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Monday
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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Agnew of Oulton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Berridge	Whip
Lord Bethell	Whip
Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Callanan	Minister of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Duncan of Springbank	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Northern Ireland Office
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Department for International Development
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Baroness Morgan of Cotes	The Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Sater	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Baroness Sugg	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for International Development
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

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Written Statements

Monday, 27 January 2020

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

[HLWS58]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Hon Friend George Eustice (Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) has today made the following statement:

The Agriculture and Fisheries Council takes place in Brussels on 27 January.

As the provisional agenda stands, the main item for agriculture will be an exchange of view between EU ministers on the regulation on CAP transitional rules. The Commission will also present on the agricultural aspects of the Green Deal, followed by an exchange of views on this.

This will be followed by a presentation from the Croatian Presidency on the work programme during the Presidency.

Business Rates Reliefs

[HLWS61]

The Earl of Courtown: My right honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Jesse Norman) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Government will increase the retail discount from one-third to 50 per cent, extend that discount to cinemas and music venues, extend the duration of the local newspapers office space discount, and introduce an additional discount for pubs.

The increase in the level of the retail discount from one-third to 50 per cent will apply in 2020/21 for eligible retail businesses occupying a property with a rateable value less than £51,000.

The extension of the retail discount is to those eligible music venues and cinemas with a rateable value of less than £51,000.

The extension of the £1,500 business rates discount for office space occupied by local newspapers will apply for an additional 5 years until 31 March 2025.

The pubs discount will provide a £1,000 discount to eligible pubs with a rateable value of less than £100,000 in 2020/21. This is in addition to the retail discount and will apply after the retail discount.

All reliefs are subject to state aid rules and apply in England only.

The Government confirms that it will fully fund local authorities for awarding these reliefs and provide new burdens funding to local authorities for administrative and IT costs.

Local authorities should start preparations to include these changes now, and act promptly to ensure eligible business receive the increased support in their rates bills at the start of the financial year.

The Government expects local authorities to ensure these changes are applied for the start of the 2020/21 billing period. The Government will publish amended guidance for the retail discount reflecting these changes as well as refreshed pubs relief guidance for local authorities.

The Barnett formula will be applied in the usual way. Consequential for the devolved administrations will be confirmed at the Budget.

Cairncross Review: Government Response

[HLWS63]

Baroness Morgan of Cotes:

1) The Government is today publishing its response to the independent review into the sustainability of high-quality journalism in the UK, which was led by the journalist and academic Dame Frances Cairncross. The Government remains grateful to Dame Frances for her work on this review.

2) The Cairncross Review looked at the overall state of the news media market; the threats to the financial sustainability of publishers; the impact of search engines and social media platforms; and the role of digital advertising. The Review identified a range of challenges facing the sector and made nine recommendations for government, regulators and industry.

3) Since the publication of the Review, DCMS has engaged news publishers, online platforms, the BBC, Ofcom and other regulators to take their views into account in formulating the Government's response.

4) This Government is clear that newspapers play an invaluable role in the fabric of our society, and underlines its support for a free and independent press. News publishers remain uniquely placed to undertake the investigative journalism and scrutiny of public institutions, including local councils and our courts, which is vital to helping ensure a healthy democracy both nationally and at a local level. However, as society continues to move online, as the Cairncross Review identified, the news publishing sector is facing significant challenges in transitioning to sustainable digital business models. These challenges include newspaper circulation figures and income from advertising falling dramatically, leading to large-scale closure of local papers and the number of full-time, frontline journalists dropping significantly.

5) The Government is committed to supporting the industry in its transition to a more sustainable footing. The Government therefore accepts the majority of the Cairncross Review's recommendations, apart from the proposal to establish an Institute for Public Interest News. The Government will not be taking this recommendation forward as, while it acknowledges the value the proposed institute is intended to achieve, it is not for the Government to lead on this issue.

6) The Government has already started to take forward some of the interventions proposed in the Review. We

have worked with Nesta to develop a £2million pilot innovation fund, which launched in October 2019 and seeks to invest in new technological prototypes, start-ups and innovative business models to explore new ways of sustaining the industry in this changing landscape. The Government will work with Nesta and other partners to evaluate and draw findings from the pilot fund to inform decisions on the full innovation fund ahead of the next Spending Review. The Government has also announced formally today that it is extending the £1,500 business rates discount for office space occupied by local newspapers in England for an additional five years, until 31 March 2025, as part of its efforts to support local and regional journalism. The Chancellor will consider the case for a range of potential tax incentives to support the news publishing industry this year, including policy options on VAT, notwithstanding recent litigation in this area.

7) There are many synergies between recommendations made by Dame Frances and this Government's wider programme of work to address the challenges raised by digital products and services, including in light of the findings of the Unlocking Digital Competition Report of the Digital Competition Expert Panel, chaired by Jason Furman, and the Online Harms White Paper. In taking forward the recommendations from the Cairncross Review, the Government will continue to take account of the connections between these areas to ensure a coordinated and coherent approach.

8) The Cairncross Review and its recommendations were not aimed solely at the Government. For example, the Review recommended that the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) investigate the workings of the online advertising market to ensure fair competition. The CMA published their interim report in December 2019 and the Government looks forward to considering the findings of the final report, which is due for publication in July 2020.

9) As announced last year following the publication of the Cairncross Review, DCMS is also considering how online advertising is regulated in the UK. This work is looking at how well the current regime is equipped to tackle the challenges posed by developments in online advertising, aiming to foster fair, accountable and ethical online advertising that works for citizens, businesses and society as a whole. This work will complement and supplement other reviews underway in this area, including work by the CMA, the Information Commissioner's Office and the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation. In this context, DCMS is today launching a Call for Evidence. DCMS welcomes views from participants engaged in all stages of the online advertising supply chain, as well as those who work in complementary or competing markets.

10) The Government also intends to go beyond the recommendations in the Cairncross Review, including with a view to supporting the modernisation of court reporting, supporting transparency in the advertising supply chain and continuing to ensure a free and independent press, both in the UK and internationally.

The Government will continue to engage with the sector and identify ways to support the news publishing industry as we take forward this work. The Government reiterates its commitment to champion our media and creative industries more widely.

11) To read the full response and the Call for Evidence on online advertising, please go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-cairncross-review-a-sustainable-future-for-journalism/>

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

Exiting the European Union

[HLWS57]

Lord Callanan: The Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP, Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union has made the following statement:

Signing of the Withdrawal Agreement

On Friday 24 January, the Prime Minister signed the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union and European Atomic Energy Community. The Presidents of the European Commission and European Council signed the Agreement on behalf of the European Union on the same date. The Withdrawal Agreement must now be ratified by both parties by 31 January to bring the Agreement into force from the point when the United Kingdom leaves the European Union. Ratification by the EU will take place after the European Parliament has given its consent to the conclusion of the Agreement, which is expected to happen on 29 January.

Following ratification by both parties, the Agreement will enter into force at 23:00 GMT on 31st January in the UK (00:00 on 1st February in Brussels).

UK-EEA EFTA Separation Agreement

On Tuesday 28 January the UK, alongside representatives from the EEA EFTA States (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) will also sign the UK-EEA EFTA Separation Agreement. First published in December 2018, this agreement protects the rights of our citizens who have chosen to call each other's countries home, as well as resolving a small number of other issues arising from the UK's exit from the EU. The UK-EEA EFTA Separation Agreement broadly mirrors the terms of the UK-EU Withdrawal Agreement.

The UK-EEA EFTA Separation Agreement will be provisionally applied by the UK from exit day. The UK-EEA EFTA Separation Agreement will be subject to parliamentary scrutiny processes under the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010, and will enter into force in respect of the UK following ratification by the UK and at least one other party.

UKRep

Following the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, the United Kingdom's Representation to the European Union (UKRep) in Brussels will become a third country Mission to the European Union. Formally,

the Mission will be titled the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland's Mission to the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community. In practice, the Mission will be referred to as the United Kingdom's Mission to the European Union, shortened to UKMis Brussels.

This change will take effect from 1 February 2020.

Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority: Annual Reports and Accounts

[HLWS59]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Safeguarding and Vulnerability (Victoria Atkins) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The 2018/19 Annual Report and Accounts for the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority is being laid before the House today and published on www.gov.uk. Copies will be available in the Vote Office.

Sport Broadcasting

[HLWS62]

Baroness Barran: My Honourable Friend the Minister of State for Sport, Media and Creative Industries, Nigel Adams MP, has made the following Statement.

On Thursday 18 July 2019, Jeremy Wright MP, the then Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, announced to the House that he was consulting with Channel 4, the BBC, S4C, Ofcom and the International Paralympic Committee on the addition of the Paralympic Games to the listed events regime. The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Baroness Morgan) and I have carefully considered the consultation responses and have decided to add the Paralympic Games to Category A of the list of sporting and other events of national interest maintained under section 97(1) of the Broadcasting Act 1996.

The Secretary of State and I are satisfied that the Paralympic Games meets the criteria for listing as it is an event of 'special national significance' and provides a 'shared moment on the national calendar' that serves to unite the whole of the United Kingdom. Having started in Stoke Mandeville in the 1940s, the event has a unique relationship with the UK. The increasing audience figures also demonstrate its clear importance to the UK. It is the pre-eminent international event in disability sport, involves the national team, commands a large television audience and has a history of broadcast on free-to-air channels.

The Secretary of State has also written to the European Commission to notify them of the change to the list as she is required to do under Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

The Secretary of State and I also consulted on the addition of the women's equivalents of men's events already on the list. The consultation closed on 11 December 2019, and the responses are being analysed. The government will respond in due course.

Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures

[HLWS60]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Section 19(1) of the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011 (the Act) requires the Secretary of State to report to Parliament as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of every relevant three-month period on the exercise of her TPIM powers under the Act during that period.

The level of information provided will always be subject to slight variations based on operational advice.

• TPIM notices in force (as of 30 November 2019)	5
• TPIM notices in respect of British citizens (as of 30 November 2019)	5
• TPIM notices extended (during the reporting period)	1
• TPIM notices revoked (during the reporting period)	0
• TPIM notices revived (during the reporting period)	1
• Variations made to measures specified in TPIM notices (during the reporting period)	6
• Applications to vary measures specified in TPIM notices refused (during the reporting period)	1
• The number of current subjects relocated under TPIM legislation (as of 30 November 2019)	3

The TPIM Review Group (TRG) keeps every TPIM notice under regular and formal review. Third quarter TRG meetings took place on 4 September, 18 September and 1 October 2019. Fourth quarter TRG meetings took place on 9, 10 and 11 December 2019.

The Section 9 TPIM Act 2011 judicial review of the TPIM against QT was heard at the High Court between 24 and 27 June 2019. In a judgment handed down on 14 October 2019 the Court upheld the necessity and proportionality of the TPIM notice against QT.

On 10 December 2019 former TPIM subject IM was sentenced to three years imprisonment for breach of his TPIM notice that was in force between 20 June 2016 and 19 June 2018.

Written Answers

Monday, 27 January 2020

Abduljalil Abdulla al-Singace

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they will take to ensure that Dr Abduljalil al-Singace (1) receives the medical care he requires, (2) is free to attend hospital appointments without the imposition of shackles, and (3) is released. [\[HL348\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We continue to monitor the case of Abduljalil al-Singace. We have raised Dr al-Singace's case at senior levels with the Government of Bahrain. The Bahraini Government has been clear in public statements that access to medical care for those in detention is guaranteed by the Constitution of Bahrain. The Government of Bahrain has also publically stated that Dr Al Singace's health continues to be monitored by a number of specialist consultants at the Royal Medical Services Hospital, where he has had 82 medical appointments since 2011, as well as 258 appointments at the Public Security Health Centre.

Aho Bilicen

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Turkey about the reported arrest of Father Aho Bilicen a Syriac-Orthodox monk, at Mor Yakoub church in Turkey on 9 January. [\[HL283\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Our Embassy has so far deliberately not raised his case with the Turks and indeed may not do so due to the nature of the charges against the priest which revolve around alleged support to the terrorist group the PKK.

Apprentices: Taxation

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Winchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to extend the 24-month period during which levy-paying training providers can spend Apprenticeship Levy funds. [\[HL371\]](#)

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The apprenticeship levy is paid by all UK employers with a pay bill in excess of £3 million. Levy-paying employers in England use an award-winning apprenticeship service to manage their funds, make payments to training providers, and transfer funds to other organisations.

Funds available to employers expire on a rolling, month-by-month basis after 24 months, where they have not been spent. We anticipated that levy-payers would use various amounts available to them, with only some spending all funds available to them. Individual levy-

paying employers have full control over when and where apprenticeship funds are spent to meet their current and future skills needs, including by using transfers to support the sustainable development of skills in their supply chain or local area. Where employers are not spending funds available to them and the availability expires, the budget is used to support apprenticeships taken forward by other large and small employers.

When the levy was introduced, we responded to feedback from employers and representative bodies to increase the expiry period for these funds from 18 to 24 months, and currently have no plans to extend it further. In February 2019, we introduced a tool on the apprenticeship service to help employers estimate their funds and plan for expiry.

Armed Forces: Empty Property

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Ministry of Defence dwellings are currently lying empty in each of (1) England, (2) Scotland, and (3) Wales; and what plans they have, if any, to modernise and re-let those dwellings. [\[HL319\]](#)

Baroness Goldie: As of 27 January 2020 the Ministry of Defence (MOD) currently has 8951 Service Family Accommodation (SFA) properties vacant in England (20%), 850 properties in Scotland (27%) and 274 properties in Wales (25%). These figures represent a snapshot in time as the occupancy rate varies on a daily basis as Service families move in and out. The Department is focused on reducing the number of empty properties in the UK from the current level of 20% overall to a 10% management margin by Autumn 2021. This is being achieved by handing back vacant properties in England and Wales to Annington Homes; widening eligibility to cohabiting couples and Service leavers; and accelerating the letting of temporarily empty properties to screened members of the public at prevailing market rates.

SFA are modernised as required to maintain them at a Decent Homes Standard (DHS). 97% of all SFA meet DHS as a minimum, and are, therefore, available for allocation to Service families. In the last financial year this resulted in approximately 3,800 homes receiving upgrades, including new kitchens and bathrooms.

Asylum: Children

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with (1) the British Red Cross, (2) the Refugee Council, (3) the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and (4) any other relevant organisations, about how best to enhance the safety and wellbeing of (a) child refugees, and (b) asylum seekers; and whether any such discussions include consideration of the possible benefits of family reunion to such safety and wellbeing. [\[HL327\]](#)

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office engage with a range of external organisations to discuss the support and care provided to unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children. This includes regular discussions with NGOs about a number of issues that affect unaccompanied children who are in the UK.

Our current refugee family reunion policy does not allow child refugees to sponsor their parents. The Government's view is that if children could sponsor parents, it would risk creating incentives for more children to be encouraged, or even forced, to leave their family and risk hazardous journeys to the UK. This plays into the hands of criminal gangs who exploit vulnerable people and goes against our safeguarding responsibilities.

Bahrain: Technical Assistance

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the reimposition of the death sentences against Mohamed Ramadhan and Husain Moosa, whether they intend to reconsider their provision of technical assistance to Bahrain given the use of torture, capital punishment and executions by the government of that country. [HL349]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As the Minister for the Middle East and North Africa said on 8 January, we are deeply concerned about the death sentences given to Mohamed Ramadhan and Husain Moosa. The Government of Bahrain is fully aware that the UK is firmly opposed to the death penalty, in all circumstances. The UK has and will continue to monitor the cases closely and raise concerns with senior members of the Bahraini Government. Assistance, which is kept under regular review, is provided in line with international standards, and fully complies with our domestic and international human rights obligations.

British Nationality: Hong Kong

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received about offering eligible Hong Kong citizens full British citizenships; and what was their response to any such representations. [HL304]

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received about offering full hereditary British citizenship to Hong Kong British National (Overseas) status holders, including those so entitled who did not complete the requisite paperwork before the transfer of sovereignty in 1997; and what was their response to any such representations. [HL305]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Her Majesty's Government has received a number of representations about offering Hong Kong citizens full British citizenship. The Government continues to believe that the best

solution for Hong Kong and the people who live there, is full respect for the rights and freedoms set out in the Sino-British Joint Declaration.

The creation of BN(O) status was part of the delicate balance and negotiations of the Joint Declaration.

British Overseas Territories: Brexit

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of any (1) advantages, and (2) disadvantages, that are likely to be experienced by each of the Overseas Territories after the UK's departure from the EU. [HL576]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government is working closely with the leaders of all the Overseas Territories (OTs) on matters relating to Brexit. After we leave the European Union, the UK will negotiate the future relationship with the EU on behalf of the whole UK family, including the OTs.

The Government has been addressing concerns over funding and citizens' rights for all OTs. Most non-European OTs, save the Falkland Islands and Tristan da Cunha, have little substantive trade with the EU.

Brexit represents an opportunity to pursue the OTs' interests in the UK's new, independent trade policy, including seeking improved market access around the world for OT-originating goods and services. Officials are in discussions with OT Representatives about their specific interests in particular markets.

Caribbean: Sugar

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are giving to British Overseas Territories in the Caribbean to help them diversify from sugar production. [HL641]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Each of the UK's Caribbean Overseas Territories has its own unique constitution setting out the responsibilities of the local government and the UK Government. The UK supports the economic diversification of the OTs, recognising that it is for the Governments of the OTs to determine policies to support their economies.

Children: Social Services

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Frontline and the Centre for Public Impact A Blueprint for Children's Social Care, published on 20 November 2019, outlining a new model for children's social care that allows social workers to spend more time with families and that aims to improve standards through increased supervision and transparency. [HL317]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the survey by the British Association for Social Workers, launched in May 2018, which found that social workers spend 20 per cent of their time in direct contact with families, with one out of three social workers not working directly with children. [HL318]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Securing further improvement in the quality of the children's social care system is a priority. We welcome the contribution both of these reports make to these efforts. Whilst local authorities are responsible for the deployment of child and family social workers, the government is continuing to invest in practice improvement. This includes our £84 million investment in the Strengthening Families, Protecting Children programme; and securing better research and evidence about practice and the social work workforce such as through the What Works for Children's Social Care. Our large-scale longitudinal study of child and family social workers will provide significant insights into the experience of child and family social workers and will help both the government and employers identify priorities for action.

Civil Proceedings: Arbitration*Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of using a model of University Court Annexed Arbitration for civil disputes to aid those who are unable to afford legal fees. [HL294]

Lord Keen of Elie: The Government has made no assessment of University Court Annexed Arbitration. However, the Government supports early dispute resolution and it is playing a key role in the HMCTS court reform programme. For example, the Online Civil Money Claims Service has recently started piloting a new approach where claims up to £500 are automatically referred to mediation, unless both parties 'opt out'. The results of the pilot and the impact of this approach will be evaluated.

Climate Change*Asked by Lord Turnbull*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what comparison they have made of the impact on the maintenance of global temperatures until 2100 of adopting (1) net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, (2) net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, and (3) a reduction of 80 per cent carbon emissions by 2050. [HL485]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: The Government has not made this comparison itself. The legislation that Parliament passed to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions in the UK by 2050 is aligned with advice from our independent Committee on Climate Change, and is based on evidence regarding global emissions provided

by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Special Report on the impact of 1.5°C global warming.

The evidence shows that in order to limit global warming to 1.5°C, global emissions of carbon dioxide must roughly halve by 2030 and reach net zero by around 2050. The UK's net zero target is for all greenhouse gases which goes beyond this global pathway to 1.5°C. Delivering this target will require ambitious action across government and this commitment puts us in a strong position to call for other countries to follow our lead and consider what similar commitments they can make.

Commonwealth Games 2022: Gun Sports*Asked by Lord Moynihan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they support the proposal from the National Rifle Association of India to host a Commonwealth Games shooting medal event before the Commonwealth Games, due to be hosted in Birmingham 2022, and to count towards the medal tally; and what assessment they have made of the cost implications for the UK Government and the Organising Committee of such a proposal. [HL335]

Baroness Barran: The proposal from the National Rifle Association of India is with the Commonwealth Games Federation for consideration, and any decision on the proposal or the format of the competition will be subject to their governance process. The Government welcomes the proposal, and hopes that a solution can be found to enable shooters from the UK and around the Commonwealth to compete at the highest level.

Whilst discussions are still at an early stage, and subject to further consideration, the Government understands that the costs of hosting an event would be borne by India as the host nation.

Coronavirus*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk posed by a novel coronavirus to the UK. [HL482]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: Based on limited available information on the transmission of the disease, the risk posed by the novel coronavirus to the United Kingdom population is considered low and the risk to UK travellers to China is moderate. This remains under review as more data emerges.

This risk assessment was reviewed and agreed by New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group on 21 January 2020.

Data Protection*Asked by Lord Clement-Jones*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what data sharing measures they have considered for UK and EU

companies whose commercial model requires such sharing in the event of a no-deal Brexit. [HL297]

Baroness Barran: It is in everyone's interests that the unrestricted exchange of personal data between EU Member States and the UK continues. The EU has an established mechanism to allow the free flow of personal data to countries outside the EU, called adequacy decisions. The EU has committed in the Political Declaration to the Commission beginning its adequacy assessment of the UK as soon as possible after the UK leaves the EU, endeavouring to adopt adequacy decisions by the end of December 2020 if the applicable conditions are met.

The UK has already taken steps to ensure that, if adequacy is not secured, there will be no additional restrictions on transfers of personal data from the UK to the EU.

In addition to adequacy decisions, there are a number of alternative mechanisms which allow the legal transfer of personal data from the EU to a third country. The most common alternative transfer mechanism for companies is standard contractual clauses (SCCs). SCCs are pre-approved by the European Commission and can be inserted into contracts to provide a legal basis for transferring personal data from the EU to a third country.

We are working with the Information Commissioner Office (ICO) to raise awareness and help businesses comply with the rules when we leave the EU. The ICO has produced guidance and resources for organisations, which can be found on the ICO's website at www.ico.org.uk.

Department for International Development

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for the future role of the Department for International Development. [HL325]

Baroness Sugg: This government has confirmed its commitment to 0.7 and has set out a series of ambitious development targets in the manifesto. This includes ending preventable deaths of mothers, new-born babies and children by 2030 and leading the way in eradicating Ebola and malaria.

Deportation

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the errors made by the Home Office in the case of Saiful Islam, originally from Bangladesh and now living in Cardiff; whether they still intend to deport him; and what steps they intend to take to ensure that such errors do not occur in future in relation to other cases. [HL342]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: All applications are considered on their individual merits, on the basis of the

evidence provided and in accordance with the immigration rules. Since Mr Islam's case came to light, we have apologised to him for the errors made in relation to criminality checks, and rolled-out a new training package for all staff entitled 'Data Protection in the Home Office'.

Although not in direct response to Mr Islam's case in particular, this training course aims to enhance data protection awareness and understanding throughout the Home Office workforce.

Mr Islam is not subject to removal action at present.

East Midlands Rail Franchise

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government who they have contracted to operate the Nottingham to Liverpool railway service from December 2021; and what estimate they have made of the financial implications of the decision to end the Norwich to Liverpool railway service at Nottingham from December 2021 in terms of (1) cost, and (2) revenue. [HL295]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: No decision has been made to date on which train operator will provide the Nottingham to Liverpool railway service from December 2021. The financial implications of ending the Norwich to Liverpool service at Nottingham were considered as part of the competition for the new East Midlands franchise.

Egypt: Detainees

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last made representations to the government of Egypt about the indefinite detention and access to medical care of (1) Essam El-Haddad, (2) Gehad El-Haddad, and (3) other prisoners held without charge or trial in Egypt; and what response they received. [HL454]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We regularly raise our human rights concerns with the Egyptian authorities, particularly around detentions and prison conditions. We continue to urge the authorities to ensure that all detainees are treated in accordance with relevant international human rights standards. For example, during Egypt's Universal Periodic Review in November 2019, we called upon the Egyptian Government ensure access to medical care and family visits in prisons and to release all those detained for exercising the right to freedom of expression. Our Ambassador in Cairo last raised the specific cases of Essam El Haddad and Gehad El Haddad at senior level in July 2019.

Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the main terms of the contract held by Ecotricity for the provision of electric charging points at motorway

services; who are the parties to this contract; and whether it covers the (1) provision of prompt repair of charging points when required, (2) regular maintenance of those charging points, and (3) 24-hour helpline for motorists using those services. [HL343]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: This contract is a commercial matter between Ecotricity and the Motorway Service Areas (MSAs).

The Government recognises the urgent need for a joined up and reliable charging provision on the strategic road network and is working with industry to ensure this is established. Highways England has dedicated funding of £15m to ensure that its total network is within 20 miles of an electric vehicle chargepoint. The Office for Low Emission Vehicles is currently undertaking a review (Project Rapid) into current provision and future demand for rapid and higher-powered chargepoints for cars and vans along England's strategic road network. Should it become necessary to regulate, the Automated and Electric Vehicles Act gives the Government powers to improve the experience of using chargepoints by setting reliability and maintenance stands to ensure chargepoints are accessible and to require availability of chargepoint data including charge location, if they are available for use and whether they are in working order.

Electricity Interconnectors

Asked by Viscount Ridley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what annual standing charge on the consumer has been permitted by Ofgem to the owners of the Western Link interconnector between Hunterston and Deeside; and for how many years that charge has been permitted. [HL467]

Asked by Viscount Ridley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to require Ofgem to publish the calculations behind the approved rate of return allowed to the owners of the Western Link interconnector. [HL468]

Asked by Viscount Ridley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to investigate the late delivery of the Western Link interconnector; and whether negligence in construction or operation of that interconnector may expose consumers to additional costs. [HL469]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: The information requested is a matter for Ofgem. Ofgem will write directly to my noble Friend and a copy of the letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Employment: Epilepsy

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people with epilepsy they have supported into employment since October 2016. [HL613]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: No assessment has been made of the number of people with epilepsy who have been supported into work by the Government since October 2016.

The Government is committed to reducing the disability employment gap and seeing a million more disabled people in work by 2027. We support disabled people, including people with epilepsy, to return to work through programmes such as the Work and Health Programme, Access to Work and the new Intensive Personalised Employment Support Programme. We will publish a National Strategy for Disabled People before the end of 2020. This will look at ways to improve the benefits system, opportunities and access for disabled people in terms of housing, education, transport and jobs.

Energy: Conservation

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of the £9.2 billion funding to invest in the energy efficiency of homes, schools and hospitals announced in the Queen's Speech is new money that has not already been allocated. [HL508]

The Earl of Courtown: The Government takes its environmental responsibilities very seriously and is committed to meeting net zero by 2050.

Any spending decisions are for future fiscal events. This year's Budget and Spending Review will confirm multi-year budgets including those commitments made in the Queen's speech.

We are considering what further fiscal and other policy measures are needed to meet our net zero target and HMT Net Zero Review will be looking at how to pay for net zero over the course of this year.

Erasmus+ Programme and Horizon Europe

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what level of future involvement for the UK in Erasmus and Horizon programmes they hope to establish after leaving the EU; what has been the financial contribution by the UK to those specific programmes in each of the last five years; and how much has been awarded, in total, to the UK from those programmes in each of the last five years. [HL341]

Baroness Berridge: This government values the strong collaborative partnerships that we have across Europe in the areas of science, education, research and innovation and want to continue to support these opportunities.

The terms of the Withdrawal Agreement mean that the UK will continue to participate in EU Programmes financed by the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) until their closure. Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ are EU programmes financed during this MFF period.

UK organisations, scientists, researchers and businesses will be able to continue in these programmes and receive EU grant funding until the end of 2020 and for the lifetime of individual projects.

We will continue to collaborate with the EU on scientific research and education and we've been clear that where it is in the UK's interests, we will seek to participate in some specific EU programmes, such as Horizon Europe and Erasmus+. The Political Declaration agreed with the EU in October 2019 demonstrates a shared intent between UK and EU leaders to agree a framework that supports collaboration in science and innovation.

The shape and content of EU programmes post-2020, including Horizon Europe and Erasmus+, are currently being negotiated in the EU Institutions and have not yet been finalised. These EU programmes must be adopted by the EU before any potential formal negotiations on association could begin.

As a Member State, the UK does not contribute financially to specific programmes. Member States pay for participation in EU framework programmes through the general UK contribution to the EU Budget.

The following table indicates the amount of Horizon 2020 funding awarded to UK organisations:

<i>Year (grant signature)</i>	<i>Horizon 2020 funding awarded (excl. Euratom Research & Training)[1]</i>
2014	€ 394 million
2015	€ 1,477 million
2016	€ 1,344 million
2017	€ 1,074 million
2018	€ 1,069 million
2019	€ 820 million
Total	€ 6,179 million

[1] Data source: European Commission, <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/horizon-dashboard> - accessed 14/01/2019. Accessed 14/01/2019

Please note totals of the table will not be accurate due to rounding.

With regards to Erasmus+, the most up-to-date information on funding results is held by the UK National

Agency which is attached and can be found at the following link under 'Statistics for the UK 2014-2018': <https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/statistics>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL341_PDF [HL341_Erasmus_in_numbers.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-13/HL341>

Fracking: Licensing

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Duncan of Springbank on 9 January (HL Deb, col 302), whether those who hold a licence from the Oil and Gas Authority which allows them to undertake exploratory drilling in relation to shale gas, such as those in East Lancashire, can still apply for (1) drilling licences, and (2) planning permission in relation to such drilling, during the current moratorium on fracking; and what advice they have given to the owners of such licences. [HL499]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: The Government set out its position in the Written Ministerial Statement of 4 November 2019, confirming that it will take a presumption against issuing any further Hydraulic Fracturing Consents, creating a moratorium. Future applications for Hydraulic Fracturing Consent will be considered on their own merits by the Secretary of State, in accordance with the law.

Companies may still apply for drilling licences and planning permission for development which includes hydraulic fracturing. However, the shale gas industry should take the Government's position into account when considering new developments.

No further advice has been issued to licence holders subsequent to the Written Ministerial Statement.

Further Education: Standards

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Winchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase the number of student teaching hours in further education. [HL372]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The department currently expects that 16 and 17 year olds in full time education at colleges and school sixth forms are provided with, on average, 600 planned hours of education a year, although many receive more than this. This is ample time, for example for the teaching of 3 A-Levels or a substantial technical qualification, with time for other activities to support young people's development such as mentoring, additional tuition or work experience.

New T Level qualifications will start to be delivered from September this year. These are larger and more demanding technical education programmes, which on average we expect to be 900 hours per year including a

substantial industry placement. T Levels programmes will receive additional funding to pay for the additional hours.

The government has announced increased 16-19 funding in 2020-21 of £400 million – an increase of 7% in overall 16-19 funding and the biggest injection of new money in a single year since 2010. Providers may use some of this additional funding to provide more teaching hours for some students, for example those who do not yet have maths and/or English GCSEs at grade 4 or above, for whom £35 million of the additional funding will be allocated.

The arrangements for adult education are more flexible as the teaching hours provided relate specifically to what qualifications or programmes individual students choose to study and their mode of attendance is subject to agreement between individual providers and their students.

Hajer Mansoor Hassan

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to ensure that Hajer Mansoor, a Bahraini political prisoner, is (1) not held in solitary confinement, and (2) excluded from non-custodial punishment in reprisal for the human rights work of her son-in-law Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei. [HL345]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have raised the case of Hajer Mansoor at senior levels with the Government of Bahrain. The Bahraini Government has been clear these convictions are not related to the activities of Mr Al Wadaei and has given details on charges. We continue to monitor this case.

Hammersmith Bridge: Closures

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 7 January (HL105), what discussions they have had with Transport for London about the Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice with regards to the closure of Hammersmith Bridge. [HL493]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department for Transport has not had any discussions with Transport for London about the Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice specifically regarding the closure of Hammersmith Bridge.

Hassan Mushaima

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Bahrain concerning the medical treatment of political prisoner Hassan Mushaima, particularly in respect of (1) specialised medical care for diabetes, and (2) access

to the results of his cancer scans; and, further to those discussions, what steps they will take to secure his release. [HL347]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We continue to monitor the case of Hassan Mushaima. We have raised Mr Mushaima's case at senior levels with the Government of Bahrain. The Bahraini Government has been clear in public statements that between 2011 and April 2019, Mr Mushaima had 397 appointments at the prison clinic and that he has been prescribed and is receiving 14 medicines on a regular basis, including some that were ordered from overseas specifically. Public statements have also confirmed that access to medical care for those in detention is guaranteed by the Constitution of Bahrain.

Hevrin Khalaf

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they have taken to establish the identity of, and to bring to justice, the killers of Hevrin Khalaf in North East Syria; and what assessment they have made of the allegations in the BBC documentary Hevrin Khalaf: Death of a peacemaker, broadcast on 13 January, that her execution was carried out by Turkish-backed jihadis. [HL439]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have condemned the reported killing on 12 October 2019 of Hevrin Khalaf, the Secretary General of the Future Syria Party, by Turkish-backed Syrian armed groups. We have made clear to Turkey the need for an investigation and for those responsible to be brought to justice. The UK strongly supports efforts to pursue accountability for the most serious crimes committed in Syria, including the UN Commission of Inquiry and the International Impartial and Independent Mechanism.

HMS Queen Elizabeth

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether a fleet solid support ship will be available for HMS Queen Elizabeth's first operational deployment East of Suez. [HL368]

Baroness Goldie: HMS Queen Elizabeth's first operational deployment will be in 2021. The Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers will operate as part of a Maritime Task Group that will be tailored to meet the required tasks. The precise composition of a Task Group will depend on the operational circumstances at that time; and we will be able to draw from a range of modern and highly capable vessels.

For operational security reasons, it is our policy to not comment on specific capabilities as this would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

Hong Kong: World War II

Asked by Lord Craig of Radley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for the UK to be represented by a minister at any of the ceremonies in Hong Kong that will commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the liberation of Hong Kong in 1945. [HL452]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The 75th Hong Kong Liberation day ceremony will be held at Sai Wan Cemetery on 31 August. We are not aware of any plans for official events to mark the anniversary.

Integrated Security, Defence and Foreign Policy Review

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the forthcoming Integrated Security, Defence and Foreign Policy Review will incorporate Britain's role and involvement in (1) the Council of Europe, (2) the OSCE and its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, (3) the Inter-Parliamentary Union, (4) the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and (5) other multilateral agencies. [HL320]

Earl Howe: The Integrated Security Defence and Foreign Policy Review was announced in the Queen's Speech to reassess the nation's place in the world. The review will examine how we strengthen and prioritise our alliances, diplomacy and development. It will also deliver against the government's ambition to extend our diplomatic network; reinvigorate relationships with Europe; and seek to strengthen old and new partnerships across the world.

Internet: Privacy

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of Google's "privacy sandbox" technology on market fairness and safety. [HL483]

Baroness Barran: Google's "privacy sandbox" initiative is at an early stage, and the impact of its proposals on consumer outcomes is yet to be seen. The Government is committed to ensuring that the internet and new technologies are safe and secure, and that businesses can compete on a level playing field. We are currently considering how to boost competition and innovation in digital markets, and will continue to assess all external proposals for supporting these aims.

Iran: Demonstrations

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of Iran's reported use of violence against protestors in Tehran on 12 January. [HL350]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of reports of violence used against protesters in Tehran on 12 January. We unreservedly support the right to peaceful protest and call on Iran to uphold its commitments under international law to protect freedom of assembly and speech.

Iraq: Islamic State

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to respond to statements by victims of Daesh genocide provided by Lord Alton of Liverpool; what assessment they have made of such statements; and what assessment they have made of the adequacy of the process in Iraq for witness statements from such victims for the purposes of criminal trials. [HL278]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We regularly raise these concerns with the Iraqi governmental and judicial authorities – reiterating the importance of respect for international standards of due process and fair trial. We also raise our opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances as a matter of principle. Separately, we continue to support the UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Daesh (UNITAD) in Iraq. UNITAD is expanding its engagement with witnesses, survivors and impacted communities – implementing advanced witness protection and support so that even the most vulnerable members of society in Iraq feel able to come forward with their accounts.

Foreign & Commonwealth Office officials have been in contact with you to confirm the details of this correspondence. This has now been logged in our internal system and you will now have received a reply.

Islamic State

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to His Majesty King Abdullah of Jordan's interview with France 24 on 12 January, in which he warned of the re-establishment and rise of IS in southern eastern Syria and western Iraq, what assessment they have made of the re-emergence of IS and in particular, those IS fighters who have travelled from Idlib in Syria to Libya; and what discussions they have had with the government of Jordan and other partners in that region about the development of a strategy to combat that re-emergence. [HL521]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain concerned at the risk of Daesh resurgence in parts of Syria and Iraq. We have been clear that, despite their loss of territory, Daesh still pose a threat to the security of both countries, and the region. For this reason we continue to work with the Global Coalition and our partners to tackle Daesh in Syria and Iraq and to prevent Daesh fighters from travelling from there to other countries. We have close and frequent dialogue with the Jordanian government on

regional security issues, both bilaterally and as part of the Global Coalition Against Daesh and Small Group on Syria.

Israel: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the claims by Addameer, published on 23 December 2019, that they have collected evidence of torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian detainees at Israeli interrogation centres. [HL359]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we have not made an assessment of these specific claims, the British Government has concerns about mistreatment of Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons, and about Israel's respect of its obligations as an occupying power, under applicable international law. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv have raised the treatment of Palestinians in Israeli prisons with the Israeli authorities, most recently on 16 December 2019. We emphasise the importance of treating prisoners and detainees humanely and in accordance with international law.

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the vote in the Israeli Security Cabinet on 29 December 2019 to withhold \$43 million of tax funds from the Palestinian Authority, based on claims that the money has been used to promote violence. [HL395]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have repeatedly raised with the Government of Israel our concerns about Israel's decision to withhold tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority (PA), most recently on 17 December 2019. It is important Israel carries out the regular monthly transfer of tax revenues it collects on behalf of the PA in line with its international obligations. We expect economic and fiscal agreements between Israel and the PA to continue to be fully implemented.

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about reports of assaults on Palestinian growers, thefts of olives and vandalism of olive trees and farm equipment in 2019. [HL396]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are troubled by reports of assaults on Palestinian farmers, the vandalism of olive trees, and the stealing of produce. The UK condemns any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised the increase in settler violence with the Israeli authorities on 17 December 2019. Under international law, Israel, as the occupying power, has an obligation to take all measures in its power to protect the Palestinian population from acts of violence. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing

appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population. We welcome the efforts of Israeli authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance and bring those responsible to justice.

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on the Palestinian economy of Palestinian tax revenues being withheld by Israel. [HL432]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains gravely concerned about the economic and humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including the impacts of tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority (PA) being withheld. We have repeatedly raised with the Government of Israel our concerns about its decision to withhold tax revenues to the PA, most recently on 17 December 2019. It is important Israel carries out the regular monthly transfer of tax revenues it collects on behalf of the PA in line with its international obligations. We expect economic and fiscal agreements between Israel and the PA to continue to be fully implemented, including Israel's obligations under the Oslo Accords and Paris Protocol.

Israel: West Bank

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take in response to the publication of data by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on the demolition of structures and displacement in Area C of the West Bank in 2019, including the finding that 507 persons have been displaced and 394 structures have been demolished. [HL397]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are deeply concerned by the continued demolition of Palestinian property by the Israeli authorities. Demolitions and evictions of Palestinians from their homes cause unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians; call into question Israel's commitment to a viable two-state solution; and, in all but the most exceptional of cases, are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. We have repeatedly made clear to the Israeli authorities our serious concern at the increase in demolitions of Palestinian properties in Area C of the West Bank and in East Jerusalem, most recently on 17 December 2019. The UK and international partners will continue to call bilaterally, and in international fora, for Israel to abandon demolition plans entirely, and instead provide a transparent route to construction for Palestinians in Area C. The British Government supports Bedouin communities and Palestinians facing demolition or eviction in Area C of the West Bank through our legal aid programme, which helps residents challenge decisions in the Israeli legal system. The UK has also allocated £1.1 million to support

essential infrastructure for vulnerable Palestinians in Area C.

Israeli Settlements

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about its decision to allow Israeli citizens to register land deeds in Area C of the West Bank; and what assessment they have made of that decision. [HL394]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are very concerned about the granting of further rights and privileges to Israelis living in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We recognise that Palestinians face severe difficulty in securing building permissions for homes and infrastructure in East Jerusalem and Area C. Practically, this leaves Palestinians with little option but to build without permission, placing their homes at risk of demolition on the grounds they do not have a permit. We continue to urge the Government of Israel to develop improved mechanisms for zoning, planning and permitting in Area C for the benefit of the Palestinian population, including by facilitating local Palestinian participation in such processes. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv did so most recently on 10 December 2019.

Jerusalem: Religious Freedom

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reported attacks by Israeli police on Muslim worshippers in the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound on 7 January. [HL398]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains concerned by incidents on Haram Al-Sharif / Temple Mount, including altercations inside the al-Aqsa Mosque. We have stressed the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population. In our meetings with the Israeli authorities we regularly raise the need to respect the status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem and the West Bank. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised this issue with the Israeli authorities on 16 October 2019.

Leasehold: Older People

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the finding by The Times, published on 23 November 2019, of the loss in value of new build retirement homes as a result of ground rent and service charges levied by management companies. [HL313]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Unfair leasehold practices have no place in a modern housing market. The

Government is taking forward a comprehensive programme to reform leasehold. This includes reducing ground rents on future leases to a zero and banning new leasehold houses.

The Government's response to the technical consultation *Implementing reforms to the leasehold system in England*, published on 27 June 2019, set out that in future, purchasers of retirement homes must be offered the choice between paying ground rents on their new home or purchasing the property with zero ground rents (but with a higher sales price). In addition, ground rents cannot be used where event (exit) fees apply.

The law is clear that service charges must be reasonable and, where costs relate to work or services, the work or services must be of a reasonable standard. Leaseholders may make an application to the First-tier Tribunal to make a determination on the reasonableness of their service charges.

In October 2018 my Department established an independent Regulation of Property Agents working group, chaired by Lord Best, to raise standards across the property sector, which also considered how fees such as service charges should be presented to consumers, and whether they should be capped or banned. The working group reported in July 2019 and we are considering their recommendations.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the findings, published by The Times on 23 November 2019, of the loss in value of new build retirement homes, whether they intend to hold discussions with the Solicitors Regulation Authority about housebuilders suggesting to prospective buyers that they use solicitors proposed by the house builder. [HL314]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the investigation by The Times of the loss in value of new build retirement homes as a result of ground rent and service charges levied by management companies where house builders suggest to prospective buyers that they use solicitors proposed by the house builder, published on 23 November 2019, what plans they have to ensure that independent advice is made available to such buyers. [HL315]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Home buyers are under no obligation to use the solicitor recommended by their developer and the Government makes this point clearly in its *How to Buy a Home* guide (attached). https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/829864/6.5492_-_MHCLG_-_How_to_Buy_Guide_WEB.PDF

There can be beneficial reasons for a property buyer to use a solicitor proposed by the house builder, such as greater familiarity with the processes of the house builder leading to fewer delays in the conveyancing process. The Solicitors Regulation Authority, however, is clear in

setting standards of conduct and behaviour and provides a framework for ethical and competent practice.

If a homebuyer has a complaint against a conveyancer or solicitor, an estate agent, property developer, landlord or freeholder or management agent, they do have a right of redress. Trading Standards have published guidance for leaseholders seeking redress, which is available (attached) here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/7263/Guidance-for-consumers-seeking-redress-for-leasehold-matters>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Home Guide [200121 How to Buy Home guide HL314.PDF]

Leasehold redress [200121 Leasehold a guide to redress HL314.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-13/HL314>

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that new proposals to reform leasehold law should include new retirement homes. [HL316]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: In developing and taking forward leasehold reforms, the Government is taking into consideration all relevant sectors of the UK housing market, including new retirement homes.

Lebanon: Politics and Government

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what meetings they have held since October 2019 to discuss the unity and stability of Lebanon in view of the continuing protests and violence throughout that country. [HL522]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa spoke to the Lebanese Ambassador to the UK on 24 October 2019. He also spoke with former Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri on 9 December 2019 about the situation. Members of the International Support Group for Lebanon – including the UK – met in December 2019. The group reiterated its support to Lebanon and was unified in calling for the swift formation of a Government capable of meeting the aspirations expressed by Lebanese and capable of delivering the urgently required economic reform; it also reiterated that the right for peaceful protest must continue to be respected. The UK's Defence Senior Advisor to the Middle East and North Africa visited Lebanon on 12 December 2019 and met with senior Lebanese authorities, including President Aoun, to discuss the current situation.

Libya: IRA

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have lodged a claim with the government of Libya on behalf of those UK citizens who suffered losses resulting from

Libya's support for IRA terrorists during the Northern Ireland Troubles. [HL302]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Libyan Government has a responsibility to deal with the legacy of the Qadhafi regime, as part of a broad process of national and international reconciliation and justice. We have a longstanding position of not pursuing government-to-government negotiations with Libya on behalf of victims of Qadhafi-sponsored IRA terrorism, but we continue to provide facilitation support to victims, their representatives and campaign groups. Ministers and our diplomats continue to press the Libyan authorities to engage constructively. The Government takes this issue extremely seriously, which is why on 6 March 2019, the Foreign Secretary appointed William Shawcross as Special Representative on UK victims of Qadhafi-sponsored terrorism.

Libya: Turkey

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that the governments of Libya and Turkey are close to signing a memorandum of understanding in regard to compensation to be paid by Libya to Turkish businesses for (1) unpaid debts, and (2) loss or damage to Turkish equipment, as a result of the recent conflict in Libya. [HL301]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of media reporting of Turkish efforts to seek compensation from Libya for unpaid debts, and are following the issue.

Lighting: Pollution

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the levels of light pollution in the UK; whether light pollution in the UK is decreasing; and if so, at what rate. [HL411]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: A range of measures are in place to ensure that light pollution is effectively managed through controls in the planning system, the statutory nuisance regime and improvements in street lighting.

The Government has not made a recent assessment of overall levels of light pollution in the UK or of whether these are decreasing.

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the cost of wasted energy from light pollution; and what assessment they have made of the impact of light pollution on (1) health, (2) wildlife, and (3) astronomy. [HL526]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: 1. Public Health England carried out a study in 2016 for the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers and the Society

of Light and Lighting, which included an assessment of light-emitting diode (LED) streetlights on health. The study concluded that some LED streetlight luminaires emitted more blue light than was necessary, but that there was no evidence of direct adverse health effects on people.

2. Defra has published or contributed to a range of assessments of the impact of artificial light on insects and wider biodiversity, as well as global and national assessments of the drivers of biodiversity loss more generally.

Following publication of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's report, 'Artificial light in the environment' in 2009, Defra has supported assessments of impacts of artificial light on insects and on other organisms such as bats. These are published on our science website. Defra has also funded or co-funded national and international assessments of drivers of change on insects and wider biodiversity such as the global IPBES Assessment Report on Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production, which notes effects of light on nocturnal insects may be growing and identifies the need for further study.

There have been a number of externally funded studies which have highlighted potential impacts of artificial light pollution on insects, which Defra keeps under review, for example, with our academic partners on the National Pollinator Strategy for England.

3. Government officials have met with relevant stakeholders including the Commission for Dark Skies but have not made an assessment of the impact of light pollution on astronomy.

The Government has not made an assessment specifically of the cost of wasted energy from light pollution. In respect of the Strategic Road network a full appraisal is carried out before any lighting project is commissioned, including in-depth analysis of the environmental impact and economic benefits of the scheme. All lighting on the network is designed according to current British and European standards which emphasise the importance of limiting light pollution, and older forms of lantern are in the process of being replaced with environmentally sensitive lighting when they become due for renewal.

Middle East and North Africa: Young People

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what programmes they run, or intend to run, in (1) the Middle East, (2) North Africa, (3) Turkey, (4) Iran, and (5) Afghanistan, to work with young adults from those areas; and what plans they have for ministerial visits to focus on issues which affect such young adults. [HL322]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Her Majesty's Government supports a wide-range of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) funded programmes benefitting young adults. For example, in Turkey we have

helped train young politicians and civil society representatives in democratic participation. In Tunisia and Egypt, we have helped young people build skills to access jobs. In Jordan we have supported implementation of the Government's Youth Strategy. In Afghanistan we have supported economic development and job creation. More information can be found on the gov.uk website. We do not comment on future Ministerial visits for security reasons but Ministers raise these issues with their international partners on a regular basis.

NHS: Negligence

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much the NHS has paid out, in total, for clinical negligence claims in each of the last ten years for which figures are available; what were the five main reasons for such claims; and what strategy the NHS has for reducing the number of such claims. [HL280]

Lord Bethell: NHS Resolution handles clinical negligence claims on behalf of National Health Service organisations and independent sector providers of NHS care in England.

The amount the NHS has paid out, in total, for clinical negligence claims in each of the last 10 financial years for which figures are available is shown in the following table.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Total Paid £'000</i>
2009/10	786,991
2010/11	863,398
2011/12	1,277,372
2012/13	1,258,881
2013/14	1,192,540
2014/15	1,169,587
2015/16	1,488,455
2016/17	1,707,167
2017/18	2,227,542
2018/19	2,359,866

The five main reasons for the above claims by frequency are:

- Failed / Delay to Treatment;
- Failed / Delay to Diagnosis;
- Intra-Operative Problems;
- Inappropriate Treatment; and
- Inadequate Nursing Care.

Our ambition is for the NHS to be the safest healthcare system in the world. We have thoroughly overhauled the infrastructure underpinning healthcare quality and safety in the last decade to minimise harm. *The NHS Patient*

Safety Strategy: Safer culture, safer systems, safer patients, published in July 2019, and *Safer Maternity Care: The NHS Maternity Safety Strategy – Progress and Next Steps*, published in November 2017, set out the comprehensive approach to continuously improve safety. Copies of the strategies are attached.

The NHS Resolution five-year strategy *Delivering fair resolution and learning from harm*, published in 2017, describes how the organisation is contributing to improved safety and tackling clinical negligence costs. NHS Resolution is committed to learning from claims and is working directly with trusts to share learning and best practice across the NHS to drive safety improvement. This will help to minimise the potential of clinical errors that could lead to harm and possible future claims. A copy of the strategy is attached.

The Department is also working intensively with the Ministry of Justice, other Government Departments and NHS Resolution to tackle the continued year-on-year rises in clinical negligence costs which are eating progressively into resources available for front-line care. While there are no simple solutions and the work is still ongoing, good progress has been made in developing our understanding of all the drivers of cost and exploring ways forward.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

NHS Patient Safety Strategy
[190708_Patient_Safety_Strategy_.pdf]

NHS Resolution Strategy [NHS-Resolution-Our-strategy-to-2022-1.pdf]

Safer Maternity Care [Safer_maternity_care_-_progress_and_next_steps.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-13/HL280>

Palestinians: Health Services

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they intend to make to the government of Israel about reports that the only vehicle available to a medical team that provides assistance to 1,500 Palestinians in the West Bank has been confiscated by Israel. [HL355]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Free movement of patients and medical personnel is vital to the effectiveness of care in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). Ambulance and permit delays can lead to missed appointments and interrupted treatments, endangering the health and lives of patients. That is why we need a lasting peace agreement which ensures that all those who are in need of medical attention have access to healthcare provisions. We have made clear to the Israeli authorities the importance of medical assistance being available to Palestinians, most recently on 30 October 2019.

Palestinians: Recognition of States

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to raise the legal status of Palestinians in international law by recognising Palestine as a state; if so, when; and if not, why not. [HL356]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we are clear that we want to see the creation of a sovereign, independent and viable Palestinian state - living in peace and security, side by side with Israel. The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objectives of peace and the two state solution. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue.

Parental Leave

Asked by Baroness Penn

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to publish their response to the consultation on parental leave and pay, which closed on 29 November 2019. [HL465]

Asked by Baroness Penn

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan to fulfil the Conservative Party's 2019 General Election manifesto commitment "to make it easier for fathers to take paternity leave". [HL466]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: BEIS is currently assessing the responses from the consultation on high-level options for reforming parental leave and pay. We are also conducting a formal evaluation of the Shared Parental Leave and Pay scheme, including large-scale, representative surveys of employers and parents. Together, these will give us a fuller picture of how well the current system of parental leave and pay is working for parents and employers, and inform how we might make it easier for fathers and partners to take Paternity Leave.

The evaluation is ongoing, and we will report on this and publish the Government Response to the consultation in due course.

More generally, Government is committed to making the UK the best place to work and grow a business. In the recent Queen's Speech, we announced that we will bring forward an Employment Rights Bill to deliver the greatest workers rights reform in over 20 years.

Plastic Bags: Fees and Charges

Asked by Lord Hayward

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Gardiner of Kimble on 17 July 2019 (HL Deb, col 232), what advice they received from the

Regulatory Policy Committee concerning the costs and benefits of introducing a 10p plastic bag charge; and when they intend to publish their proposals on the introduction of a 10p plastic bag charge. [HL568]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Regulatory Policy Committee have scrutinised our impact assessment on the costs and benefits of extending the carrier bag charge to all retailers and increasing the minimum charge to 10p, assessing it as fit-for-purpose. The impact assessment will be published alongside the Government response to our consultation on these measures shortly.

Post-18 Education and Funding Review

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Winchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government which, if any, recommendations from the Post-18 Education and Funding Review they plan to implement; and what is the intended timescale for implementation. [HL370]

Baroness Berridge: We want to ensure we have a joined-up education system that is accessible to all and encourages the development of the skills we need as a country.

Philip Augar and his independent panel have made thoughtful recommendations on tuition fee levels and loan repayment, the balance of funding between universities, further education, apprenticeships and adult learning, and we are considering all these recommendations carefully.

Refugees: Children

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Amnesty International, The Refugee Council and Save the Children Without my Family, published on 10 January, which calls for changes to Government policy on family separation of child refugees in the UK. [HL279]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government provides safe and legal routes to bring families together through its family reunion policy. This allows a partner and children under 18 of those granted protection in the UK to join them here, if they formed part of the family unit before the sponsor fled their country.

Our current policy does not allow child refugees to sponsor their parents. The Government's view is that if children could sponsor parents, it would risk creating incentives for more children to be encouraged, or even forced, to leave their family and risk hazardous journeys to the UK. This plays into the hands of criminal gangs who exploit vulnerable people and goes against our safeguarding responsibilities.

Our policy is not designed to keep child refugees apart from their parents, but in considering any policy we must

think carefully about the wider impact to avoid putting more people unnecessarily into harm's way.

Russia: Libya

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the involvement of Russia in the internal affairs of Libya. [HL392]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of reports of Russian Private Military Companies operating in Libya, and take very seriously reports of any activity that would breach the UN Arms Embargo. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Russia has a responsibility to uphold UN Security Council Resolutions and international law.

Shipping: Fuels

Asked by Lord Moynihan

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they are monitoring the UN International Maritime Organisation 2020 regulation on the reduction of sulphur levels for marine fuels for most coastal and international waters from 3.5 per cent by weight to 0.5 per cent. [HL339]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Sulphur levels in marine fuels are monitored by carrying out sulphur inspections and sulphur sampling on board ships which call at UK ports. Fuel samples are drawn from ships and sent for testing to ensure that the sulphur levels are in compliance with EU and international requirements.

Social Services: Pay

Asked by Baroness Gardner of Parkes

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Henley on 11 April 2019 (HL15230), how many agencies employing careworkers are paying the costs of such workers for their travel between clients; and what steps they take to ensure that care agencies pay staff appropriate remuneration for any time spent travelling between appointments. [HL498]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: The law is clear that for care workers, and other workers, time spent travelling between assignments counts as time worked for National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage (NMW) purposes. Furthermore, the Government issued statutory guidance supporting the implementation of the Care Act which specifies; "Remuneration must be at least sufficient to comply with the NMW legislation for hourly pay or equivalent salary. This will include appropriate remuneration for any time spent travelling between appointments."

The Government has more than doubled the NMW compliance and enforcement budget to £27.4 million for 2019/20, up from £13.2 million in 2015/16. HMRC utilise those resources to follow up on every worker complaint received and to undertake proactive investigations. Last year (2018/19), HMRC identified over £6 million in minimum wage arrears within the Human Health and Social Work sector, owed to over 27,000 workers. This includes, but is not limited to, arrears relating to travel time.

Workers can call the ACAS helpline for free, confidential advice about their rights and entitlements. If they want to make a complaint through HMRC, they can do so in complete confidence, either via ACAS or using the online complaints form on GOV.UK. HMRC will protect their anonymity throughout the investigation.

Syria: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the (1) expiry of UN authorisation for cross-border humanitarian access to areas of Syria outside government control, and (2) rejection of two draft resolutions to renew that authorisation under Resolution 2449, on displaced refugees in Syria. [HL282]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK abstained on UN Security Council Resolution 2504 on 10 January which extended authorisation for only two of the previous four border crossings for humanitarian assistance to Syria. This followed the vetoes by Russia and China of a renewal of Resolution 2249. We abstained because, while we support continued cross-border assistance through two border crossings from Turkey to north-west Syria, we were appalled that the other two existing crossings were not included in the new resolution at Russian insistence despite continued humanitarian need. This includes Yaroubiya crossing, between Iraq and north-east Syria, which last year was used to deliver medical aid to more than 1.4 million people. Ending the UN mandate for aid to enter via this route will therefore have a severe impact on north-east Syria. The UK is working closely with partners to consider how best to continue providing for the urgent need of Syrian civilians in the area.

Taiwan: Elections

Asked by Lord Steel of Aikwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the outcome of the election in Taiwan; and in particular, of its impact on Hong Kong. [HL476]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Foreign Secretary's statement on 11 January noted that the presidential and legislative elections in Taiwan were testament to Taiwan's vibrant democracy. He congratulated the people of Taiwan on the smooth conduct of those elections and to Dr Tsai Ing-wen and her party on her re-election. The Foreign Secretary expressed his hope that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait would renew dialogue to resolve differences and build constructive relations across the Strait.

We have not yet made an assessment of the impact of the elections in Taiwan on Hong Kong. It is clear, however, that many people in Hong Kong followed the elections with interest.

Whirlpool Corporation: Washing Machines

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice has been given by the Office for Product Safety and Standards to online marketplaces following the product recall of Hotpoint and Indesit washing machines in December 2019. [HL308]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: The Government is committed to protecting consumers from unsafe products. The Chief Executive of the Office for Product Safety and Standards wrote to online platforms when the recall was announced by Whirlpool requesting them to take steps to ensure affected washing machines and other recalled items were not available on their platforms to protect public safety.

My hon. Friend the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility, has previously written to the UK heads of Amazon, Alibaba, eBay, Facebook and Gumtree to ensure they are playing their part in protecting UK consumers from unsafe goods and is closely monitoring the situation.

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