pilot will run in up to six locations one of which is expected to be in Northern Ireland. Further information on the pilot can be found at: <https://fair4allfinance.org.uk/news/plans-announced-for-new-uk-wide-no-interest-loan-scheme-pilot/>.

**WALES****■ Coronavirus: Wales****Mark Fletcher:** [903365]

What discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on the potential merits of a separate independent public inquiry into the handling of the covid-19 outbreak in Wales.

**David T C Davies:**

It is for the Welsh Government to consider the merits of a separate public inquiry. It is vital that all such inquiries rigorously examine public bodies' handling of the Covid crisis and provide at least the same level of scrutiny as the UK public inquiry.

The UK Government is working closely with the devolved administrations on the scope of the UK public inquiry. I look forward to this beginning its work next year.

**Bob Blackman:** [903369]

What estimate he has made of the total funding provided by the Government to Wales to help tackle the covid-19 outbreak.

**Simon Hart:**

The funding provided to Wales by the UK Government demonstrates the value of the Union to Wales and reflects Wales' value to the Union.

The UK Government has provided over **£3.4 billion** in direct support to businesses across Wales, an additional **£8.6 billion** to the Welsh Government to tackle the pandemic.

**■ Devolved Matters: Wales****Deidre Brock:** [903366]

What recent assessment his Department has made of the effect of the United Kingdom Internal Market Act 2020 on the ability of the Senedd to legislate effectively in devolved policy areas.

**Simon Hart:**

The UK Internal Market Act has not taken a single power away from the devolved administrations.

What it has done is protect seamless trade within our United Kingdom which is vital to Welsh business and the Welsh economy, with Wales selling more to the rest of the UK than to the rest of the World put together.

**Large Goods Vehicle Drivers: Wales****Stuart C McDonald:**[\[903363\]](#)

What recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on lorry driver shortages in Wales.

**David T C Davies:**

The Secretary of State for Wales and I have a wide range of discussions with Ministerial colleagues, including how to solve the current shortage of lorry drivers.

That is why the government is increasing the availability of HGV driving testing. However, I would like to remind the honourable Member that the HGV driver shortage is not exclusive to the UK and is a Europe wide issue.

**WORK AND PENSIONS****Fuel Poverty: Scottish Highlands****Drew Hendry:**[\[45870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the effect on the levels of fuel poverty of the suspension of the pension triple lock in the Scottish Highlands.

**Guy Opperman:**

The Social Security (Up-rating of Benefits) Bill ensures those who rely on the new State Pension, basic State Pension and Pension Credit Standard Minimum Guarantee have their spending power preserved. They will be protected from the higher costs of living by increasing at least with the rise in inflation or 2.5%, whichever is higher. This was also the case last year when we took legislative action to increase State Pension rates despite the fall in earnings which would otherwise have meant that they would have been frozen.

The UK Government is committed to supporting older people and vulnerable households to keep warm, and it has a strong package of policies already delivering to those in need.

This includes Winter Fuel Payments and Cold Weather Payments available in Scotland until the Scottish Government has built the capacity to deliver replacements for them.

## ■ Labour Market: Newport West

**Ruth Jones:**

[\[44444\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she has taken to tackle labour market shortages in Newport West constituency.

**Mims Davies:**

We want everyone to be able to find a job, progress in work and thrive in the labour market, whoever they are and wherever they live. Through our Plan for Jobs, the government announced over £33 billion in measures to create, support and protect jobs, which includes £2.9 billion funding for Restart and £3 billion investment in the Kickstart programme alongside other measures focussed on boosting work search, skills and apprenticeships.

Alongside measures in Plan for Jobs, DWP is leading cross-government collaboration to identify and remove barriers to working in sectors with immediate or growing demand for jobs. We continue to work closely with these departments and sector bodies to identify and address barriers facing DWP customers and to ensure the provision is available to support individuals to access opportunities in these sectors. We work closely with a range of departments to shape skills support to enable individuals to develop the skills needed in order to move to roles in different sectors.

In addition, the local Jobcentre team are currently supporting the recruitment of a significant number vacancies in the Newport area and continue to build on these opportunities with employers to support claimants in their movement to work. The Jobcentre team continually engages with local employers, supporting recruitment drives and promoting the use of the Jobcentre for recruitment events. Some of the larger employers they are currently supporting include; Tesco, RF Brooks, McDonald's, Trinity FM, Celtic Manor and TK Maxx.

## ■ Local Housing Allowance

**Justin Madders:**

[\[43545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 28 April 2021 to Question 183052 on Local Housing Allowance. what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies on Discretionary Housing Payment applications of the statistics on households in receipt of Local Housing Allowance where rent exceeds the allowance.

**Will Quince:**

There has been no such assessment made. Data on households in receipt of Local Housing Allowance where rent exceeds the allowance is taken into account when allocating Discretionary Housing Payment funding between Local Authorities.

There is no limit to the length of time over which a Discretionary Housing Payment award may be made. It may be awarded for a short period to give a claimant time to deal with their financial circumstances or for a longer period until their circumstances change.



Since 2011, the government has provided over £1 billion in Discretionary Housing Payments to local authorities to help support people who need help those who require further financial assistance towards housing costs.

■ **Universal Credit**

**Virginia Crosbie:**

[\[45952\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of retaining the £20 uplift to the standard allowance of universal credit.

**Will Quince:**

We expect this would cost around £6bn per year. The cost of funding one year of the uplift is the equivalent of adding 1p on the basic rate of income tax in addition to a 3p increase in fuel duty.

## MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

### FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

#### ■ Afghanistan: Peacekeeping Operations

**Lisa Nandy:**

[\[44334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when he last discussed the implications of UK troop withdrawal from Afghanistan with the Foreign Minister or other senior officials of (a) Pakistan, (b) Iran, (c) Tajikistan, (d) Turkmenistan and (e) Uzbekistan prior to Taliban forces taking control of Kabul on 15 August 2021.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 10 September 2021. The correct answer should have been:**

**Nigel Adams:**

The Foreign Secretary is in regular contact with counterparts in the region. As set out in the Foreign Secretary's statement to Parliament on September 6th, he visited Qatar and Pakistan from 1-3 September and Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon visited Uzbekistan and Tajikistan from 1-3 September. The Foreign Secretary also had telephone conversations with the Uzbek Foreign Minister on 6 September, the Tajik Foreign Minister on 2 September, and with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on 15, 25 and 27 August. Lord Ahmad additionally called the Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, on 3 September, the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan on 25 August and Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan on the same day. They held discussions with counterparts on securing safe passage for those fleeing Afghanistan and advancing the government's international priorities.

#### ■ Afghanistan: Refugees

**Preet Kaur Gill:**

[\[41124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what meetings he has had with counterparts in countries neighboring Afghanistan on the needs of Afghan refugees in those countries and the support his Department could provide; and when those meetings took place.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 10 September 2021. The correct answer should have been:**

**Nigel Adams:**

As set out in the Foreign Secretary's statement to Parliament on September 6th, he visited Qatar and Pakistan from 1-3 September and Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon visited Uzbekistan and Tajikistan from 1-3 September. The Foreign Secretary has also had telephone conversations with the Uzbek Foreign Minister on 6 September, the Tajik Foreign Minister, on 2 September, and with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on 27 and 25 August. Lord Ahmad has additionally called the Deputy Foreign Minister

of Turkmenistan, on 3 September, the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan on 25 August and Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan on the same day. They held discussions with counterparts on securing safe passage for those fleeing Afghanistan and advancing the government's international priorities.

**Fleur Anderson:**

**[41333]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to work with countries neighbouring Afghanistan on keeping their borders open and resettling refugees that flee by land.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 7 September 2021. The correct answer should have been:**

**Nigel Adams:**

The Foreign Secretary visited Qatar and Pakistan from 1-3 September and Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon visited Uzbekistan and Tajikistan from 1-3 September. The Foreign Secretary has also had telephone conversations with the Uzbek Foreign Minister on 6 September, the Tajik Foreign Minister, on 2 September, and with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on 27 and 25 August. Lord Ahmad has additionally called the Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, on 3 September, the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan on 25 August and Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan on the same day. They held discussions with counterparts on securing safe passage for those fleeing Afghanistan and advancing the government's international priorities. In addition, FCDO Rapid Deployment Teams have been sent to Pakistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to reinforce our Embassy staff to process arrivals from Afghanistan.

■ **Afghanistan: Taliban**

**Alan Brown:**

**[41003]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will list the international counterparts he has discussed the Taliban upsurge in Afghanistan with, including the dates and times of those discussions, during the period 12 to 16 August 2021.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 10 September 2021. The correct answer should have been:**

**Nigel Adams:**

As the Foreign Secretary made clear in Parliament on September 6th, Ministers and senior officials have undertaken sustained engagement with international partners throughout the crisis. Amongst a range of other activity, the Foreign Secretary visited Qatar and Pakistan from 1-3 September and Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon visited Uzbekistan and Tajikistan from 1-3 September. The Foreign Secretary has also had telephone conversations with the Uzbek Foreign Minister on 6 September, the Tajik Foreign Minister, on 2 September, and with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on 27 and 25 August. Lord Ahmad has additionally called the Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, on 3 September, the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan on 25 August and

Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan on the same day. They held discussions with counterparts on securing safe passage for those fleeing Afghanistan and advancing the government's international priorities.

■ **Asia: Diplomatic Service**

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

**[41961]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, on what dates during the month of August 2021 he spoke to HM Ambassadors to Iran, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 9 September 2021. The correct answer should have been:**

**Nigel Adams:**

As set out in the Foreign Secretary's statement to Parliament on September 6th, he visited Qatar and Pakistan from 1-3 September and Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon visited Uzbekistan and Tajikistan from 1-3 September. The Foreign Secretary has also had telephone conversations with the Uzbek Foreign Minister on 6 September, the Tajik Foreign Minister, on 2 September, and with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on 27 ~~and 25~~ August. Lord Ahmad has additionally called the Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, on 3 September, the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan on 25 August and Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan on the same day. They held discussions with counterparts on securing safe passage for those fleeing Afghanistan and advancing the government's international priorities. Throughout this crisis the Foreign Secretary had received advice that draws on a range of inputs from HM Ambassadors to Iran, Pakistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### CABINET OFFICE

#### ■ Election Systems

##### **Minister of State for the Constitution and Devolution (Chloe Smith):**

**[[HCWS289](#)]**

On 16 March 2021, my Rt. Hon. Friend, the Home Secretary, [announced](#) to the House that the Government would be introducing legislation to change the voting system for all Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC), Combined Authority Mayors, and the Mayor of London.

This legislation, due to be brought forward when Parliamentary time allowed, would see the voting systems change from the confusing and over-complicated Supplementary Vote system to the tried and tested First Past the Post system.

I am pleased to announce that the Government intends to bring forward these changes in an amendment to the Elections Bill at Committee stage. Including these changes in the Elections Bill will ensure that they are implemented ahead of the next scheduled PCC elections in May 2024. This timetable will give good notice to all future candidates and electoral administrators of the change in voting system to First Past the Post well in advance of these elections, in accordance with Electoral Commission guidance.

Additionally, I can announce that the voting system for Local Authority mayors in England, which are also currently on the Supplementary Vote system, will be changed to First Past the Post. This will ensure that all Mayoral elections across England will have a consistent voting system.

These changes will allow us to deliver on the Government's manifesto commitment to continue supporting the First Past the Post system. Given that two thirds of voters voted in favour of retaining First Past the Post for Parliamentary elections in the 2011 nationwide referendum, these changes also reflect the view of the British people.

In this May's London Mayoral elections, the Supplementary Vote system saw hundreds of thousands void, wasted or blank votes cast, reflecting voter confusion and the complex system. In a speech to this House in 1931, Winston Churchill when describing transferable voting said "the decision is to be determined by the most worthless votes given for the most worthless candidates."

The Supplementary Vote system as used in England and Wales is found nowhere else in the world. The nearest similar system where voters rank up to three candidates – the Contingent Vote system – is used only in Sri Lanka; by contrast, First Past the Post is the world's most widely used electoral system. The Government believes that First Past the Post is a more straightforward way of electing representatives, which is transparent to both voters and administrators and results in a more accessible system.

The change to First Past the Post will provide clear local accountability in a readily understandable way, making it easier for voters to express a clear choice: the person chosen to represent a local area will be the one who directly receives the most votes.

## ■ Election Finance and Policy

**Minister of State for the Constitution and Devolution (Chloe Smith):**  
[\[HCWS290\]](#)

This Government is committed to ensuring our democracy is secure, fair, modern and transparent and through the changes being brought in by the Elections Bill, we are updating our electoral systems to ensure they are kept up to date for our age.

The Elections Bill will progress this week to Committee stage in the House of Commons, and to aid hon. Members in their consideration of the Bill, I am today (15 September) publishing two documents relating to measures in the Elections Bill: specifically an illustrative Electoral Commission Strategy and Policy Statement; and the Government's response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) report into Regulating Election Finance.

### *Electoral Commission Strategy and Policy Statement*

As I set out in my [statement](#) to the House on 17 June, the Elections Bill provides for the introduction of a Strategy and Policy Statement, which will set out guidance and principles to which the Electoral Commission must have regard in exercising their functions. I committed to publish an illustrative example of this Statement to aid parliamentarians' understanding of this measure, and I have today placed a copy of this in the Libraries of both Houses. The Government will continue to engage with interested parties, including the Parliamentary Parties Panel, on this illustrative Statement.

It is important to note that this is an illustrative example of the Strategy and Policy Statement - the Bill does not include the text of the Statement, and instead makes provision for the Statement to be introduced in secondary legislation. Following Royal Assent, a draft Statement will be subject to a statutory consultation with the stakeholders listed in the Bill before the approval of Parliament is sought.

To further support Parliament's scrutiny of the Bill, on 7 September I also made a [statement](#) to the House on the role of the Speaker's Committee in holding the Electoral Commission to account, and placed an infographic outlining the Commission's existing accountability framework in the Libraries of Both Houses.

### *The Government response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) report on Regulating Election Finance*

We have today published the Government's response to the CSPL report on Regulating Election Finance. The Government welcomes the report published in July by the CSPL, and agrees with the key principles of fairness, transparency and integrity which have guided their work. Indeed, our existing regulatory framework is already based upon these principles.

It is, of course, important that the rules around electoral finance are kept under review and updated as necessary. As I set out in my [statement](#) to the House on 15 June, the Elections Bill is making important reforms to the regulatory framework to support public confidence in the integrity of our electoral system, by strengthening and updating political finance and campaigning regulation; these include reforms that relate directly to recommendations made in the CSPL report.

Electoral law is complex and it is important that any changes are made with careful consideration. Therefore, the Government intends to look at all the recommendations in the CSPL report alongside other recommendations set out in similar reports, including the forthcoming Reports from the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee into the work of the Electoral Commission and the Elections Bill, as part of further work examining the regulatory framework for elections, beyond the Elections Bill.

We are the stewards of a fantastic democratic heritage which must be kept up to date to protect our democracy and maintain public confidence in our electoral system.

The associated documents have been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.