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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**  
**(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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

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# Written Statements

Tuesday, 28 January 2020

## Foreign Affairs Council: 20 January 2020

[HLWS64]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** My Right Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Christopher Pincher), has made the following written Ministerial statement:

The High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP), Josep Borrell, chaired the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) in Brussels on 20 January. The United Kingdom's Permanent Representative to the EU (Sir Tim Barrow) represented the United Kingdom.

### *Current Affairs*

The HRVP and Foreign Ministers had an exchange of views on a number of pressing issues.

The German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas briefed on the outcome of the 19 January Berlin conference on Libya. Ministers discussed EU engagement towards a political solution, in particular in helping to implement the agreed ceasefire and enforce the UN arms embargo.

HRVP Borrell discussed the situation in Bolivia and set out EU support towards the general election on 3 May 2020. He also touched on Venezuela and concern about recent escalations following the events in the National Assembly.

The HRVP debriefed on his recent trip to New Delhi, India, where he participated in the Raisina Dialogue and he discussed preparations for the upcoming 15th EU-India Summit, scheduled for 13 March.

Cyprus raised Turkey's hydrocarbon exploration activity in the Eastern Mediterranean, following Turkey's announcement on 18 January that it would engage in further drilling.

### *Sahel*

Following France's and the G5 Sahel (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger) Leaders' summit that took place in Pau on 13 January, Ministers exchanged views on the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel and the role the EU could play as an important partner and donor in the region. They expressed support for renewing the existing Sahel Strategy to try to increase the impact of EU's security, stability and development engagement. Ministers emphasised the importance of an integrated approach between the different actors involved and resources deployed. Ministers also welcomed the planned EU-G5 Sahel summit in March, noting it would be an opportunity to identify joint priorities and ensure G5 ownership.

### *Climate Diplomacy*

The Council adopted conclusions on climate diplomacy and agreed to focus diplomatic outreach to third-countries to encourage key partners and emitters to implement concrete actions and achieve the best results ahead of COP26. There was support for a proposal that all new EU international agreements, including all trade agreements, contain a clause to hold partners to ambitious climate standards.

The United Kingdom underlined that success in Glasgow would rely on concerted diplomatic efforts and the importance of ensuring tangible outcomes when updating Nationally Defined Contributions (NDCs).

### *Middle East Peace Process and the wider region*

Over lunch, Foreign Ministers discussed the Middle East Peace Process and restated their national positions on the recognition of Palestine. The United Kingdom underlined the importance of firmly rejecting illegal annexation but made clear that our position on recognition was unchanged and reiterated our commitment to a two-state solution.

Ministers touched on the future of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the importance of continuing efforts to de-escalate tensions in the region. The United Kingdom, France and Germany underlined the importance of the E3's work to find a diplomatic path through the JCPOA's Dispute Resolution Mechanism to bring Iran back into compliance and preserve the deal.

### *Council Conclusions*

The Council agreed a number of further measures:

- The Council approved the Terms of Reference for the EU-Ecuador Dialogue on Human Rights. Since 2014, the EU and Ecuador meet at least once a year to review the state of their relationship and discuss issues of common interest.
- The Council adopted conclusions on the continued presence of Operation Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina to support authorities in maintaining a safe and secure environment for its citizens.
- The Council adopted a decision on the conclusion of the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the Republic of Kazakhstan (12409/16). The decision will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union in accordance with Article 17 (1)(a) of the Council's Rules of Procedure.
- The Council appointed 120 members and 114 alternate members to the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) for its new five-year term running from 26 January 2020 to 25 January 2025 (14986/19).
- Regarding public access to documents, the European Council approved on 15 January 2020 the reply to confirmatory application No 39/c/01/19 (doc. EUCO 35/19). On 20 January 2020, the Council adopted by

written procedure the reply to confirmatory application No 38/c/01/19 (doc. 14533/19).

## Rough Sleeping Initiative

[HLWS65]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Robert Jenrick) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today, I am announcing provisional allocations of up to £112 million for a third year of Rough Sleeping Initiative and Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding. This funding covers around 270 local authorities in England, including those that were part of joint funding proposals and represents an uplift of £26 million on last year's Rough Sleeping Initiative and Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding.

We announced the Rough Sleeping Initiative in March 2018 to make an immediate impact on rough sleeping. Our [impact evaluation](#) of the initiative (published September 2019) demonstrated that it drove the first national reduction in rough sleeping in almost a decade. The analysis demonstrated a 32% net reduction in the number of rough sleepers, compared to what the level would have been had the initiative not been in place.

To build on the Rough Sleeping Initiative, we launched the Rapid Rehousing Pathway. This approach includes funding for Somewhere Safe to Stay hubs, which provide warm and dry shelter, rapid assessment, and support to people who are already, or at risk of, sleeping rough; specialist Navigators, who act as a single point of contact to support people from the streets into settled accommodation; the establishment of Local Lettings Agencies to source, identify, or provide homes and advice for rough sleepers or those at risk; and funding for Supported Lettings initiatives, which will provide flexible support to help individuals sustain their tenancies.

For the next financial year we have combined the Rough Sleeping Initiative and Rapid Rehousing Pathway to form one consolidated funding pot for 2020/21, to simplify the process for local authorities. We have drawn on learnings from both programmes to optimise the effectiveness of next year's funding, which was open to all local authorities in England. Since October 2019 our expert adviser teams have worked intensively with local authorities to coproduce plans to further reduce rough sleeping.

A full list of the areas funded is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rough-sleeping-initiative-2020-to-2021-funding-allocations>

With the funding I have announced today, local areas will be able to enhance services that connect people with the right support and sustainable housing to move them swiftly away from the street and facilitate their recovery. This important work is part of delivering on the commitment made in the government manifesto to end rough sleeping by the end of this parliament.

## UK Telecommunications

[HLWS66]

**Baroness Morgan of Cotes:** The Telecoms Supply Chain Review - laid before Parliament in July 2019 - underlined the range and nature of the risks facing our critical digital infrastructure.

The Review addressed three questions:

How should telecoms operators be incentivised to improve security standards and practices in 5G and full fibre networks?

How should the security challenges posed by high risk vendors be addressed?

How can sustainable diversity in the telecoms supply chain be created?

The Government is establishing one of the strongest regimes for telecoms security in the world. This will raise security standards across the UK's telecoms operators and the vendors that supply them. At the heart of the new regime, will be the National Cyber Security Centre's Telecoms Security Requirements guidance. This will raise the height of the security bar and set out tough new standards to be met in the design and operation of the UK's telecoms networks.

The Government intends to legislate, at the earliest opportunity, to introduce a new comprehensive telecoms security regime - to be overseen by the communications sector regulator, Ofcom, and Government.

The Review also underlined the need for the UK to improve diversity in the supply of equipment to telecoms networks.

The Government is developing an ambitious strategy to help diversify the supply chain. This will entail the deployment of all the tools at the Government's disposal. The strategy has three main strands:

Attracting established vendors who are not currently present in the UK;

Supporting the emergence of new, disruptive entrants to the supply chain; and

Promoting the adoption of open, interoperable standards that will reduce barriers to entry.

The UK's telecoms operators are leading the world in the adoption of new, innovative approaches to expand the supply chain. The Government will work with industry and like-minded countries to achieve these goals.

The third area covered by the Review was how to treat those vendors which pose greater security and resilience risks to UK telecoms.

The Government has now completed its consideration of all the information and analysis on this subject, and is publishing the final conclusions of the Telecoms Supply Chain Review in relation to high risk vendors.

In order to assess a vendor as high risk, the Review recommends a set of objective factors are taken into account. These include:

the strategic position or scale of the vendor in the UK network;

the strategic position or scale of the vendor in other telecoms networks, particularly if the vendor is new to the UK market;

the quality and transparency of the vendor's engineering practices and cyber security controls;

the vendor's resilience both in technical terms and in relation to the continuity of supply to UK operators;

the vendor's domestic security laws in the jurisdiction where the vendor is based and the risk of external direction that conflicts with UK law;

the relationship between the vendor and the vendor's domestic state apparatus; and

the availability of offensive cyber capability by that domestic state apparatus, or associated actors, that might be used to target UK interests.

To ensure the security of 5G and full fibre networks, it is both necessary and proportionate to place tight restrictions on the presence of any vendors that are identified as higher risk.

For 5G and full fibre networks, the Review concluded that, based on the current position of the UK market, high risk vendors should be:

Excluded from all safety related and safety critical networks in Critical National Infrastructure;

Excluded from security critical network functions;

Limited to a minority presence in other network functions to a cap of up to 35%; and

Subjected to tight restrictions, including exclusions from sensitive geographic locations.

These new controls will also be contingent on an NCSC-approved risk mitigation strategy for any operator using such a vendor.

Over time, our intention is for the market share of high risk vendors to reduce as market diversification takes place.

The Government intends to bring forward legislation, at the earliest opportunity, to limit and control the presence of high risk vendors in UK networks, and to be able to respond appropriately as technology changes.

Nothing in the Review's conclusions affects this country's ability to share highly sensitive intelligence data over highly secure networks, both within the U.K. and with our partners, including the Five Eyes.

GCHQ have categorically confirmed that how the UK constructs its 5G and full fibre public telecoms networks has nothing to do with how the Government shares classified data.

In response to the Review, the Government has asked the National Cyber Security Centre to produce guidance for industry in relation to high risk vendors. The guidance sets out how NCSC will determine whether a vendor is high risk, the precise restrictions it advises should be applied to high risk vendors in the UK's 5G and full fibre networks, and what mitigation measures operators should take if using high risk vendors.

The NCSC has published that guidance on their website at: [www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/ncsc-advice-on-the-use-of-equipment-from-high-risk-vendors-in-uk-telecoms-networks](http://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/ncsc-advice-on-the-use-of-equipment-from-high-risk-vendors-in-uk-telecoms-networks), as well as a summary of the security analysis conducted for the Telecoms Supply Chain Review at: [www.ncsc.gov.uk/report/summary-of-NCSC-security-analysis-for-the-UK-telecoms-sector](http://www.ncsc.gov.uk/report/summary-of-NCSC-security-analysis-for-the-UK-telecoms-sector). The DCMS press release accompanying this Written Ministerial Statement can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-plans-to-safeguard-countrys-telecoms-network-and-pave-way-for-fast-reliable-and-secure-connectivity>.

Copies of these documents have been placed in the House of Commons library.

## Written Answers

Tuesday, 28 January 2020

### **Aberystwyth University: Listed Buildings**

Asked by **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had, or intend to have, with the Welsh Government about securing a sustainable future for Old College, Aberystwyth. [HL450]

**Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist:** Last week, the National Lottery Heritage Fund announced that Old College, Aberystwyth has been awarded almost £10 million of National Lottery money. The National Lottery Heritage Memorial Fund, which allocates Lottery funds to heritage, is a non-departmental public body accountable to parliament through the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. The mechanism in which funding decisions are made on individual applications and policies are independent of the Government. The National Lottery Heritage Fund is the distributor. This funding commitment builds on the investment of over £400million of National Lottery funding into more than 2,600 heritage projects in Wales.

The investment in Old College will generate around 50 new jobs and encourage graduates to stay in Aberystwyth to establish new businesses, boosting the local economy. The renovation will create gallery spaces, a centre for entrepreneurs and new businesses, artist studios, community rooms and facilities for major events and festivals. This investment will give the building a new lease of life, securing a sustainable future for generations to come. This funding will also be supported by £3 million investment by Welsh Government and £3 million from the European Regional Development Fund through the Tourism Attractor Destination programme.

### **Agriculture: Subsidies**

Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to fund the provision of independent advice for farmers in any new agricultural support schemes. [HL541]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** Our Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme is the cornerstone of our new agricultural policy. Founded on the principle of “public money for public goods”, ELM is intended to provide a powerful vehicle for achieving the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan and commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, while supporting our rural economy.

ELM is looking into several options for sourcing advisors, considering both private and public sector options. The options we are considering allow flexibility to source experienced advisors in the short-term for the National Pilot, whilst building sufficient and high-quality advisor capacity to support the full roll out of ELM. The

National Pilot provides an opportunity to co-design with stakeholders and land managers the most appropriate way to provide this capacity and whether it is provided from the public or private sector.

Asked by **Lord Carrington**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential damage to the environment as a result of the three crop rule leading farmers to cultivate drenched farmland and thereby damage soil structures. [HL679]

Asked by **Lord Carrington**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the weather conditions experienced by farmers this planting season, what plans they have to suspend the three crop rule. [HL680]

Asked by **Lord Carrington**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to accept early Force Majeure claims as a prevention mechanism to ensure that soil structure is not damaged as a result of farmers trying to adhere to the three crop rule. [HL681]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** Farmers have been experiencing difficulties with the recent prolonged wet weather and are concerned about their ability to meet Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) rules.

Whilst we have not carried out specific assessments of the environmental impact of cultivating waterlogged farmland following the wet weather experienced so far this winter, we encourage farmers to take all the necessary and reasonable steps to protect their soils. In some cases, we understand that this may result in difficulty meeting CAP rules, including the ‘three crop rule’. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has recently updated its GOV.UK online guidance on flooding and wet weather so that farmers are clear on the rules and possible alternative options that will allow them to remain compliant – including alternatives to the three crop rule. This was put together in direct response to customers’ and stakeholders’ questions and concerns.

If they are in doubt, farmers should contact the RPA to discuss possible mitigation measures where farmers are unsure of the impact that flooding will have on their ability to comply with greening, or other CAP rules, including whether they should apply for *force majeure*.

We will continue to monitor the situation and work closely with stakeholders, including farmers, where cases of *force majeure* are put forward. We are also exploring how best to provide flexibility and support farmers affected by the recent wet weather.

### **Air Passenger Duty**

Asked by **Baroness Randerson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the environmental impact of cutting Air Passenger Duty from all domestic flights. [HL581]

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether deferred Air Passenger Duty relief is congruent with state aid and competition rules. [HL582]

**The Earl of Courtown:** As announced on 14 January, HM Treasury is undertaking a review of Air Passenger Duty to ensure regional connectivity is strengthened while meeting the UK's climate change commitments to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

The government takes its environmental responsibilities very seriously and uses a range of levers at its disposal, including spending, taxation and regulatory policy, to meet its climate and environmental objectives.

The actions that the Government has taken are fully compliant with State Aid rules.

### **Army Reserve: Recruitment**

*Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many soldiers have been recruited to the Army Reserves since January 2019. [HL611]

**Baroness Goldie:** Between 1 January 2019 and 30 September 2019 3,300 people joined the Reserves both trained and untrained. This consists of Army Reservists, sponsored Reserves, and those personnel now serving on Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) who were recruited as Army Reservists.

Notes:

Figures have been rounded to 10 for presentational purposes; numbers ending in "5" have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.

Intake Statistics are published on a quarterly basis by Defence Statistics. These figures are taken from the most recent published figures.

### **Belfast Agreement**

*Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, following withdrawal from the EU, individuals will be able to initiate legal proceedings, independent of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission or the Equality Commission, if there is an alleged diminution of rights, safeguards or equality of opportunity as set out in the Belfast Agreement; and, if so, how this is provided for in the EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill. [HL404]

**Lord Duncan of Springbank:** The amendments made, via schedule 3 of the EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill, to sections 6 and 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 mean that the Northern Ireland Assembly, ministers and departments will be acting outside their competence or powers if they legislate or act in a way that breaches the "no diminution" commitment; this would be actionable by judicial review in the normal way. The Government also considers that Article 2(1) of the Protocol is capable of

direct effect and that individuals will therefore be able to rely directly on this article before the domestic courts. Individuals will be able to bring proceedings independently or, where the case meets certain criteria, with the assistance of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission or the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

*Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether legal aid will be available for individuals seeking to initiate legal proceedings based on an alleged diminution of rights, safeguards or equality of opportunity, as set out in the Belfast Agreement. [HL405]

**Lord Keen of Elie:** A legal challenge asserting an alleged diminution of rights, safeguards or equality of opportunity, as set out in the Belfast Agreement, would likely be brought through the Northern Ireland court system. Given legal aid is a matter devolved to Northern Ireland, whether it is or would be available for such a challenge in Northern Ireland is not a matter for Her Majesty's Government.

### **Blood: Donors**

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to encourage more men to donate blood. [HL519]

**Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford:** NHS Blood and Transplant is responsible for the collection, manufacturing and issuing of blood products to the National Health Service in England.

There is always a need for new blood donors, of all blood types, to replace those donors who can no longer give blood. There is a high demand for male blood as only men's blood can be used for some specialist transfusions and blood products. NHS Blood and Transplant also needs new blood donors from a black African or black Caribbean background to treat sickle cell disease.

In November 2019, NHS Blood and Transplant and BT Sport joined forces to recruit more male blood donors as, in 2019, 41% of new donor recruits were male. The campaign is being shown on live television, video on demand and social media.

### **British Business Bank**

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Duncan of Springbank on 28 October 2019 (HL48), whether the decision to classify the default rate of loans made by the British Business Bank via peer-to-peer platforms as commercially sensitive information was to protect (1) the British Business Bank, or (2) the identity of borrowers; and if it was to protect the identity of borrowers, whether they will publish the aggregate value of (a) defaulted, and

(b) provisional, loans through peer-to-peer platforms for each of the last three financial years. [HL579]

**Lord Duncan of Springbank:** Data provided to the British Business Bank (BBB) by its delivery partners to meet portfolio monitoring and reporting requirements remains commercially sensitive to the delivery partners and as such is governed by confidentiality agreements. An individual delivery partner may choose to publish data on the overall performance of their loan book, which may include but will not be limited to BBB backed investments. A list of BBB's delivery partners can be found on their website.

The BBB's Annual Report and Accounts ("Enabling Small Businesses to Grow and Prosper") includes information on the BBB's overall performance and is available on the website

### Care Homes: Finance

*Asked by Lord Warner*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to transfer responsibility for the funding provision of nursing home care to the NHS. [HL489]

**Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford:** The Government has no current plans to transfer responsibility for the funding provision of nursing home care to the National Health Service.

The NHS already provides NHS-funded nursing care. This is funding for care homes which supports the provision of nursing care by registered nurses to individuals who are assessed as eligible for funded nursing care.

### Children: Education

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in introducing a register for children not in school. [HL427]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** In the spring of 2019, a consultation was held on proposals for a mandatory register of children not attending state or registered independent schools to help local authorities carry out their responsibilities in relation to children not in school. The consultation closed in June 2019. Responses to the consultation have been considered and a formal government response document setting out next steps will be issued in due course.

### Chinook Helicopters

*Asked by Lord Moonie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for the military Mark 4 Chinook helicopters that are currently held in store. [HL578]

**Baroness Goldie:** The remaining Mark 4 Chinook helicopters are being modified through a safety enhancement programme, the Digital Automatic Flight Control System. They will return to flying as Mark 6A Chinooks by the end of the year.

### Court of Justice of the European Union

*Asked by Lord Clement-Jones*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what mechanisms are proposed for mediating legal conflict with the Court of Justice of the European Union where companies are subject to both the jurisdiction of the EU and the UK. [HL299]

**Lord Callanan:** The Withdrawal Agreement brings about the end of the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice of the EU in Britain.

The EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill makes clear that it is a matter for UK courts to determine UK law, and provides for legal clarity after the implementation period. It also provides for how UK courts must interpret relevant separation agreement law under our international obligations.

Companies will be subject to the court systems of the jurisdictions in which they operate, as normal.

### Crown Lands and Estates

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money was raised by the Crown Estates in each of the last five years; and how any such money was spent. [HL442]

**The Earl of Courtown:** The Crown Estate publishes its Integrated Annual Report and Accounts each year. The latest Report for the year 2018-19 is available on The Crown Estate's website.[1].

As set out in the 2018-19 Report, the net revenue profit The Crown Estate has generated in each of the past five years, are as follows:

2018-19 = £343.5 million;  
 2017-18 = £329.4 million;  
 2016-17 = £328.8 million;  
 2015-16 = £304.1 million; and  
 2014-15 = £285.1 million.

The Crown Estate generates valuable revenue for the Exchequer, and over the past ten years, the business has returned a total of £2.8 billion into the Consolidated Fund, contributing to vital public services such as the NHS and policing.

[1] <https://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/en-gb/our-business/2019-annual-report/>

## Design of UK Funding Schemes for European and International Collaboration Review

Asked by *Lord Fox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to respond to the report by Professor Adrian Smith and Professor Graeme Reid *Changes and Choices: advice on future frameworks for international collaboration on research and innovation*, published on 5 November 2019. [HL453]

**Lord Duncan of Springbank:** Sir Adrian and Professor Reid's report 'Changes and Choices' makes overarching recommendations which highlight the importance of stabilising and building on the UK capability, it presents opportunities for the future funding landscape of UK research and innovation globally, and it also provides options should the UK decide not to associate to Horizon Europe.

The Government is carefully considering the recommendations including how this might inform future policy and plans to publish a response in due course.

### Developing Countries: Abortion

Asked by *Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to highlight and address how best to (1) prevent unsafe abortion, and (2) make safe abortion accessible for all, as part of their commitment to end preventable deaths of mothers, new-born babies and children in the developing world. [HL434]

**Baroness Sugg:** DFID's policy on safe abortion takes an evidence-based, public health approach that aims to reduce death and disability caused by unsafe abortions. Between 2018 and 2019, we supported 23.5 million women to use modern methods of family planning, averting 2 million unsafe abortions and saving 8,300 lives.

Unsafe abortion continues to be a major cause of preventable maternal mortality in developing countries. Sexual and reproductive health and rights will therefore be at the heart of our commitment to ending preventable deaths of mothers, new-born babies and children. We will continue to empower women and girls to choose whether, when and how many children to have. In countries where abortion is permitted, this means supporting programmes that make safe abortion more accessible in order to save the lives of women who would otherwise resort to backstreet abortions. In countries where abortion is highly restricted, we help make the consequences of unsafe abortion more widely understood and support those fighting to access safe abortion. We do this through supporting dedicated programmes such as the Safe Abortion Action Fund, which improves access to safe abortion for some of the world's most vulnerable women and girls, and an integrated approach to sexual and

reproductive health and rights, which includes safe abortion care where legal.

### Developing Countries: Health Services

Asked by *Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of Official Development Assistance was allocated to sexual and reproductive health and rights in (1) 2017–18, and (2) 2018–19. [HL435]

**Baroness Sugg:** DFID financial reporting estimates that 13.6% of DFID's total expenditure was spent on sexual and reproductive health and rights in the financial year 2017-18. Comparable figures for the financial year 2018-2019 are not yet available.

### Devolution: England

Asked by *Lord Porter of Spalding*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to work with local government to develop and implement their proposals for English devolution; and if so, how. [HL531]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The Government's ambition is for full devolution across England including through more devolution deals that level up powers and invest further in infrastructure. That is why it has been working with local authority leaders to unlock the Sheffield City Region and continues discussions with West Yorkshire leaders on a new devolution deal. The Government also engages with a wide range of local government partners on the future of devolution in England and looks forward to continuing this as it develops the English Devolution White Paper.

### Devolution: Sheffield City Region

Asked by *Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the Sheffield City Region Devolution Deal has not been completed; and when they expect that deal to be finalised. [HL420]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** Sheffield City Region leaders agreed on 27 January that they would launch on 3 February the statutorily required consultation which is the next step towards implementing the Sheffield City Region Devolution Deal. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, the statutory tests being met, and to the necessary Order being consented to by the South Yorkshire councils and approved by Parliament, the people of South Yorkshire will from this year be able to benefit from the Deal, including from the £30 million annual investment funds.

### Devolution: Yorkshire and the Humber

Asked by *Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made in relation to Metro Mayors in Yorkshire. [HL495]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** As the Prime Minister said at his speech in the Convention of the North ‘we are going to do devolution properly...with more Mayors across the North’. In Yorkshire we are pleased to see recent progress the Mayor and leaders of the Sheffield City Region are making towards getting their devolution deal over the line with the benefits that will bring for people across South Yorkshire, including £30 million annually of investment funds. We are also proceeding with negotiations for a devolution deal with a Mayor for Leeds and West Yorkshire, and other areas of Yorkshire are discussing devolution with us.

### Energy Performance Certificates

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the (1) effectiveness, and (2) accuracy, of Energy Performance Certificates as applied to domestic dwellings. [HL691]

**Lord Duncan of Springbank:** The Government launched a Call for Evidence on Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) in 2018, which covered questions of both EPC effectiveness and accuracy. We are conducting analysis of the responses and will publish a government response in due course.

### EU Defence Policy

*Asked by Lord James of Blackheath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any agreements have been made with the EU about British participation in (1) the establishment of a European Defence Union, (2) any military command and control procedures, (3) the future of Five Eyes, (4) the procurement of military equipment from an EU-wide organisation, and (5) the transfer of nuclear technology licensed to the UK by the United States; if so, what are the details of any such agreements; and whether any such agreements are separate to any agreements relating to the UK's departure from the EU. [HL456]

**Baroness Goldie:** The UK has no agreement with the EU about British participation in the establishment of a 'European Defence Union'.

The Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration provide the option, but no obligation, for the UK to continue to contribute to CSDP operations and missions on a voluntary basis, and where of benefit to UK interests. This does not undermine the UK's sovereignty, our command or control of our Armed Forces nor does it oblige us to participate in a 'defence union' or any EU defence initiatives.

The UK will retain full sovereign control over its defence, intelligence services and decision-making after leaving the EU. The UK will also retain control over the deployment of its Armed Forces and their equipment. Any future security partnership negotiated with the EU would reflect this position.

The UK currently has no agreements with the EU on military command and control procedures other than those in the Withdrawal Agreement referring to continued participation in CSDP operations and missions during the Implementation Period. UK personnel remain under UK sovereign command at all times.

The UK does not have any agreements with the EU on British participation in the 'Five Eyes' community. Any future relationship agreement with the EU will not undermine our partnership with the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The intelligence cooperation between these 'Five Eyes' partners is the broadest, deepest and most advanced of any grouping of nations and we are committed to maintaining it.

The UK has not entered into any agreements with the EU to participate in the procurement of military equipment from EU-wide organisations. There are no agreements with the EU about British participation in transfer of nuclear technology licensed to the UK by the US.

### Ferries: Isles of Scilly

*Asked by Lord West of Spithead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the implications for the Isles of Scilly of no longer having a ferry. [HL596]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** A regular passenger service is provided commercially by the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group during the summer season. The Scillonian III vessel is currently being prepared for the new season and is scheduled to resume service on 23 March 2020.

No assessment has been made by Government on the implication for the Isles of Scilly of the ferry service ceasing.

### Festival of Britain

*Asked by Lord Porter of Spalding*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the (1) Local Government Association, and (2) local government, about the role of councils in the upcoming Festival of Britain. [HL533]

**Baroness Barran:** DCMS has asked the Organising Committee for the Birmingham Commonwealth Games, under the leadership of its Chief Creative Officer, to develop plans for the Festival. The Organising Committee will lead on any discussions with local government.

### Flybe: Newquay Cornwall Airport

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that Flybe flights between Newquay and London which are operated under a public service obligation are maintained in the event of Flybe ceasing operations. [HL440]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Government recognises the important role that Flybe plays in the UK's connectivity by flying many of the regional routes that other providers do not operate. Flybe has now confirmed that they will continue to operate as normal, preserving flights to airports such as Southampton, Belfast and Birmingham, as well as the Newquay to London public service obligation.

### Gaza: Travel Restrictions

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made, and intend to make, to the government of Israel about reports that it is not allowing parents to accompany their children and babies who need to leave Gaza for medical treatment in the West Bank. [HL433]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Our Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises the matter of medical permits with the Israeli authorities, most recently on 30 October 2019. My colleague Dr Murrison also raised medical permits, and the importance of parents being allowed to accompany children in need of urgent medical treatment, with the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 22 October 2019. Israeli restrictions severely restrict the movement of medical professionals, patients and families from Gaza, hampering the provision of quality health services, as well as impacting Palestinians in the West Bank. The situation in Gaza is particularly acute, and is compounded by frequent closure by Egypt of the Rafah crossing, preventing urgent medical cases from seeking treatment in Egypt. A lasting resolution to the situation is needed that will ensure that all those who are in need of medical attention and their families have unimpeded access to healthcare provisions.

### Gender Recognition: Children

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what funding, if any, the Department for Health and Social Care has provided to the Tavistock Clinic so that they can undertake gender reassignment of children. [HL378]

**Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford:** The Department does not make grant awards to National Health Service trusts.

As a NHS trust, funding would be provided by local and national NHS commissioners for NHS services provided.

### Gynaecology

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that clinics in London are offering surgery to "restore" women's virginity. [HL436]

**Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford:** The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care providers, including surgery clinics, in England. Any provider of surgery, including hymenoplasty, must register with the CQC and meet its fundamental standards of safety and quality – or risk enforcement action. All medical professionals have a duty of care to their patients and must always take into account a patient's vulnerability or psychological needs before offering treatment, according to the General Medical Council's ethical standards.

Pressuring a female partner or family member into undergoing any surgical procedures which they do not want is unacceptable. The Government is committed to challenging cultural attitudes that underpin these behaviours, as set out in the cross-Government *Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy*, published in 2016.

### Hate Crime

*Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect the Law Commission review into hate crime to be completed. [HL384]

**Lord Keen of Elie:** The Law Commission were invited to review the law on hate crime and to make recommendations for its reform. The review began in March 2019 and will also consider which characteristics (for example gender, age, disability) deserve enhanced protection by the criminal law and on what basis.

The Law Commission plan to issue a consultation on this matter in early 2020. Further information on the review can be found on the Law Commission webpage at: <https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/hate-crime/>

### Healthcare at Home

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the value of all contracts they had with the health provider Healthcare at Home in the last financial year. [HL380]

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what complaints, if any, they have received about late deliveries by the healthcare provider Healthcare at Home. [HL381]

**Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford:** In England, there are 12 providers of homecare medicines services and approximately 400,000 patients in receipt of a homecare medicines service. Each homecare provider provides a variety of services to National Health Service patients under contracts which may be held at national, regional or local hospital trust level. Healthcare at Home is one of those suppliers, providing services to approximately 200,000 patients or 50% of the patient cohort.

Information is not collected centrally about the value of contracts held with a particular supplier.

As part of the quality assurance and governance processes, homecare providers are assessed on a monthly basis against their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and more formally on a regular basis through face to face meetings with the National Homecare Medicines Committee. Providers not meeting their KPIs are held to account and action will be taken to ensure that levels of service are brought back in line with relevant the relevant standards.

### High Speed 2 Independent Review

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to make an assessment of the Oakervee Report on HS2. [HL425]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Transport Secretary has met with Doug Oakervee to discuss the Review. The Government has been clear that it will publish the final report of the Oakervee Review and will set out next steps on HS2 in due course.

### High Speed 2 Railway Line

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the financial impact of not proceeding with HS2. [HL426]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Secretary of State commissioned the Oakervee Review to provide advice on how and whether to proceed with HS2, including examining the direct cost of cancelling the project. The government has committed to publishing the Oakervee Review report and will set out next steps on HS2 in due course.

### Housing: Energy

*Asked by Lord Stunell*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of (1) the number of homes in England that fall within each rating band of Energy Performance Certificates, and (2) the amount by which annual CO2 emissions would be reduced if every home within each rating band were to be improved to the next rating band level. [HL479]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** (1) The most recent analysis of the number of homes within each Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band that this Department has is the 2016 English Housing Survey which estimated that over 7 million dwellings in England had an energy efficiency rating of A to C, over 15.5 million dwellings were rated C to D and over 1.1 million dwellings were rated F to G.

(2) This Department does not hold any information on the amount by which annual CO2 emissions would be reduced if every home within each rating band were to be

improved to the next rating band level. However, the Government's Clean Growth Strategy estimated that upgrading energy efficiency from an EPC Band E to an EPC Band D reduces energy costs by £380 per year on average.

### Immigration Controls: Airports

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the waiting times at the border at all UK airports that use ePassport gates; what is the difference in waiting times, broken down by each airport; and what comparison they have made of the difference in the waiting times, broken down by each airport, before the ePassport gates were installed and now. [HL421]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** A direct comparison of queue times before and after ePassport Gates installation is not an accurate assessment of improvement given the number of variables involved, including but not limited to increasing number of biometric passports in circulation, changes to the cohorts of passengers able to use the gates, delays to flight schedules and increased number of travellers to the UK.

Recent and previous performance against passenger wait time Service Level Agreements can be found in Border Force Transparency data available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/border-force-transparency-data>

Border Force is committed to ensuring passengers arriving in the UK receive an excellent service. ePassport gates are an efficient means of border clearance for eligible passenger cohorts and allow us to conduct a full range of security checks.

ePassport Gates are part of the long-term vision for the border, making better use of digital technology and greater automation to improve the passenger experience, whilst maintaining security.

There are 264 e-Passport Gates now operational at 23 air and rail terminals including Paris Gare du Nord and Brussels Gare du Mid, and e-Passport Gates usage continues to increase, linked to the increase availability of e-Passports. e-Passport gate usage has increased from 1 Million in 2009 to 61.3 Million for the 12 months to the end of November of 2019

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the technical efficacy of ePassport gates at UK airports; and what percentage of all ePassport gate readings result in a failed face reading. [HL422]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Protecting the UK border is, and always has been, of paramount importance to this Government. It has never been government

practice, for reasons of national security, to comment on operational issues relating to border security.

This includes offering commentary on the performance of border systems and of ePassport Gates specifically

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much has been spent on ePassport gates at UK airports over the last four years. [HL423]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Over the last 4 years (2016 to date), Border Force have installed 124 ePassport gates at costs in the region of £9.75m with ongoing support/service costs in the region of £5.3m.

### Japanese Knotweed: Weed Control

*Asked by Baroness Wilcox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in eliminating Japanese knotweed. [HL774]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The Government recognises the threats posed by invasive non-native species including Japanese knotweed and has a comprehensive Great Britain Non-native Species Strategy designed to tackle these threats, the first of its kind in Europe.

Local Action Groups, with support from the Government, are actively involved in reducing and eradicating Japanese knotweed. Increasing public awareness of the species and what can be done about it is an important part of tackling the problems caused by Japanese knotweed. To that aim, we launched the first Invasive Species Week in 2015, to bring together a wide range of organisations to raise awareness of invasive non-native species, to highlight work going on to tackle them and to inspire people to get involved and help prevent their spread. Invasive Species Week has gone from strength to strength, with eight administrations taking part in 2019 and 93 events held.

Defra continues to fund a biocontrol programme through the release of a psyllid insect to tackle Japanese knotweed. The Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI) is working to establish the highly specific psyllid *Aphalara itadori* in the UK and a population of climatically suitable psyllids from Japan is being studied in CABI's quarantine in Surrey. It is hoped this will be the key to unlocking the potential of this agent to reduce the effort and cost of managing Japanese knotweed and its invasive capacity. Research is also underway to evaluate a leaf-spot fungus for use as a mycoherbicide.

The Government has developed guidance on how to prevent the spread of Japanese knotweed, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-japanese-knotweed-from-spreading>

### Joaquin Elo Ayeto

*Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Equatorial Guinea concerning the detention of Joaquin Elo Ayeto. [HL642]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK remains concerned by the human rights situation in Equatorial Guinea and reports of arbitrary detention. We have no diplomatic mission or resident diplomatic staff in Equatorial Guinea. We use regular visits by our non-resident Ambassador (based in Cameroon) and discussions with the Chargé in London to raise human rights concerns. The British Ambassador raised human rights during his most recent visit in January.

### Mermaids UK: Finance

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what funding, if any, the Department of Health and Social Care provides to the charity Mermaids UK. [HL379]

**Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford:** The Department grants team can confirm there is no record of a grant payment being made to Mermaids UK in the year 2019/20 to date or during 2018/19.

### Migrant Camps

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what information they collect about conditions in refugee camps outside the UK; and what assessment they have made of those conditions. [HL414]

**Baroness Sugg:** The UK does not itself undertake primary data collection on conditions in refugee camps. We are a major supporter of UN High Commission for Refugees, the UN's refugee agency, which is mandated with the protection of refugees. UNHCR undertakes regular assessments of the standards of living and conditions in camps against a set of standards agreed with partners. The Department for International Development rigorously monitors the performance of UK partners in specific refugee responses, including against information on living conditions in camps compiled and provided by UNHCR.

### Motorways: Safety

*Asked by Lord Goodlad*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they intend to take to ensure the safety of smart motorways. [HL563]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Secretary of State for Transport announced in October an evidence stocktake to gather the facts on the safety of smart motorways and

make recommendations. That work is being undertaken at pace.

The Department does not want to pre-judge the results of that work, which we will be publishing very soon. We will continue to prioritise improving safety – making conditions safer for everyone on our roads.

### **National Probation Service for England and Wales: Standards**

*Asked by Lord Laming*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they intend to take to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of HM Probation Service. [HL400]

**Lord Keen of Elie:** This Government is clear that probation services must improve. Our reforms will build on the changes introduced by Transforming Rehabilitation, while addressing the challenges in the system. We are simplifying responsibilities for public, private and voluntary sector probation partners. This means the National Probation Service (NPS) delivering robust supervision of all offenders, the private sector continuing to drive innovation in sentence delivery, and greater voluntary sector involvement in rehabilitation. Our changes will allow each sector to play to its strengths, deliver more investment in skilled probation staff, and ensure stronger supervision and support for offenders.

We will set out further detail on the operating model for the future system shortly.

### **Non-native Species**

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to comply with International Maritime Organisation protocols that require ships to purify their ballast water to prevent the arrival of invasive species, including (1) Chinese mitten crabs, (2) Portuguese oysters, and (3) zebra mussels, in ships' ballast tanks. [HL542]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department for Transport is currently developing the UK legislative package to enable the UK to accede to the International Convention on the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments by Summer 2020 with implementing legislation in place by Autumn 2020.

### **Nuclear Power: Wales**

*Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had, and intend to have, with the Welsh Government about nuclear power in Wales. [HL496]

**Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist:** The Government is committed to new nuclear as part of the UK's future energy mix and although a reserved matter I am keen to work with the Welsh Government to ensure

where we can deliver on new nuclear in Wales. Officials from my department and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy regularly engage with officials from Welsh Government on nuclear in Wales. I am keen to ensure discussions continue on areas where we are jointly affected.

### **Offences against Children: Criminal Investigation**

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken since Operation Augusta was launched in 2003 to ensure that child sexual abuse allegations are properly investigated. [HL431]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Child sexual abuse is an appalling crime and that this Government is committed to tackling it. It is important that we look at what has gone wrong in the past and work tirelessly to ensure we do not repeat those mistakes.

Since Operation Augusta we have taken significant steps to transform the way police respond to these horrific crimes. We have prioritised child sexual abuse as a national threat and we have worked with the College of Policing to deliver a package of measures to ensure the police are better placed to respond to child protection issues, including enhanced coverage of vulnerability in the curriculum for the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship, and the development of a Public Protection and Safeguarding Leaders course.

The Home Office is continuing to provide significant investment to initiatives and activities that will support the police to continue transformation in their response to child sexual abuse, particularly in areas of disruption, prevention and early intervention. Last year, we announced that we will be investing a further £30m in law enforcement capabilities to ensure offenders are no longer able to prey on society's most vulnerable.

The government will go further and publish a comprehensive national strategy to tackle all forms of Child Sexual Abuse in early 2020 which will build on our action to tackle all child sexual abuse and bring horrific predators to justice.

Our new strategy will set out our whole system response to tackling child sexual abuse and how we will work across government, law enforcement, safeguarding partners and industry to root out offending, protect victims and help victims and survivors rebuild their lives.

### **Offences against Children: Greater Manchester**

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to reports that failings by police and children's services in Greater Manchester resulted in victims of sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation being denied justice, what discussions they have had with the National Crime

Agency about such reports; and what action they intend to take as a result. [HL382]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** These were truly shocking cases of the most vulnerable in our society being preyed upon and abused by ruthless predators, and failed by those whose job it was to protect them. It is important that lessons are learnt, and we work tirelessly to safeguard victims of these horrific crimes and bring the evil criminals who abuse our children to justice.

The government engages routinely with law enforcement agencies, including the National Crime Agency, to tackle child sexual offending and ensure the police respond appropriately to vulnerable victims. The National Crime Agency considers reports such as these in drawing up its annual National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime, which can be found online. <https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are/publications/296-national-strategic-assessment-of-serious-organised-crime-2019/>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

National Strategic Assessment of SOC - 2019 [National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime 2019.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-14/HL382>

## Planning

*Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Town and Country Planning Association, *Planning 2020: Raynsford Review of Planning in England*, published in November 2018; and what steps they intend to take in response. [HL524]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The Government believes that further reform of the planning system is necessary. We will be publishing a planning White Paper in due course, which will aim to make the planning system clearer, more accessible and more certain for all users, including home owners and small businesses. It will also address resourcing and performance in local planning departments and ensure timely decisions are made. It will seek to improve the ways communities can get involved in the planning process, including through the opportunities afforded by new digital methods of engagement.

## Police: Mental Health Services

*Asked by Lord Norton of Louth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many police forces employ integrated street triage for mental health services; what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of such provision; and whether they plan to encourage more police forces to employ this practice. [HL407]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** There is no single generic model for mental health crisis "street triage" services and the Home Office does not routinely collect information on such schemes. However, the 2018 report of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on policing and mental health recorded that mental health triage schemes were operational in 42 of the 43 police forces in England and Wales.

There have been a number of local and academic evaluations of such schemes, however HMICFRS noted that evaluation of schemes was not always consistent and recommended that all forces should review their arrangements using practice guidelines developed by the College of Policing to help forces benchmark their triage activity. HMICFRS will be inspecting on progress as part of their integrated PEEL assessments inspection framework. It is an operational matter for Chief Officers to determine whether to establish or maintain street triage schemes.

## Portsmouth University: Overseas Students

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decision by the University of Portsmouth to waive the requirement for students to have taken the International English Language Test. [HL424]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** To be eligible to enter the UK under Tier 4, an applicant must be able to demonstrate they have an adequate level of English to access the proposed course of study. All Tier 4 General Students must prove they satisfy the minimum English language requirements against the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages (CEFR). A student must show that they meet the minimum level of English at CEFR B2 to be eligible to study in the UK at degree level or above. Students can prove their English Language ability in different ways.

Tier 4 Higher Education Providers with a track record of compliance including the University of Portsmouth, are able to make their own assessment of the proficiency of an applicant in English Language, if a student is accessing a course of study at degree level or above. Tier 4 providers must be satisfied that an applicant is proficient in English Language to a minimum of CEFR B2 level in all four disciplines assessed by the International English Language Test. The provider is able to undertake its own assessment of the ability of an applicant to satisfy these criteria. There is no stipulation in the Immigration Rules relating to how this assessment must be made.

## Private Rented Housing: Electrical Safety

*Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they are making on plans to introduce mandatory electrical safety checks in the private rented sector. [HL393]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** On 13 January 2020, the Government laid before Parliament new regulations that will require private landlords to make sure the electrical installations in their properties are safe.

The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 require that:

- Electrical installations must be inspected and tested by a qualified and competent person at least every five years;
- Electrical safety standards must be met;
- Reports (known as ‘Electrical Installation Condition Reports or ‘EICRs’) must be provided to tenants, and to local authorities on request.

The Regulations also set out enforcement powers for local authorities who will be able to tackle those rogue landlords who breach their new duties under the Regulations.

Subject to approval by parliament, these requirements will come into force for all new tenancies from 1 July 2020 and for all existing tenancies from 1 April 2021.

## Public Transport: North of England

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they made of the Transport for the North integrated pay as you go contactless bank card scheme, in particular the withdrawal of the main bus companies in the north from that scheme. [HL500]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Government pledged up to £150m in 2015 to Transport for the North (TfN), to support their plans for an integrated and smart travel programme across the North. Whilst several projects are now in delivery, during development of the ‘contactless bank card scheme’, TfN concluded that the full, multi-modal benefits of their original scheme design cannot be delivered without the involvement of commercial bus operators, who have now developed their own bank card ticketing schemes. TfN are currently in the process of developing alternative proposals, with a multi-modal solution across the North remaining their ambition for the future.

The Department continues to fully support TfN's aspiration to deliver a step-change in the public transport experience for passengers in the North through an improved and modernised smart ticketing offer.

## Racial Discrimination: Football

*Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 30 October 2019 (HL181), how many of the police reported football-related racist incidents have led to people being charged; and what range of penalties was applied. [HL377]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office does not hold this information, although individual police forces may have this information for their force area.

As mentioned in my previous response, racist chanting or abuse may be an offence under section 3 of the Football (Offences) Act 1991 or sections 4, 4A or 5 of the Public Order Act 1986. Offences under sections 4 and 4A of the 1986 Act carry a maximum penalty of six months' imprisonment and are capable of being charged as a racially or religiously aggravated offence.

In addition, the court must impose a preventative Football Banning Order following conviction for a relevant offence it reasonably believes that making an order would help to prevent violence or disorder at, or in, connection with any regulated football matches. Football Banning Orders prohibit the subject from attending regulated football matches for a period of two to ten years, depending on the nature of the offence.

The Law Commission is carrying out a full review of the coverage and approach of current hate crime legislative provisions, including in the context of football.

## Railways: Strikes

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 7 January (HL63), when they intend to introduce legislation to guarantee that, in times of strike action on rail, a pre-agreed minimum level of train service is provided; and what provisions such legislation will include to protect the rights of railway managers. [HL412]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** It is the Government's intention to introduce a Bill during this parliamentary session. The purpose of Minimum Service Level legislation is to ensure that the right to take strike action is in future balanced with the rights of passengers, who are being disproportionately impacted by strikes.

## Refugees: Children

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many child refugees came to the UK to join family members in (1) 2015, (2) 2016, (3) 2017, and (4) 2018. [HL413]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office publishes a range of data on asylum seekers and refugees in the ‘Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>

This data includes a range of topics relevant to the question above:

- The number of asylum applications received in the UK and initial decision on such applications, broken down by age and whether or not the application was lodged by an unaccompanied asylum seeking children

(UASC), are published in tables Asy\_D01 and Asy\_D02 of the asylum and resettlement detailed datasets. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets>

The number of people resettled in the UK, broken down by age are published in table Asy\_D02 of the asylum and resettlement detailed datasets. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets>

The number of family reunion visas granted to family members of refugees in the UK, broken down by age are published in table Fam\_D01 of the family reunion datasets.

The number of asylum seekers transferred into and out of the UK under the Dublin Regulation, broken down by Dublin article are published in table Dub\_D01 of the Dublin regulation datasets.

On overview of the Dublin articles, and the criteria for meeting each article can be found in the User Guide. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-guide-to-home-office-immigration-statistics--9>

Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to the year ending September 2019 and covers the period requested for (2015 to 2018).

Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the 'summary tables'.

The 'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on asylum and resettlement.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar'.

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that more than 10,000 unaccompanied children have used dangerous means to enter the UK over the past decade; and what steps they are taking to provide safe routes for such children. [HL415]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Those who need international protection should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach – that is the fastest route to safety. There are a number of safe and legal routes available to the UK which specifically enable us to provide protection for the most vulnerable refugees, including children.

Since 2010, the UK has granted protection to 41,000 vulnerable children and this will continue to be a priority after we leave the EU.

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they are not continuing the EU policy of assisting child refugees to be reunited with their families in the UK. [HL418]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Government's policy has not changed and protecting vulnerable children will remain our priority after we leave the EU. The new Clause 37 in the Withdrawal Agreement Bill reaffirms this commitment while clarifying the role of Parliament and Government in negotiations. Additionally Clause 37 places an obligation on the Government to lay a statement before Parliament on the progress of negotiations.

The Government is clear that we remain committed to seeking an agreement with the EU on this issue, and the Home Secretary wrote to the European Commission on 22 October to begin negotiations. The UK will continue to be bound by the Dublin Regulation provisions during the implementation period, allowing us to continue to transfer family reunion cases to the UK throughout 2020.

## Refugees: Housing

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made towards their commitment to accept 20,000 Syrian refugees by 2020. [HL416]

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many offers of accommodation by local authorities for refugees have been (1) made, and (2) accepted. [HL417]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office is committed to publishing data in an orderly way as part of the regular quarterly Immigration Statistics, in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Latest statistics published on 28 November 2019 show that a total of 18,252 people had been resettled in the UK under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme since it began across 317 local authorities.

The statistics, which include a local authority breakdown of resettlements, are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>

We have received sufficient pledges from local authorities to meet the 20,000 commitment under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and we continue to work closely with local authorities to turn these offers of support into arrivals.

## Royal Family: Aviation

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the use of publicly funded helicopters and charter planes by the Royal family is restricted to use for official engagements; and if so, which members of the Royal family are permitted to use such transport. [HL443]

**The Earl of Courtown:** The Sovereign Grant meets the cost of official journeys undertaken by or in support of The Queen and other members of the Royal Family. Travel by The Queen, The Duke of Edinburgh, The

Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall and The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge between residences is categorised as official.

The Sovereign Grant does not fund any private travel costs. The cost of any private use by the Royal Family of Sovereign Grant facilities is fully reimbursed.

### Royal Regiment of Scotland

*Asked by Lord Campbell of Pittenweem*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current (1) nominal, and (2) actual, strength of the battalions of the Royal Regiment of Scotland. [HL620]

**Baroness Goldie:** The current trained strength of the Royal Regiment of Scotland by battalion as at 1 October 2019 can be found in the attached table, alongside the workforce recruitment.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Royal Regiment of Scotland [HL620 - Current Trained Strength of Royal Regiment of Scotland by Battalion.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-21/HL620>

### Social Security Benefits

*Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish the evaluation of the benefit cap undertaken by the National Centre for Social Research and the Institute for Fiscal Studies. [HL402]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The results of the two strands of benefit cap evaluation will be published together in due course. The research comprises:

a) A quantitative longitudinal survey of capped households under both Housing Benefit and Universal Credit together with qualitative case studies of local authorities, undertaken by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen).

b) Quantitative analysis of capped households undertaken by officials from the Department for Work and Pensions, and peer reviewed by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS).

### Social Work: Bureaucracy

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of bureaucratic processes in social work, in particular (1) management chains, (2) paper work, and (3) culture; and what steps they intend to take in response. [HL507]

**Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford:** We have made no such assessment.

### South Western Railway: Strikes

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 7 January (HL62), what estimate they have made of the cost to the economy of the South Western Railway strikes which began on 2 December 2019. [HL409]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** As set out in our manifesto commitment, we are concerned about the impact of strike action on passengers and intend to implement Minimum Service Level legislation to ensure that the right to strike is in future balanced with the rights of passengers, who are being disproportionately adversely impacted by strikes.

### Sovereign Grant

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether data is available on how the Sovereign Grant is spent; and if so, where that data is available. [HL441]

**The Earl of Courtown:** Each year the Royal Household publishes the Sovereign Grant and Sovereign Grant Reserve Annual Report and Accounts, a full report on Royal public finances. The 2018-19 report was published on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019, and can be found on the Monarchy website [1].

[1]  
[https://www.royal.uk/sites/default/files/media/final\\_sovereign\\_grant\\_for\\_website.pdf](https://www.royal.uk/sites/default/files/media/final_sovereign_grant_for_website.pdf)

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which members of the Royal family are in receipt of funds from the Sovereign Grant; and how much each such individual receives annually. [HL444]

**The Earl of Courtown:** No member of the Royal Family receives an allowance from the Sovereign Grant. The Sovereign Grant Act 2011 came into effect from 1 April 2012 and consolidated the funding provided to support the official duties of The Queen and maintain the Occupied Royal Palaces. Until 31 March 2012, funding had been provided under the Civil List and the Grants-in-aid for the Maintenance of the Occupied Royal Palaces, Royal Travel and Communications and Information.

The Court Circular, available on the Monarchy website[1] is the official record of past royal engagements, detailing engagements undertaken by all members of the Royal Family.

[1] <https://www.royal.uk/court-circular>

### Syria: Humanitarian Aid

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they intend to ensure that necessary aid access to Syria is maintained,

including by alternative routes, following the UN Security Council Decision of 10 January only to re-authorise two of the four crossing-points from Turkey to Syria for a period of six months rather than 12. [HL399]

**Baroness Sugg:** We are gravely disappointed that the new resolution loses two of the four crossing-points into Syria, including Yaroubiya, the only UN-mandated border crossing into the North East. With UN agencies unable to deliver aid cross-border into North East Syria, and medical supplies from Yaroubiya reaching 1.4 million people last year, DFID Ministers and UK Officials are raising this with the UN, and will ask the UN to report regularly on the humanitarian situation in North East Syria. DFID is also speaking with international partners to determine how to meet the immediate shortfall in medical supplies. The UK is committed to supporting UN and NGO partners to have unfettered humanitarian access to all those in need in Syria, across all modalities, and this cannot be time-restricted.

### **Terrorism: Northern Ireland**

*Asked by Lord Empey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish the full analysis of their consultation Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland's Past, first published on 11 May 2018. [HL391]

**Lord Duncan of Springbank:** A summary of responses to the Northern Ireland Office's consultation 'Addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland's past' was published in July 2019. We will continue to look at the consultation responses to inform the way forward.

### **Tree Preservation Orders**

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Viscount Younger of Leckie on 7 January (HL65), how many Tree Preservation Orders there are in England; and whether they expect that number to increase between 2020 and 2025. [HL530]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** Information on the number of Tree Preservation Orders is not collected or held centrally, and it would be an unreliable indicator of the state of the nation's trees. This Government is,

however, encouraging new tree planting on a massive scale, and expects every local authority to be mindful of the benefits of tree cover to the environment, to place-making, and to physical and mental health, whether or not a particular tree or group of trees requires special protection on amenity grounds.

### **Universities: Standards**

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which organisation, if any, is tasked with ensuring the quality of teaching of overseas campuses of UK universities. [HL477]

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they inspect the overseas campuses of UK universities. [HL478]

**Baroness Berridge:** UK higher education providers with degree-awarding powers are responsible for the academic standards of their awards and for the quality of provision, irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.

The external review of Transnational Education (TNE) has been carried out by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) on behalf of funders, regulators and UK providers since it was established in 1997.

As higher education is a devolved matter, each nation of the UK will deliver quality assurance of TNE according to the process adopted for higher education institutions within its jurisdiction.

Historically, QAA has carried out TNE reviews, which have included a range of activities including overseas campus inspection, scrutiny of partnerships from the UK end including video conferences with providers, and the analysis of data on TNE provision.

The process for carrying out TNE review activity for UK higher education institutions has been the subject of a recent consultation which ended in January 2020, carried out by Universities UK International, Guild HE and QAA.

The consultation responses are currently being considered and the future model of TNE review, including overseas campus inspection, will be decided through this process and the consulting organisations will jointly analyse the responses and develop an action plan.

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