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

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

**Written Statements .....1**

**Written Answers.....3**

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<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development
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<b>Baroness Berridge</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Bethell</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care and Whip
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<b>Baroness Sugg</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development
<b>Lord True</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
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# Written Statements

Monday, 15 June 2020

## Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme

[HLWS288]

**Lord Callanan:** My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Alok Sharma) has today made the following statement:

I am tabling this statement for the benefit of Honourable and Right Honourable Members to bring to their attention the details of changes we have made to the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS).

CLBILS is facilitated by the Government-owned British Business Bank and delivered through its delivery partners. Lenders have until now offered loans from £30,000 up to £50 million to support viable businesses with a turnover of £45 million and above that are affected by the coronavirus outbreak. It is designed to ensure businesses that have been adversely impacted by the coronavirus outbreak can access the finance they need, even if they are too large to access CBILS but unable to access the Bank of England's Covid Corporate Financing Facility. There is no limit on the number and aggregate value of loans that can be made under the scheme.

Despite this, some businesses have not been able to address cashflow issues due to caps on maximum loan sizes permissible under the scheme. Businesses with turnover up to £250 million have been unable to borrow more than £25 million, and no business, regardless of turnover, has been permitted to borrow more than £50 million. On 26 May, we therefore made the following changes to the scheme:

- an increase in the maximum loan size available under CLBILS: loans are now available from £50,000 to £200 million;
- the replacement of the £25 million loan size cap for firms with a turnover of up to £250 million with a new cap on maximum loan size at 25 per cent of turnover for all borrowers through CLBILS; and
- tighter restrictions on company activities for the duration of the facility for loans above £50 million: borrowers cannot make any dividend payments other than those that have already been declared, may not make any share buybacks on dividend payments, may not pay any cash bonuses, or award any pay rises to senior management (including the board) except where they were declared before the CLBILS loan was taken out, are in keeping with similar payments made in the preceding 12 months, and do not have a material negative impact on the borrower's ability to repay the loan.

- for loans up to £50 million, the existing restrictions on dividends continue to apply: only dividends declared before the CLBILS loan was taken out, are in keeping with those made in the previous 12 months, and which would not have a material negative impact on the ability to repay the loan are permitted.

Further detailed technical changes to the scheme, including the approach to restructuring events and new provisions on seniority of CLBILS facilities, are detailed on the British Business Bank's website.

There remains no limit on the number or aggregate value of loans issued under CLBILS. The Government remains subject to a statutory contingent liability arising from CLBILS, and I will be laying a revised Departmental Minute today containing a description of the liability undertaken.

## Prüm: Data Sharing

[HLWS286]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My rt hon Friend the Minister of State for Security (James Brokenshire) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Following a review of the policy of limiting data sharing via Prüm to the DNA profiles of convicted criminals and excluding data which relates to those suspected but not convicted of a crime, it is the Government's intention to begin exchanging suspects' data held in England & Wales and Northern Ireland with connected EU Member States through Prüm. Consultation will continue with the Scottish Government, where policing matters are devolved, in respect of the implications for the implementation of the policy in Scotland.

EU Council Implementing Decision 2019/968 required the UK to "review its policy on the exchange of suspects' profiles" and set a deadline of the 15 June 2020 to notify the Council of that outcome. The Implementing Decision makes clear the Council should "re-evaluate the situation with a view to the continuation or termination of DNA Prüm automated exchange" should the notification not be made. In order to meet that deadline, Sir Tim Barrow will shortly be instructed to notify the European institutions that it is the Government's intention to begin exchanging suspects' data held in England & Wales and Northern Ireland with connected EU Member States through Prüm and that consultation will continue with the Scottish Government.

The UK has been exchanging DNA data via Prüm since July 2019. During that period searches of historic data held on the UK's national DNA database have been made against the data held by the nine EU countries to whom we have connected. Around 12,000 initial hits have been identified relating to UK investigations. EU Member States have received approximately 41,000 initial hits from matching their data with that held by the UK. These hits have already delivered public protection benefits. For example, an unidentified crime stain from a sexual assault

in Glasgow in 2012 was identified as a subject convicted for theft offences in Austria and that investigation is now being progressed in way that would not have been possible were it not for the Prüm exchange.

Sharing suspects' data would mean that more UK data stores would be checked across the EU, supplementing intelligence for investigations, including in relation to serious organised crime, terrorism and cross-border crime. Law enforcement agencies have identified that there are risks and missed opportunities associated with not sharing suspects' data. For example, the inclusion of UK data taken from a person suspected of rape - where the conviction rates are disappointingly low - could allow a match to be made with data held in the EU where that person may have been previously suspected or convicted of a sexual offence.

This exchange involves a two-step process. Step one is to send anonymised biometric data to the connected partner for it to be searched against their database, providing a 'hit/no hit' result. Where there is a match against the anonymised data, step two applies during which the relevant demographic data is shared, i.e. name, and date of birth. A series of stringent checks are carried out by UK law enforcement agencies before any demographic or identifying data is provided and only if the Member State submits a separate request for this data.

The Government has considered the impact of sharing suspects' data as it concerns individual freedoms. However, I am reassured by protections applicable to England and Wales which carefully govern the retention of biometric data, and which confer protections to data from individuals who have not been convicted. The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 creates a strict retention regime which sets out that data must be deleted within a set period, depending on the circumstances under which it was collected. This regime considers factors such as the age of the individual at the time of the offence, the seriousness of the offence, and ensures that suspects' data constitutes only around 2% of the profiles in the DNA and fingerprint databases at any one time.

In addition, a number of safeguards were introduced when Parliament voted in favour of joining Prüm in 2015 have been in place since we started exchanging DNA data. They include: the introduction of an independent oversight board; the requirement that low-quality matches be excluded from Prüm searching; the introduction of an additional step where a 'hit' involves data which relates to a minor; and the exclusion of data held for only a short period in relation to vulnerable persons. These all work together to protect against innocent UK citizens being caught up inappropriately in overseas criminal investigations. The Government considers these safeguards to be working well. Ensuring continued adherence to the UK's scientific standards means that

there is a one in a billion chance that a UK DNA sample would be falsely matched with an overseas criminal investigation. Moreover, the two-step Prüm process means that a law enforcement officer in the UK checks the data against set criteria before providing any identifying data to the requesting state. These checks ensure that the information is lawfully retained and that providing the information would not endanger any UK investigation.

In considering whether to include suspects' data, the Government has carefully balanced the potential public protection benefits against concerns that a UK citizen could be caught up inappropriately in criminal investigations in EU Member States and has considered the effectiveness of the safeguards put in place to prevent such instances occurring. In light of the benefits reaped from exchanging DNA since July 2019 and the way in which the safeguards have been applied, the Government has concluded that the important public safety benefits in exchanging suspects' data outweigh the risks associating with sharing it.

As we made clear in the "UK Approach" published on 27 February, the Government is discussing a possible agreement on law enforcement with the EU, which could include arrangements providing similar capabilities to those currently delivered through the Prüm system.

### **Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee: Second Meeting**

[HLWS287]

**Lord True:** My Rt Hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Michael Gove) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The second meeting of the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee took place by video conference on 12 June 2020. It was co-chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP and Vice President of the European Commission, Maroš Šefčovič.

The Committee was updated on progress of the Specialised Committees and Withdrawal Agreement implementation. The Committee adopted one Decision on correcting errors and omissions in the Withdrawal Agreement relating to financial provisions and citizens' rights.

The UK emphasised its decision not to extend the Transition Period.

The UK also announced that it would introduce new border controls on imports coming into Great Britain from the EU in three stages up until 1 July 2021. The UK stated that it was taking a flexible and pragmatic approach that will give industry extra time to be ready for the new procedures, recognising the impact of COVID-19 on businesses' ability to prepare.

# Written Answers

Monday, 15 June 2020

## Abortion: Drugs

Asked by **Baroness Stroud**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they made of the risk of allowing the at-home administration, following a telephone consultation, of mifepristone and misoprostol for an abortion. [HL5115]

Asked by **Baroness Stroud**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what safeguards are in place to ensure that mifepristone and misoprostol are only prescribed for medical abortions at home where women are less than 10 weeks pregnant; and what plans they have, if any, to reconsider allowing such treatment to be prescribed without seeing a clinician in person. [HL5116]

Asked by **Baroness Stroud**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what factors are considered when determining whether a pregnant woman should see a clinician in person during the COVID-19 outbreak to (1) have an ultrasound to determine the gestational age of the pregnancy, and (2) have two doctors certify the grounds for a termination. [HL5117]

**Lord Bethell:** The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) has issued clinical guidelines for healthcare professionals on *Coronavirus infection and abortion care*. The guidance sets out the circumstances where women should be asked to attend a clinic for an ultra-sound scan, however it states that "most women can determine the gestational age of their pregnancy with reasonable accuracy by last menstrual period (LMP) alone". The RCOG guidance has recently been updated and now includes a decision aid for clinicians to use to help determine if an ultra-sound scan is required.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recommends in their guidance *Abortion Care* that services should consider providing abortion assessments by phone or video call, as evidence shows that community services and telemedicine appointments improve access to abortion services. Abortion providers will discuss possible complications with the woman in the consultation, and women will be provided with information about possible symptoms, including those which would necessitate urgent review. Copies of these guidance are attached.

It is a legal requirement for two doctors to certify that there are grounds for an abortion before treatment can proceed unless an emergency situation has arisen.

The approval to allow women to take both sets of pills for early medical abortion at home is on a temporary basis only and is limited for two years, or until the COVID-19 pandemic is over. It is not permanent.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Abortion Care [abortion-care-pdf-66141773098693.pdf]

Coronavirus infection and abortion care [2020-06-03-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-and-abortion-care.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-02/HL5115>

## Accident and Emergency Departments: Admissions

Asked by **Lord Kennedy of Southwark**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 1 June (HL4699), in what format the information on the number of people reporting to accident and emergency departments with serious non-COVID-19 related conditions is held. [HL5304]

**Lord Bethell:** All systems relating to the attendance of patients at accident and emergency (A&E) commence at the point the patient is booked in. Administrative information is held in the Secondary Uses Service (SUS) and Hospital Episodes Statistics (HES) datasets which includes details of any investigation, diagnosis made, and treatment carried out during the A&E attendance.

Information about the data collected during an attendance at A&E can be found in the NHS Data Model and Dictionary. Once this data is processed it is used to create the HES A&E dataset. Details of the fields and content of this asset can be found in the HES A&E data Dictionary.

The Monthly A&E Attendances and Emergency Admissions collection also collects the total number of attendances in the calendar month for all A&E types, including minor injury units and walk-in centres, and of these, the number discharged, admitted or transferred within four hours of arrival.

## Armed Forces: Cadets

Asked by **Lord Lingfield**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the attainment of Cadet Expansion Programme targets. [HL5386]

**Baroness Goldie:** The Cadet Expansion Programme aimed to have 500 cadet units parading in schools by March 2020. This target was met five months early in November 2019. The Government's ambition is to now grow the number of cadets attending these units to 60,000 by 2024.

COVID-19 caused the closure of all secondary schools and the suspension of all face-to-face cadet activity from 17 March. Restarting activity in school cadet units will be at the Headteachers' discretion, subject to Government

guidance and will be secondary to efforts to return schools to normal service.

Cadet training personnel from the Services will be available to support school cadet units in returning to activity when Headteachers decide the time is right.

*Asked by Lord Lingfield*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support the cadet forces to resume their normal activities as the COVID-19 lockdown is lifted. [HL5387]

**Baroness Goldie:** Face-to-face cadet activity has been suspended since 17 March but a significant effort by adult volunteers to engage cadets in virtual activities has resulted in around 70% of units participating online. This important action is being taken to retain the engagement of young people and adult volunteers and to prepare for when normal cadet activities recommence.

Planning is currently underway across the cadet forces for a gradual step-by-step return to face-to-face cadet activity in line with Government guidance on easing COVID-19 restrictions. The Service cadet organisations are ready to support cadet units returning to normal cadet activity when it is right to do so.

### **Armed Forces: Misconduct**

*Asked by Lord Thomas of Gresford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many claims for damages relating to alleged misconduct by UK Armed Forces personnel serving overseas have been made in each year since 2003; what percentage of these claims have been settled; what was the (1) total, and (2) average, cost of such settlements; and whether any (a) current, or (b) former, member of the UK Armed Forces has been required to contribute to settlement costs. [HL5124]

**Baroness Goldie:** Since 2003, Her Majesty's Government has received in excess of 1,330 claims for damages relating to alleged misconduct by UK Armed Forces personnel serving overseas. These claims arise from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan and the Cyprus Emergency in the late 1950s.

The claims received focus predominately on alleged unlawful detention but many incorporate allegations of mistreatment at the hands of British military personnel. Any payment of compensation in settlement of claims received would have been made by the Ministry of Defence.

We are currently unable to provide with certainty a breakdown of the claims as requested due to the current restrictions and lack of access to data. The process of collating the information will take some time and will require going through historical records. In addition, any information provided would be on a provisional basis as confirmation would require cross-reference with paper records.

*Asked by Lord Thomas of Gresford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their policy on the investigation of claims for damages relating to alleged misconduct by UK Armed Forces personnel serving overseas. [HL5125]

**Baroness Goldie:** All claims received are considered under the principles of common law and dealt with on a strict legal liability case. If, following an investigation, it is found that there is substance to the allegations and there has been negligence on our part, compensation is paid. This pertains to any claim regardless of the location.

### **Aviation: Meetings**

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many meetings have taken place between Treasury ministers and representatives of (1) UK airlines, (2) UK airports, and (3) aerospace manufacturers, in the last three months. [HL5078]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** Treasury Ministers and officials meet with a wide range of stakeholders across sectors as part of ongoing policy development and implementation.

Ministers and officials from the Department for Transport are in regular contact with airlines, airports and unions to understand the impact that COVID-19 is having on the sector and its workers.

### **Biology: International Cooperation**

*Asked by Lord Tunnicliffe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much annual funding the International Biological Security Programme received in (1) 2016, (2) 2017, (3) 2018, (4) 2019, and (5) 2020. [T] [HL5444]

**Baroness Goldie:** The Ministry of Defence has provided annual funding for the International Biological Security Programme in these Financial Years as follows:

2016-17 - £300,000  
2017-18 - £300,000  
2018-19 - £200,000  
2019-20 - £200,000  
2020-21 - £200,000

During this period the International Biological Security Programme has received the following additional funding from cross-Government funds:

2018-19 - £140,000  
2019-20 - £585,000

### **Brexit**

*Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what engagement has taken place with the Welsh Government about plans

for the end of the EU transition period, including with regard to which UK legislation will require Legislative Consent; and what engagement has particularly focussed on the possibility of the UK and the EU failing to reach agreement on future relations. [HL4988]

**Lord True:** The UK Government has been working closely with the devolved administrations throughout negotiations with the EU. Engagement with the devolved administrations continues; the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, other Cabinet Office Ministers and officials have been in regular contact with their counterparts from the devolved administrations to update them on the negotiations.

The UK Government has worked with the Welsh Government to deliver on a wide range of legislative matters, and will continue to seek legislative consent, as appropriate.

The UK Government has noted the request of the Labour-run administration in Wales to extend the transition period but there is no change to the position that the Transition Period will end this year.

### **Buchtar Tabuni**

*Asked by Lord Lexden*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have made representations to the government of Indonesia about the case of Buchtar Tabuni, who has been charged with treason after participating in peaceful protests. [HL5211]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are aware of the arrest, and subsequent charging, of Buchtar Tabuni. We have not raised this specific case with the Indonesian authorities, but we regularly press the Indonesian authorities to address legitimate human rights concerns, including upholding the right of peaceful protest. The UK fully respects the territorial integrity of Indonesia, including Papua. The then Minister for Asia and the Pacific, Heather Wheeler, raised Papua with the Indonesian Deputy Foreign Minister, Mahendra Siregar, during her visit to Jakarta in January 2020.

### **Businesses: Retail Trade**

*Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that businesses in the retail sector have access to finance. [HL4894]

**Lord Callanan:** My Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced a host of measures to help businesses access finance with £330 billion worth of government backed and guaranteed loans including:

A Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) which enables SMEs with a turnover of up to £45 million access vital financial support. The Chancellor has extended CBILS so that all viable businesses affected

by COVID-19, and not just those unable to secure regular commercial financing, will now be eligible should they need finance to keep operating during this difficult time.

A Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) providing finance to mid-sized and larger UK businesses with a group turnover of more than £45 million. We have increased the maximum amount available through CLBILS to a borrower and its group from £50 million to £200 million.

A Bounce Back Loans Scheme which provides loans of up to £50,000 to benefit small businesses with a 100% government-backed guarantee for lenders.

### **Cancer: Medical Treatments**

*Asked by Lord Rennard*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that services and treatment for patients with cancer return to the level provided before the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL5081]

*Asked by Lord Rennard*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to deal with the backlog of cancer treatments that have been delayed or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL5082]

**Lord Bethell:** In response to COVID-19, 21 Cancer Alliances across England now have arrangements in place for cancer hubs. These are hospitals dedicated to cancer care away from hospitals dealing with the virus to keep often vulnerable cancer patients safe.

Essential and urgent cancer treatment has continued throughout the pandemic period, and we are now working on the restoration and recovery of all cancer services.

As part of the restoration of services, NHS services will continue to identify ring-fenced diagnostic and surgical capacity for cancer, as well as delivering treating patients in cancer hubs, to ensure that referrals, diagnostics and treatment are brought back to pre-pandemic levels.

### **Care Homes: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they took in response to the advice from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies following its meeting on 10 March to ensure that "special policy consideration be given to care homes and various types of retirement communities" and that a specific action plan for social care was in place by mid-April.; to what timescale they implemented their response; and what assessment they have made of the length of time taken to respond to that recommendation. [HL4895]

**Lord Bethell:** Since the start of this outbreak we have been working closely with the sector and public health experts to put in place guidance and support for adult social care based on the latest domestic and international

evidence, including that brought together by Public Health England and the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies, and drawing on the insights of care providers

In February, the first guidance for the sector was published. In March we announced £1.6 billion funding for local government and £1.3 billion to go to the National Health Service and social care for discharge support. In April we announced a further £1.6 billion for local government and published our detailed Adult Social Care Action Plan on 15 April. In May we announced an additional £600 million to support care home providers through a new Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund and our care home support package,

Alongside the care home support package, we have also published detailed guidance for home care providers to support them to deliver care safely and effectively during the pandemic. This will be relevant to retirement community settings where care is provided.

### Care Homes: Protective Clothing

*Asked by Lord Warner*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what communication they have had with individual nursing and care homes about emergency sources of supplies of personal protective equipment since 15 March; whether the Care Quality Commission was involved in any such communications; and whether a lack of personal protective equipment for staff during a pandemic is grounds for questioning a care home's Care Quality Commission registration. [[HL4728](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** Every Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered provider received at least 300 face masks in mid-March to meet a spike in demand for personal protective equipment (PPE). Providers can contact their Local Resilience Forum (LRF) if they are unsuccessful in obtaining PPE and can request an emergency PPE pack through the National Supply Disruption Response system if they cannot access PPE through their LRF. The CQC has disseminated guidance and information on PPE from central Government to the health and social care sectors and has engaged social care stakeholders to check understanding and provide clarity. The CQC's Emergency Support Framework also considers issues arising out of a lack of PPE. Any enforcement action, which could impact on a provider's registration, is balanced against wider pressures including obtaining PPE.

*Asked by Lord Beecham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to compensate (1) staff, and (2) residents, of care homes who have been adversely affected by shortages of personal protective equipment. [[HL4908](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** There are currently no plans to compensate staff or residents of care homes.

The Government has published a range of guidance to help care providers reduce the spread of infection. The

guidance sets out advice for those affected on how to minimise risks of transmission, through good infection control practices, and set out some of the steps that local authorities and the National Health Service should take to support care providers through the pandemic. We will continue to update this guidance as is required.

For supplies of personal protective equipment, we encourage all care providers to continue to use their business as usual supply chains. Where this is not possible, we are supporting the existing supplier network by providing stock of PPE to 11 wholesalers for adult social care.

If a provider has been unsuccessful in obtaining PPE through these routes, they can approach their Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to set out their PPE needs. If they are unable to access PPE through their LRF, a provider can raise a request for an emergency pack of PPE through the National Supply Disruption Response system.

We are working with e-commerce experts to launch a Parallel Supply Chain, a new web-based system for procuring PPE which will be managed in line with the published guidance from Public Health England, integrated with NHS Supply Chain's central PPE logistic operations and shipped directly to providers via Royal Mail. Over one million items have been delivered via the portal, which is now rolling out nationally to small residential and domiciliary care providers.

### Children: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which safeguards to protect children were (1) altered, and (2) removed, by the Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. [[HL5335](#)]

**Baroness Berridge:** The safety of vulnerable children remains paramount for the government during the COVID-19 outbreak which is why the vast majority of statutory duties remain unchanged. The duties to our most vulnerable children that are set out in primary legislation remain in place and we have made no changes to these.

The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 allow some temporary and limited flexibility during the COVID-19 outbreak, but these should only be used when absolutely necessary with oversight by senior management and decisions recorded. We expect local authorities and providers to comply with the original statutory duties where possible.

The amendments do not alter the overarching primary legislative responsibilities that local authorities have towards protecting children from significant harm and promoting their welfare. Some regulations have been temporarily amended, for example, to allow for face-to-face visits to take place remotely for use when absolutely necessary. However, local authorities must continue to act in the best interest of each child at all times.

## Children: Social Services

Asked by **Baroness Eaton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by Lord Agnew of Oulton on 12 February (HLWS103), when they will publish (1) the terms of reference for the review of children's social care, (2) the name of the chair of the review, and (3) the date on which the review will begin. [HL4959]

**Baroness Berridge:** The urgent local and national response to COVID-19 has delayed launching the Care Review. The government is committed to undertaking the review at the earliest opportunity. The review will be bold, broad and independently led, taking a fundamental look across children's social care, with the aim of better supporting, protecting and improving the outcomes of vulnerable children and young people.

## Colombia: Security

Asked by **Baroness Coussins**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Colombia about the safety and security of residents in Rio Quinto. [HL4941]

**Baroness Sugg:** We are aware of reports of violence by illegal armed groups in the Rio Quito. We remain extremely concerned about the continued presence of illegal armed groups in Colombia, and the impact their activity has on local people - even more so at this challenging time.

We regularly raise our concerns about these issues with the Colombian Government and in multilateral fora. Most recently, our Permanent Representative to the United Nations spoke on this at the UN Security Council on 14 April, and we consistently press the Colombian Government to focus on extending the rule of law to all parts of the country.

Colombia has made significant progress in its efforts to end the influence of such groups, and we remain steadfast in our support of the Colombian authorities as they work towards sustainable peace.

## Colombia: Surveillance

Asked by **Baroness Coussins**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of the illegal collation of secret files on civil society organisations, including human rights defenders, the press and others in Colombia. [HL4936]

**Baroness Sugg:** We are aware of allegations that Colombian state actors have been illegally gathering surveillance on civil society organisations. We expect state authorities to comply fully with their human rights obligations, and our Embassy in Bogotá regularly raises human rights issues. The United Kingdom is committed

to protecting and promoting human rights in Colombia, which is a Human Rights Priority Country.

We work with the Colombian Government, civil society and multilateral partners to support full compliance with human rights obligations in Colombia. Neither the UN nor the IACHR has invited us to support the creation of a commission.

The British Government undertakes extensive risk assessments when designing projects in Colombia and deciding which to fund, including any potential negative impact on human rights. This includes the overseas security and justice assistance (OSJA) process, which is intended to ensure any United Kingdom projects meet our human rights obligations and our values. We continually monitor the effects of our programme work in consultation with colleagues working in Colombia, and make thorough assessments of the impact of our projects.

Asked by **Baroness Coussins**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their Embassy in Colombia will monitor investigations into the alleged collation of secret files on civil society organisations there. [HL4937]

Asked by **Baroness Coussins**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any UK funding initiatives in Colombia are being used to support intelligence gathering activities there against civil society organisations. [HL4938]

Asked by **Baroness Coussins**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plan to support the creation of an international commission including the participation of the UN and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, to support and oversee investigations into alleged illegal intelligence gathering and misuse by Colombian state institutions. [HL4939]

**Baroness Sugg:** We are aware of allegations that Colombian state actors have been illegally gathering surveillance on civil society organisations. We expect state authorities to comply fully with their human rights obligations, and our Embassy in Bogotá regularly raises human rights issues. The United Kingdom is committed to protecting and promoting human rights in Colombia, which is a Human Rights Priority Country.

We work with the Colombian Government, civil society and multilateral partners to support full compliance with human rights obligations in Colombia. Neither the UN nor the IACHR has invited us to support the creation of a commission.

The British Government undertakes extensive risk assessments when designing projects in Colombia and deciding which to fund, including any potential negative impact on human rights. This includes the overseas security and justice assistance (OSJA) process, which is intended to ensure any United Kingdom projects meet our human rights obligations and our values. We continually

monitor the effects of our programme work in consultation with colleagues working in Colombia, and make thorough assessments of the impact of our projects.

### Colombia: Violence

*Asked by Baroness Coussins*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps the British Embassy in Bogota is taking to monitor the progress of the peace process with regard to the dismantling of illegal neo-paramilitary groups in the regions of Chocó and Urabá in Colombia; and what support, if any, they are providing to the National Commission for Security Guarantees tasked with that responsibility. [HL5171]

*Asked by Baroness Coussins*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) reports of infighting between illegal armed groups attributed to illegal mining activity in Rio Quito, Chocó, Colombia, and (2) the impact of such infighting on the lives of the local population and the environment. [HL5173]

**Baroness Sugg:** We remain extremely concerned about the continued presence of illegal armed groups in Colombia, and the impact their competition for control of illicit economies has on local people and environments, particularly during this challenging time. The UK Embassy in Bogota is closely monitoring the situation.

President Duque's Government has publicly committed to implementing the Peace Accords of 2016 in their entirety, and we remain steadfast in our support of the Colombian authorities - including the National Security Guarantees Commission - as they seek to ensure sustainable peace in Colombia. We are proud to be the penholder on the issue at the United Nations Security Council - most recently, our Permanent Representative to the United Nations spoke on presence of illegal armed groups in Colombia at the UN Security Council on 14 April.

We have committed almost £53 million over 5 years through the United Kingdom Conflict Stability and Security Fund for Colombia to support the implementation of the peace process, including across conflict-affected regions such as Chocó and Uruba. We regularly raise this with the Colombian authorities.

Furthermore, HMG provides overseas development assistance (ODA) to climate change initiatives in the region of Chocó in Colombia through two programmes delivered through the UK's International Climate Finance (ICF), UK Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions (UK PACT) and Partnerships for Forests (P4F). These projects aim to tackle deforestation in Colombia by fostering sustainable alternative livelihoods and the development of the bioeconomy in order to reduce CO2 emissions.

### Commonwealth Development Corporation: Coronavirus

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with representatives of the Commonwealth Development Corporation on adapting its investments and programmes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL5090]

**Baroness Sugg:** DFID ministers and officials are in frequent discussions with CDC's Chair and Executive Leadership Team as the institution delivers its response to the COVID-19 crisis. Most recently, both the Secretary of State and the Minister for Africa held a productive discussion on 6 May 2020 with the CEO and Chair of CDC. As a long-term investor focussed on delivering development impact, CDC is taking a targeted response that preserves, strengthens and helps rebuild economies across Africa and South Asia to mitigate the economic and health impacts of COVID-19. As well as providing additional capital to help firms weather the crisis and meet immediate liquidity needs, CDC has also launched an Emergency Technical Assistance Facility and published advice on its website (<https://www.cdcgroup.com/covid-19>) on measures that companies should take to protect the health and safety of employees and customers and protect jobs.

### Contact Tracing: Computer Software

*Asked by Lord Strasburger*

To ask Her Majesty's Government to what extent they retain ownership of any intellectual property related to the development of the NHSX contact tracing app. [HL5245]

**Lord Bethell:** The intellectual property associated with the National Health Service COVID-19 app is retained by the Department. In order to promote transparency, the source code for the app is published under version 3.0 of the Open Government Licence. This licence allows NHSX to make the code Open Source whilst retaining its intellectual property rights related to the development of the app.

### Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to sign the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003; and if not, why not. [HL5059]

**Baroness Barran:** The Government fully recognises the contribution that the UK's crafts, oral traditions and wider intangible cultural heritage make to the country's cultural life. We encourage communities and cultural practitioners to celebrate these practices and to continue

them for future generations. However, we have not seen any compelling business case for ratifying the UNESCO Convention, nor is it clear that the benefits of doing so would outweigh the costs. It is essential that we carefully prioritise resources towards those UNESCO conventions which will have the most impact on the safeguarding of heritage, such as the 1972 World Heritage Convention and 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. We therefore have no intention at present of ratifying the Intangible Heritage Convention, but will continue to keep the matter under review.

### **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Maternity Leave**

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether people on maternity leave beyond the period of 39 weeks' statutory maternity pay are able to return to work before the intended end of their leave and then be furloughed; if so, whether they would need to give eight weeks' notice to return to work early in order to qualify for furlough arrangements; and if not; what assessment they have made of the disparity in circumstances for these women compared to those still in receipt of maternity pay who have to give eight weeks' notice before returning to work in order to be furloughed. [HL5009]

**Lord Callanan:** Employed mothers are required to take at least two weeks Statutory Maternity Leave (or four weeks of they are a factory worker) immediately after giving birth. Generally speaking, if an employed mother wishes to return to work before the end of her Maternity Leave (which is 52 weeks), she is required to give at least 8 weeks' notice of the date that she intends to return to work, irrespective of whether she is on paid or unpaid Maternity Leave. However, the employer can agree to the employee returning on shorter or no notice.

### **Coronavirus: Clinical Trials**

*Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to ensure that semantic and geographical analysis of COVID-19 trials does not impact the (1) unity, and (2) informativeness, of the clinical research landscape. [HL5021]

**Lord Bethell:** The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), commissioned by the Department, conducts regular analyses of the COVID-19 and other clinical trials, including geographical analysis. This analysis enables NIHR to ensure patients and members of the public from all parts of England and in all relevant sites have access to research. In addition, it enables work to ensure a better matching of clinical trials with disease prevalence, which benefits both patients affected and researchers. The NIHR Clinical Research Network, using

its 15 regional centres across the country, ensures that there is a balance between the different needs of localities based on local knowledge of disease burden and a coordinated response across England.

### **Coronavirus: Disease Control**

*Asked by Baroness Coussins*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have updated the translated COVID-19 guidance to reference the addition of the loss of taste and smell to the official symptoms list; and if so, what steps they are taking to raise awareness of this update in relevant communities. [HL4940]

**Lord Bethell:** Following the change to the COVID-19 case definition, guidance documents were updated to include the symptom of a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia). These are provided in the English language, published in an online only format on GOV.UK.

Several guidance documents were updated to include the new symptom. A limited number of original guidance documents were translated into languages other than English. Translated versions of the updated guidance have not been produced as at 5 June 2020. Public Health England is currently reviewing the requirements for translation of new guidance documents and incorporating other updates.

*Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reported comments by the First Minister of Wales that there had not been a "regular rhythm" to engagement between the UK Government and the devolved administrations in respect of proposals to ease the COVID-19 lockdown. [HL4986]

**Lord True:** The UK Government is working constructively with the devolved administrations to keep the whole of the UK safe.

There have been frequent discussions between UK Government ministers and officials and their counterparts in devolved administrations. This includes through COBR and the Cabinet Committee structure established to deal with the health, economic, public sector and international impacts of the Covid-19 outbreak on behalf of the whole of the UK. We will continue positive engagement with the Devolved Administrations.

### **Coronavirus: Mental Health**

*Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to assess the impact of the easing of the lockdown on 1 June on the mental health and loneliness of those designated clinically vulnerable. [HL5265]

**Lord Bethell:** We are working with the National Health Service and Public Health England, service users,

academics and the voluntary sector to gather evidence and assess the potential longer-term mental health impacts of COVID-19 and plan for how to support the public's mental health and wellbeing throughout the 'recovery' phase.

At each review point for the social distancing measures, we will also review the risks for the clinically vulnerable and the clinically extremely vulnerable and assess whether the shielding period needs to be extended or whether it is possible for the shielding guidance to be eased further. We will base our assessment on clinical advice from our medical experts, and the best data available about the prevalence of COVID-19 in the community. The Government has also formed a new 'Tackling Loneliness Network' of charities, businesses and public figures to help connect groups at risk of isolation and bring together data and insights to better understand the impacts of COVID-19 on loneliness

### Coronavirus: Older People and Pregnancy

*Asked by Baroness Altmann*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the classification of (1) all people aged over 70, and (2) all pregnant women, as 'clinically vulnerable' to COVID-19, whether (a) employers are entitled to deny such people the same chance to work as others, regardless of their health, and (b) voluntary organisations are entitled to ban such people from volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic. [T] [HL5341]

**Lord Callanan:** It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of their age or because of being pregnant or on maternity leave.

Under Health and Safety legislation, employers have a legal responsibility to protect workers and others from risk to their health and safety. They should do everything reasonably practicable to minimise the risks. Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness, have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role.

If clinically vulnerable individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on site roles, enabling them to stay 2m away from others. The Health and Safety risk assessment should reflect this.

The Health and Safety Executive has guidance for business on how to manage risk and risk assessment at work along with specific advice to help control the risk of coronavirus in workplaces.

### Coronavirus: Protective Clothing

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they estimate they will have procured sufficient stocks of

personal protection equipment to meet (1) current, and (2) anticipated future, demand. [HL4718]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government is working around the clock to ensure we have the personal protective equipment (PPE) we need. Since the start of the outbreak, we have delivered over one billion items of PPE.

We have set up a cross-Government PPE sourcing unit, now staffed by over 400 people, to secure new supply lines from across the world and published rigorous standards against which we will buy. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's teams across the world, and in China specifically, have ensured local sources are able to deliver the products required. The Department for International Trade has also stood up a global network to coordinate PPE sourcing.

We have appointed Lord Deighton, formerly Chief Executive of London 2012 Olympics, to lead on our domestic efforts to increase the supply of PPE. The Department is currently in contact with over 350 potential United Kingdom manufacturers. We are also rapidly progressing over 14,500 offers from suppliers and ensuring they meet the safety and quality standards that National Health Service staff need, as well as prioritising offers of larger volumes.

We have contracted with over 100 new suppliers able to deliver at the scale and pace the UK requires.

### Coronavirus: Screening

*Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to reach the goal of 100,000 tests a day for COVID-19. [HL3542]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government had set a demanding objective of conducting 100,000 tests per day by the end of April 2020. This objective was met, with 122,347 tests conducted on 30 April.

*Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the results of the COVID-19 swab tests are reported by the date when the tests are taken; and if not, why not. [HL3780]

**Lord Bethell:** Results for COVID-19 swab tests are reported to those taking them in the order they are processed, which will be in the order of receipt by the laboratory.

Once a swab sample is taken as part of COVID-19 testing, it must be sent to a laboratory to be processed. We aim to make results for polymerase chain reaction tests available within 48 hours of the test being undertaken. In some cases results may take a little longer to arrive.

*Asked by Lord Rosser*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) COVID-19 home testing kits, and (2) how many results from such kits, were sent out on each day since 28 April. [T] [HL3880]

**Lord Bethell:** We introduced home testing at the end of April to make testing more accessible to individuals. Between 28 April – 5 May over 92,000 home tests were dispatched to users. In that same time period, nearly 21,000 test samples were processed by our labs. Quite rightly, tests not within the control of the programme (home test kits and satellite test kits deliveries) are counted on dispatch. Tests that remain within the control of the programme throughout (for example, Regional Testing Sites and Mobile Testing Units) are counted when they are processed through our labs.

*Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of posted COVID-19 tests for each day of distribution have been successfully returned to an authorised laboratory for evaluation. [HL3889]

**Lord Bethell:** Home testing has been expanded over several weeks from the initial piloting phase, through to the large-scale ramp up where thousands of home tests are available on a daily basis. As at 8 May over 134,000 home tests have been dispatched and more than 105,000 completed samples have been collected and this number increases daily.

### Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre

*Asked by Lord Touhig*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many officials from the Ministry of Defence were members of the Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre in (1) 2018, (2) 2019, and (3) 2020. [HL5440]

**Baroness Goldie:** The following number of Ministry of Defence officials were members of the Counter Proliferation & Arms Control Centre in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

2018: 9  
2019: 10  
2020: 10

### Cybercrime: China

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect Parliamentarians who criticise the government of China from cyber-attacks by the People's Liberation Army Cyber Warfare units, otherwise known as PLA Unit 61398. [HL5162]

**Lord True:** The UK is clear that it will not tolerate malicious cyber activity and will react robustly and proportionately to the threat. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) and the Centre for the Protection of Critical National Infrastructure (CPNI) provide advice and guidance for members of both Houses of Parliament. This guidance sets out protective measures Members, Peers and their offices can take to protect themselves

from a range of threats and threat actors, including espionage and cyber attacks. All of us in public life have a responsibility to remain vigilant and report intimidating or suspicious behaviour wherever it occurs.

### Disability and Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Lingfield*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they have been monitoring the effectiveness of measures set out in the guidance on helping children with special educational needs and disabilities to continue their education during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL5212]

**Baroness Berridge:** The government is committed to supporting local authorities and their partners to ensure children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) continue their education during the COVID-19 outbreak.

We have published a range of guidance for education settings, local authorities, health commissioning bodies and families, and are monitoring the effectiveness of measures through:

- carrying out briefings with all local authorities through regional events, setting out the government expectations regarding meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND (these briefings were also attended by a number of parent and carer representatives and health bodies);
- undertaking structured conversations with SEND leaders in all local authorities to probe the detail of their response to the measures in the guidance;
- drawing on wider feedback from our team of professional SEND advisers, delivery support partners and a range of stakeholders, including representative bodies for local authorities and parents of children with SEND, and several specialist SEND organisations; and
- through Regional Education and Children's Teams, the department is bringing together up-to-date intelligence to provide ongoing support to local authorities to deliver their responsibilities, working with Ofsted to bring all support into one coherent offer to best support them in their response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

We will continue to work with education settings, local authorities, health commissioning bodies and a range of stakeholders to keep the effectiveness of measures in our guidance under close review.

### Driving Tests: Coronavirus

*Asked by Baroness Thomas of Winchester*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their advice to vulnerable people to avoid the use of public transport during the COVID-19 pandemic, when driving tests and assessments will be permitted to resume. [T] [HL5427]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) is working closely with the Department for Transport to prepare for a safe return to testing. It will announce details of resumption in due course.

The DVSA has produced detailed standard operating procedures, which contains advice to help ensure the safety of staff and customers before, during and after the practical driving test.

Before practical driving tests are reintroduced, the DVSA will inform the driver training industry. This will help candidates prepare and reach the standard of driving needed to pass their test.

### Economic Situation

*Asked by Lord Truscott*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the combined economic cost to the UK of Brexit and COVID-19. [HL5134]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** HM Treasury does not produce forecasts of the economy or public finances.

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) is responsible for producing forecasts of the economy and public finances. Their forecasts incorporate their assessment of the economic and fiscal impact of EU exit.

On 14 April the OBR published a reference scenario assessing the potential impact of coronavirus. In this scenario GDP is assumed to fall by 35 per cent in the second quarter of 2020 before recovering in subsequent quarters. The OBR note that the Government's policy response should help limit the long-term damage to the economy and public finances.

The economic impact of our relationship with the EU is subject to thriving public debate amongst analysts. The specifics of EU exit depend on the outcome of detailed negotiations. We will continue to keep Parliament informed with appropriate analysis at appropriate times in a way that does not impede our ability to strike the best deal for the UK.

### Economic Situation: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Moonie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the impact of a decrease in GDP as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic on (1) legislative, and (2) manifesto, commitments for expenditure as a percentage of GDP. [HL5048]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The UK's fiscal council, the Office of Budget Responsibility, makes forecasts for GDP. They have published a coronavirus reference scenario, which they continue to develop and update, which can be found on the Office for Budget Responsibility's website. In their public commentary the Office for Budget Responsibility have said that the fiscal and monetary support measures of the UK authorities

“help to limit the adverse impact on potential output and thus future GDP once the crisis has passed”.

The government will take stock of the impact of the covid-19 public health and economic emergency on the forecast for the economy and public finances through the Budget process. Further details of spending plans will be set out in due course, including through a Spending Review later this year.

### Economic Situation: Isles of Scilly

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the economic resilience of the Isles of Scilly. [HL5060]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** We recognise that every region and community, including the Isles of Scilly, will be feeling the impacts of this crisis and we are working to monitor the impact of Covid-19 on local communities across the United Kingdom.

The Government has provided an unprecedented national package of support; supporting businesses, protecting jobs, and providing our public services with the resources they need to cope with the current economic emergency. These measures are helping the most vulnerable people and business across all parts of the country.

We are working closely with local areas to make sure that individuals and businesses in all regions are directed to the right support during this difficult period.

### Exercise Cygnus

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they took, following the conclusion of Exercise Cygnus, to review the contribution of the social care sector during the COBR meetings or in discussions in the lead up to those meetings. [HL4633]

**Lord Bethell:** Exercise Cygnus was a national level pandemic influenza exercise involving Ministers and officials from the Department of Health and Social Care; other Government departments; devolved administrations; NHS England; Public Health England and local agencies.

As is usual for emergency preparedness exercises, participants were debriefed and outcomes evaluated at the conclusion of the exercise. The lessons identified from Exercise Cygnus continue to be considered by the Government and a range of stakeholders, including expert advisory groups and local emergency planners. We have drawn on all the levers that the Government has to help social care providers look after the people in their care.

### Football: Equality

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to promote diversity in football. [HL5426]

**Baroness Barran:** It is vital that diversity is promoted in all levels of sport and the Government is committed to doing so.

The Government, through Sport England, is investing £2 million per year into the FA to support their work in ensuring the coaching workforce in football is more representative of wider society. This includes providing bursaries to develop coaching abilities from the grassroots to the elite levels of the game.

Government's sport and physical activity strategy 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation' has diversity and inclusion at its heart. The Government remains supportive of a number of anti-racism initiatives that work with English football from grassroots to the elite, which include Show Racism the Red Card and Kick it Out.

The Government also supports the steps the football authorities (the FA, the Premier League and the English Football League) have taken during the current season to combat discrimination. This included actions targeted at and around football grounds such as, improving reporting systems, providing better training and support for referees and stewards; and improving the quality of CCTV around stadia.

### Free School Meals: Voucher Schemes

*Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Berridge on 21 May (HL4173), when they intend to add supermarkets owned by the Co-op to the list of those participating in the COVID-19 national voucher scheme for children eligible for free school meals. [HL5261]

**Baroness Berridge:** The vouchers for free school meals can currently be spent in a variety of supermarkets. Initially, the scheme included supermarkets that already have e-gift card arrangements in place with our supplier: Asda, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Morrisons, Marks & Spencer and Waitrose. On Monday 27 April, we added Aldi to this list and on Wednesday 29 April, we added McColl's. We have been working with other supermarkets to encourage them to join. Any additional supermarkets would need to have the right infrastructure to deliver e-gift cards across their network of stores.

Schools are best placed to make decisions about the most appropriate free school meal arrangements for eligible pupils during this period. In the first instance, we are asking schools to speak to their catering teams and food suppliers about preparing meals or food parcels that could be collected by or delivered to families that are not in attendance. Where this is not possible, schools can use the national voucher scheme or make alternative voucher arrangements locally. Our guidance for schools sets out that they can be reimbursed for costs incurred where the national voucher scheme is not suitable for their families, and this can include alternative voucher arrangements

with supermarkets that are not part of the national voucher scheme.

We thank all supermarkets for their hard work during these challenging times.

These are rapidly developing circumstances. We continue to keep the situation under review and will keep Parliament updated accordingly.

### Gender: Equality

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support women working in communities to tackle the root causes of gender inequality. [HL5237]

**Baroness Berridge:** My officials regularly meet with the women's sector and continue to do so. In the present circumstances the government is providing extra funding to frontline charities including those which support women, and my officials have been alerting and encouraging grassroots women's charities to apply for grant funding which has been made available through the National Lottery Community Fund.

### Health and Social Services: Migrant Workers

*Asked by Lord Cashman*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they estimate that their proposals to abolish the Immigration Health Surcharge currently paid by care workers and NHS staff will be implemented. [HL4927]

**Lord Bethell:** Work by Department of Health and Social Care and Home Office officials is now underway on how to implement the change, and further details will be announced shortly.

### Health Services: EU Countries

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) what is their policy on the negotiation of reciprocal healthcare agreements with (a) the European Union and (b) each member country of the European Union, and (2) what progress has been made in each case. [HL5300]

**Lord Bethell:** The United Kingdom Government is currently negotiating with the European Union Commission on future reciprocal healthcare arrangements with the European Union as part of the negotiating group on 'mobility and social security coordination'. Negotiating rounds have been constructive. The Government published *The Future Relationship with the EU: The UK's Approach to Negotiations* in February 2020 and the draft legal text of a social security agreement, including reciprocal healthcare, in May 2020. A copy is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Draft legal text May 2020 [DRAFT Social Security Coordination Agreement May 2020.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-04/HL5300>

## Higher Education: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the higher education sector concerning the next academic year, in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL4673]

**Baroness Berridge:** The department engages regularly with representative bodies covering all types of higher education provider, encompassing all locations, as well as receiving representations in person and by correspondence from individual providers on a range of issues including the next academic year 2020-21.

The government announced a package of measures in May to protect students and the higher education sector from the impact of COVID-19. This has been discussed extensively with the sector, including through ministerial roundtables and letters. The package included a range of measures for next academic year. To ensure a fair, structured distribution of students across providers, temporary student number controls have been put in place for full-time, undergraduate domestic and EU students for academic year 2020/21 (with certain specific exemptions). The Government has also pulled forward tuition fee payments, expected to be worth £2.6 billion, for providers so that they receive more cash in the first term of academic year 2020/21. Through the proposals from the government and the sector, students will also benefit from a new proactive and personalised UCAS Clearing process this summer.

The government is working with higher education (HE) providers to make sure all reasonable efforts are being made to enable students to continue their studies to the best of their abilities this academic year and next.

Whilst recognising universities are autonomous institutions, we will shortly publish guidance to support them to make informed decisions on making university buildings and campuses accessible again, while minimising risks to students and staff.

Furthermore, the HE sector is already working hard to prepare learning materials for the autumn term. This includes the government working with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, professional bodies and the Office for Students (OfS), the higher education regulator in England, to ensure students continue to leave university with qualifications that have real value. The OfS has published guidance for registered providers about how the OfS will approach the regulation of quality and standards during the COVID-19 outbreak. This guidance is clear that standards must be maintained - further details are available at:

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/guidance-for-providers-about-quality-and-standards-during-coronavirus-pandemic/>. Actions that providers are taking now may continue to be required in the 2020- 21 academic year if the disruption as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak is prolonged.

## Homelessness: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to extend their contracts with hotels and bed and breakfasts to offer temporary accommodation for those who require it until the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL5481]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Nearly 15,000 vulnerable people have been housed in emergency accommodation, including hotels, since the COVID-19 emergency began. This includes people coming in directly from the streets, people previously housed in shared night shelters and people who have become vulnerable to rough sleeping during the pandemic.

The Government asked Dame Louise Casey to spearhead a specialist taskforce to lead the next phase of the Government's support for rough sleepers during the pandemic. The taskforce will work hand-in-hand with councils across the country on plans to ensure rough sleepers can move into long-term, safe accommodation once the immediate crisis is over – ensuring as few people as possible return to life on the streets.

We announced on 24 May radical plans to provide thousands of long-term, safe homes for vulnerable rough sleepers taken off the streets during this pandemic. This ambitious commitment will be backed by £160 million this year through accelerating plans for the £381 million announced for rough sleeping services at Budget, bringing the total to £433 million over the lifetime of this parliament. This funding will ensure that 6,000 new housing units will be put into the system, with 3,300 units of this accommodation becoming available in the next 12 months.

We are working intensively with local authorities to design plans for next steps which includes consideration of the role of hotels. We continue to explore this and are working with national organisations to do so, alongside councils.

## Hong Kong: Human Rights

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the briefing by Amnesty International Human rights in Hong Kong - May 2020. [HL4900]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have taken note of the briefing by Amnesty International on Human Rights in Hong Kong published in May and the issues that it raises.

We remain seriously concerned about the situation in Hong Kong and are fully committed to upholding Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and rights and freedoms, which are underpinned by the Joint Declaration of 1984 and the "One Country, Two Systems" framework set out in the Hong Kong Basic Law.

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 2 June (HL Deb, cols 1291–5), what plans they have to give further consideration to the proposal of seven former Foreign Secretaries, calling for the establishment of an international contact group on Hong Kong and the proposal of Lord Patten of Barnes for the appointment of UN human rights coordinators to monitor human rights and breaches of the Joint Sino-British Declaration in Hong Kong. [HL5151]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Foreign Secretary is engaging actively with a range of international partners to explain our position and impress on them the gravity of situation. We want to build up a groundswell of those who share our commitment to international law. We believe that is the most effective means of getting China to live up to its obligations and responsibilities as a leading member of the international community. We will also work within international institutions such as the UN Human Rights Council to ensure that China upholds the commitments they made as co-signatory to the Joint Declaration. The UK and the US raised the issue at the UN Security Council on 28 May.

### Hong Kong: National Security

*Asked by Lord Pendry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the proposals by the government of China to introduce new national security legislation in Hong Kong, what steps they are taking with (1) the United Nations, and (2) the governments of other democratic countries, to ensure that the Joint Sino-British Declaration is upheld. [HL5067]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Foreign Secretary is engaging actively with a range of international partners to explain our position and impress on them the gravity of situation. We want to build up a groundswell of those who share our commitment to international law. We believe that is the most effective means of getting China to live up to its obligations and responsibilities as a leading member of the international community. We will also work within international institutions such as the UN Human Rights Council to ensure that China upholds the commitments they made as co-signatory to the Joint Declaration. The UK and the US raised the issue at the UN Security Council on 28 May.

*Asked by Lord Truscott*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to coordinate an international response to

support the rights of Hong Kong citizens in response to China's planned security law for Hong Kong. [HL5138]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Foreign Secretary is engaging actively with a range of international partners to explain our position and impress on them the gravity of situation. We want to build up a groundswell of those who share our commitment to international law. We believe that is the most effective means of getting China to live up to its obligations and responsibilities as a leading member of the international community. We will also work within international institutions such as the UN Human Rights Council to ensure that China upholds the commitments they made as co-signatory to the Joint Declaration. The UK and the US raised the issue at the UN Security Council on 28 May.

### Hong Kong: Politics and Government

*Asked by Lord Willoughby de Broke*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ascertain the safety of Martin Lee and other supporters of democracy in Hong Kong arrested in April. [HL5149]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are concerned by the arrests of Martin Lee and other pro-democracy figures in Hong Kong. We are following these cases closely. Senior Officials have raised our concern about the arrests with the authorities in Hong Kong, Beijing and with the Chinese Embassy in London. We will continue to make our views clear publicly and privately.

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made on the formation of an international alliance to coordinate a joint response to the China-Hong Kong crisis, in order to protect the freedoms guaranteed by the Basic Law and the commitment to the one country, two systems principle. [HL5308]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Foreign Secretary is engaging actively with a range of international partners to explain our position and impress on them the gravity of situation. We want to build up a groundswell of those who share our commitment to international law. We believe that is the most effective means of getting China to live up to its obligations and responsibilities as a leading member of the international community. We will also work within international institutions such as the UN Human Rights Council to ensure that China upholds the commitments they made as co-signatory to the Joint Declaration. The UK and the US raised the issue at the UN Security Council on 28 May.

### Hospital Beds: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Warner*

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) what instructions were given to NHS acute hospital trusts on, or around, 15 March about discharging patients to make

beds available for COVID-19 patients; (2) how many beds in total the NHS in England was trying to make available; (3) which organisation issued the instructions; (4) following these instructions, (a) what proportion of patients were discharged to nursing or care homes, and (b) what proportion of those patients were tested for COVID-19 before discharge; and (5) what advance information and guidance was given to care homes about this mass discharge from acute hospitals. [HL4726]

**Lord Bethell:** On 19 March 2020, the Department and the National Health Service co-published *COVID-19 Hospital Discharge Service Requirements*, setting out guidance on supporting the safe discharge of patients who no longer need acute care. A copy of this guidance is attached.

The guidance also sets out the steps that care providers should be taking and we provided £1.3 billion to support the process. We have provided advice to care homes throughout the pandemic in response to the latest conditions and emerging evidence.

The COVID-19 hospital discharge service requirements were expected to help free up 15,000 hospital beds across England.

On 2 June, NHS England published an analysis on discharges to care homes. This data was not previously available. The data showed that the proportion of people discharged to care homes, nursing homes and hospices between 15 March and 16 April was 2.8%.

A small number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 may be discharged from the NHS within the 14-day period from the onset of COVID-19 symptoms and also require ongoing social care. If a care home provider does not feel they can provide the appropriate care for these individuals, the individual's local authority should secure alternative appropriate accommodation and care for the remainder of the required isolation period.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

COVID19 Hospital Discharge Service Requirements [COVID-19\_hospital\_discharge\_service\_requirements.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-19/HL4726>

## Housing: Construction

Asked by **Baroness Thornhill**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they make any distinction between (1) social housing, and (2) affordable housing, when collating statistics on the number of homes built exclusively for rental. [HL5428]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Yes, the department makes this distinction. Information on affordable housing by tenure is publicly available, including for social rent and affordable rent, for both starts on site and completions.

This information can be found (attached) here <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

live tables on affordable housing [200615 Live\_Table\_1000 (3) - HL5428.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-08/HL5428>

## Leisure: Coronavirus

Asked by **Baroness Doocey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what targeted support they are making available to leisure centres, museums, parks and libraries both during and beyond the lockdown. [HL4253]

**Baroness Barran:** Organisations in the leisure and recreation sector have benefitted from the unprecedented Government support for business and workers. We know that the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, in particular, has been a lifeline for these sectors, protecting jobs while organisations are closed.

In general, it is expected that publicly funded bodies such as leisure centres and parks, including companies (public enterprises), will not need to access the various different government support schemes. Other organisations such as charitable libraries, leisure centres, and museums, may be able to benefit from a range of support measures including: A 12-month business rates holiday for all eligible retail, leisure and hospitality businesses in England; the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund; the Small Business Grant Fund, which provides £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief; the Discretionary Grant Fund for Local Authorities in England to make grants payments to businesses not eligible for the above schemes; the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme; VAT deferral for up to 12 months; the Time To Pay scheme; and protection for commercial leaseholders against automatic forfeiture for non-payment until June 30, 2020.

There is also sector-specific support. For example, museums have had access to over £200 million of support from Arts Council England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and Historic England.

The Government continues to monitor the impact of these and other measures.

## Mayflower: Anniversaries

Asked by **Lord Randall of Uxbridge**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower sailing from England to Cape Cod. [HL5404]

**Baroness Barran:** We welcome events which celebrate our rich global heritage, and the 400th anniversary celebrations of the Mayflower setting sail to the United States offers a unique opportunity to do this.

I am pleased that we have provided significant funding to the Mayflower 400 organisers, who are responsible for delivering the commemorations. This is demonstrated by the £750,000 of funding my Department has provided through VisitEngland, which will help to ensure a strong legacy for the commemorations across the UK and globally.

In 2015, DCMS provided £35,000 to invest in the Mayflower museum. Last year, we also awarded Plymouth £3.5m through the Cultural Development Fund - part of which will support digital product development for Mayflower's programme.

### Medical Equipment: Imports

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to expedite the import of essential medical products during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL5478]

**Lord Grimstone of Boscobel:** HM Government is working around the clock to ensure the NHS and our social care workers have the medical equipment to do their critical frontline work.

To achieve this, a cross-government sourcing effort has been undertaken to secure new supply lines of medical products from across the world.

As a result of the Department of International Trade's work, purchase orders have now been raised by the Department for Health and Social Care for many billions of items globally from new suppliers including gloves, masks, and aprons.

### Medical Records: Data Protection

*Asked by Lord Strasburger*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether NHS England or NHSX is liaising with the Intellectual Property Office and, if so, whether those discussions will result in publication of patent applications which flow from access to the COVID-19 datastore under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015. [HL5330]

**Lord Bethell:** NHS England and NHSX are not currently liaising with the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) on the publication of patent applications resulting from access to the NHS COVID-19 Data Store under the Re-use of Public Sector Information (RUPSI) Regulations 2015. The IPO is responsible under United Kingdom law for granting UK patents. Patent applications are published by the IPO in the course of the application process as set out in the Patents Act 1977. NHS England and NHSX are keen to encourage healthcare innovations and would certainly discuss with the IPO on how that could be appropriately encouraged.

The NHS COVID-19 Data Store has its own controlled procedure for access where specific criteria related to COVID-19 purposes must be met. There is no uncontrolled access to data in the NHS COVID-19 Data Store. NHS England and NHSX would consider and respond to any request they may receive under the RUPSI Regulations, as those Regulations require.

### Monetary Policy

*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any purchases made by the Bank of England this year under the quantitative easing arrangements have been of gilt-edged securities issued within less than one month of the Bank's acquisition thereof. [HL5050]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The Bank of England's Asset Purchase Facility Fund, its subsidiary used to implement quantitative easing, has purchased gilt-edged securities within one month of their issuance in 2020. This is in line with the Facility's public operating procedures which require that it does not offer to purchase gilts within one week of their issue by the UK Debt Management Office.

### Myanmar: Coronavirus

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the announcement by the government of Myanmar of a four-month ceasefire by the military from 10 May until 31 August in order to contain and prevent the spread of COVID-19 not applying to Rakhine and Chin States. [HL5180]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The escalation of violence in Rakhine and Chin States in the first quarter of this year was alarming. The Myanmar Military's unilateral ceasefire is a step forward, but as the UK Government set out at the UN Security Council on 14 May, the ceasefire must be extended to Rakhine and Chin to de-escalate the violence and reduce tensions between armed actors and impacts on civilians. The situation in Paletwa township in Chin State remains grave, and reports of communities being harassed and intimidated by armed actors are concerning. The Minister of State for Asia recently spoke to the Myanmar Ambassador to the UK and called on the Government of Myanmar to work to de-escalate fighting in Rakhine and Chin in order to prioritise the Covid-19 response.

### Myanmar: Internally Displaced People

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Myanmar about protecting Chin villagers displaced by the conflict in Southern Chin State and Rakhine State; and what steps they have taken to ensure that Chin

internally displaced persons receive urgent humanitarian assistance. [HL5179]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK Ambassador and the Department for International Development Country Director have actively engaged with the Myanmar Ministers and officials to raise the issues of conflict, access constraints, protection for aid workers, the internet ban and the potential impact of COVID on the most vulnerable communities across Myanmar, including those who are internally displaced in Southern Chin and Rakhine States. On 12 May, the UK Ambassador raised the need to ensure that the most vulnerable and hardest to reach in Rakhine were included in the Government's "no-one left behind" policy with the key Ministers in the Myanmar Government. On 14 May, the UK convened a meeting of the UN Security Council to discuss the situation in Rakhine and Chin. In our national statement we stressed the need for a de-escalation of fighting and greater humanitarian access. For FY 19/20 we made £10 million of UK aid available to help internally displaced persons in Chin and Rakhine States. This includes humanitarian relief, access to medical services and support to mitigate economic risks.

### Neurology: Charities

*Asked by Lord Dubs*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of COVID-19 on the sustainability of charities working to support people with neurological conditions. [HL4957]

*Asked by Lord Dubs*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure the long-term sustainability of charitable organisations providing support to people with neurological conditions. [HL4958]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government is aware of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on a range of sectors, including charities.

To support charities in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 8 April 2020, of a funding package of £750 million for the wider voluntary and charity sector. Of this, £370 million will support charities working with vulnerable people. In England, £200 million of this support will be provided through the National Lottery's Coronavirus Community Support Fund, to which charities can apply for funding. Applicants will be assessed on the extent to which they meet the objectives of the fund, which are to reduce temporary closures of essential charities and to reduce the burden on the public services, including the National Health Service.

In addition, charities can access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and are able to benefit from the three-month VAT deferral scheme. Charity shop premises

will benefit from the new enhanced retail rate relief at 100%.

### Neurology: Health Services

*Asked by Lord Dubs*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of NHS secondary care services to people with neurological conditions. [HL4954]

**Lord Bethell:** No specific assessment has been made.

In co-operation with the Royal College of Physicians and the Chief Medical Officer's team, the Association of British Neurologists (ABN) published COVID-19 specific guidance for patients with neurological conditions, as well as clinicians, on 22 March 2020. The guidance identified patient groups at increased risk from COVID-19 and those for whom shielding was recommended. Early in the pandemic, the ABN recommended a reduction in face to face appointments for non-emergency care in services such as neurology, while maintaining essential care to protect patients. NHS England and NHS Improvement advised the system that in-person consultations should quickly be phased out and "should only take place when absolutely necessary".

During the pandemic, digital and remote general practitioner consultations and outpatient appointments as means to support patients have become the norm across England. Providers have been rolling out remote consultations using video, telephone, email and text message services as a priority, including for those with neurological conditions. NHS England and NHS Improvement have also published a range of guidance for primary and community health service to identify, support and engage people, such as those with neurological conditions, during the COVID-19 outbreak, including:

- the NHS England and NHS Improvement *Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) standard operating procedure: Community Health Services*; and
- the NHS England and NHS Improvement *Guidance and standard operating procedures General practice in the context of coronavirus (COVID-19)*.

Copies of these as well as the ABN guidance *Association of British Neurologists Guidance on COVID-19 for people with neurological conditions, their doctors and carers* are attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

ABN Guidance for COVID-19 [ABN\_Neurology\_COVID-19\_Guidance\_22.3.20.pdf]

Community health services guidance [C0198-community-health-services-sop.pdf]

General practice guidance [CO485-COVID-19-Primary-Care-SOP-GP-Practice-V3-29-May-2020.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-02/HL4954>

## NHS: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Warner*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the scheme for paying £60,000 to families of NHS staff who died in the COVID-19 pandemic will apply to families of care home staff who died in the pandemic. [HL4730]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government has launched a life assurance scheme for frontline National Health Service and social care staff. The scheme is non-contributory and pays a £60,000 lump sum where staff who had been recently working where personal care is provided to individuals who have contracted COVID-19 die as a result of the virus.

Care home staff are eligible, providing that their work requires them to be present in frontline settings where COVID-19 is present, and that they are employed by an organisation registered by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to provide social care services.

Furthermore, any social care staff working in non-CQC registered settings are also eligible, if their employer receives public funding.

## Nigeria: Crimes against Humanity and Human Rights

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Nigeria to encourage the (1) investigation, and (2) prosecution, of (a) war crimes, (b) crimes against humanity, and (c) other human rights abuses, committed by (i) Boko Haram, (ii) Islamic State West Africa Province, and (iii) Fulani militia. [HL4947]

**Baroness Sugg:** We are appalled by and condemn violence caused by Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa, that has caused immense suffering to communities in North East Nigeria. The UK is supporting the fight against Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa in the region, through a substantial package of security, humanitarian and stabilisation assistance. We regularly make clear to the Nigerian authorities at the highest levels the importance of protecting civilians and human rights for all, as well as ensuring those responsible for criminal acts and human rights abuses are held to account. It is important that all civilians affected by crime or conflict see that justice has been done. We call for suspects to have access to justice and that cases are carried out in accordance with Nigerian law and international human rights standards.

Intercommunal violence across multiple states in Nigeria has a devastating impact on local communities. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Wilton Park hosted a conference on 'Fostering Social Cohesion in Nigeria' in February, to consider solutions to intercommunal violence in Nigeria. Amongst other things, participants at that conference highlighted the importance

of language and cautioned against the use of inflammatory terminology, including 'militia', to describe diverse ethnic groups. We are working closely with the federal government, state governments, international partners and the National Economic Council in Nigeria, to help address the root causes of intercommunal violence, and continue to push for solutions that meet the needs of all communities affected.

## Nigeria: Overseas Aid

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the killing of Uwavera Omozuwa, in a church in Benin City, Nigeria; and how UK Aid to Nigeria is used to combat gender-based violence in that country. [HL4899]

**Baroness Sugg:** The High Commission in Abuja is tracking closely developments around the deplorable killing of Uwavera Omozuwa last month in a church in Benin City. The High Commissioner has spoken out against her killing and all gender-based violence (GBV), calling for those responsible to face justice.

GBV is an endemic issue in Nigeria and poses ongoing challenges to changing behaviour and ensuring equality and equity for women, girls, men, and boys. DFID Nigeria is committed to empowering women and protecting the most vulnerable. We directly support systems and interventions to mitigate and respond to GBV in the conflict-affected North East through provision of emergency medical care and in the case-management, legal counselling and psycho-social support for survivors of GBV through our humanitarian programme.

Across DFID Nigeria, we pursue DFID's Strategic Vision for Women and Girls. We promote women's rights and gender equality through multiple sectors: increasing women's economic empowerment through dedicated livelihoods programmes; ensuring gender sensitivity of government social protection programmes; supporting women's participation and representation in politics and civil society through governance programmes; and keeping girls safe in schools through our education programmes.

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Amnesty International 'We dried our tears': Addressing the toll on children of Northeast Nigeria's conflict, published on 27 May; and what plans they have to ensure that any UK aid programmes in Nigeria encompass (1) psychosocial support for children, and (2) gender equality initiatives. [HL4946]

**Baroness Sugg:** The High Commission has advocated for and supported the handing over of all children in any form of detention to UNICEF or appropriate agencies and this has led to the release of many hundreds in recent

months. We will continue to urge all parties to prioritise mitigating the effect of conflict on civilians, particularly the most vulnerable including women and children. In respect to criticisms of the rehabilitation and reintegration components of Operation Safe Corridor, including evidence of boys accessing the programme, the High Commission in Abuja is currently reassessing its support to Operation Safe Corridor in light of this report. We will need to be fully satisfied with our partners' plans for addressing these issues in order to continue our support.

UKAid already provides a range of humanitarian and development assistance in Nigeria that supports children affected by the conflict in the northeast, including those previously detained by the Nigerian authorities, and advocacy to the Nigerian authorities to manage these facilities in accordance with domestic and international law. This includes funding partners to provide dedicated case management support to particularly vulnerable children, including unaccompanied and separated minors, where physical and psychosocial health services plus essential material needs, are supported by UKAid.

DFID is actively delivering its Strategic Vision for Women and Girls in Nigeria to promote women's rights and gender equality. This includes increasing women's economic empowerment, supporting women's participation and representation in politics and civil society through governance programmes, and keeping girls in school.

### Nuisance Calls

*Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last reviewed the regulation of cold calling, taking into account (1) the Consumer Rights Act 2015, (2) the powers of the Office of Information Commissioner, (3) the role of the Financial Conduct Authority, and (4) any other legislation. [HL5192]

**Baroness Barran:** Government recognises that, for many, nuisance calls are at best a source of irritation, but for the most vulnerable they can be particularly stressful and damaging. We have been clear that there is no place for nuisance calls in our society and have taken a number of proactive actions in an attempt to resolve the problem.

The Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR) governs unsolicited live or automated direct marketing calls, unsolicited direct marketing emails and SMS text messages. The Information Commissioner is the UK's independent regulator for data protection. DCMS is the sponsoring government department of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). As part of fulfilling its sponsorship role, DCMS continues to work with the ICO to ensure the UK implements its high standards of data protection effectively.

The introduction of the GDPR provided strict guidelines which strengthened the definition of consent for direct marketing. Further to this, we reviewed PECR

in January 2019 where we introduced a ban on cold calling relating to pensions. The ban prohibited the selling of pension services by pension providers unless the consumer has explicitly agreed to be contacted.

In addition, the Consumer Protection (Amendment) Regulations 2014 created a private right of redress for consumers who have entered into a contract as a result of misleading actions or aggressive practices as defined in the Regulations. Under these provisions, the consumer has the right to take civil action in the courts to have the contract unwind (so they are put back in the position they were in before the contract was made) and to receive a refund and to seek compensation for damages for any additional losses or harm suffered as a result of the trader's actions".

### Overseas Aid

*Asked by Baroness Goudie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to address (1) the medium-term, and (2) the longer-term, threats to food security and hunger from (a) COVID-19, (b) locusts, and (c) climate change, in fragile and conflict affected places; and, in particular, what steps they are taking to address the locust outbreak in East Africa. [HL5187]

**Baroness Sugg:** The UK is one of the biggest humanitarian donors globally and, through our programmes, are working with partners such as the World Food Programme, UNICEF and OCHA to provide food to millions of people. As well as emergency assistance, we are working to tackle longer-term food insecurity and malnutrition.

The COVID-19 pandemic is negatively impacting food security, particularly in countries with high hunger figures, climate vulnerability and fragility or conflict. The UK is working with international partners to better track, monitor and respond to the impact of COVID-19 on food security. We have adapted our social protection, agriculture and food security programmes in highly climate-vulnerable and fragile countries to respond to COVID-19-related challenges. Responses will strengthen resilience of food and agriculture systems in the current crisis but also against longer-term climate shocks and stresses. UK support includes provision of expert advice to governments and partners.

The UK is a key contributor to the UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan, which is supporting the most vulnerable, including refugees, displaced people, and migrants during this pandemic. Through this support, UK partners, such as the World Food Programme, continue to ensure essential commodities and services, and pre-position food supplies for those most in need.

We are deeply concerned about the locust outbreak in Africa and South Asia. We are supporting the UN Food and Agriculture Office on locust control as well as providing livelihoods support to those already impacted by the outbreak.

## Overseas Aid: Coronavirus

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prioritise climate justice in the allocation of Official Development Assistance to developing countries recovering from the effects of COVID-19. [HL5087]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The impacts of climate change will disproportionately affect the lives of the poorest and most marginalised. The UK's aid programme, including our international climate finance, prioritises the interests of the world's most vulnerable and disadvantaged. Our international response to COVID-19 is focused on securing a strong global health response, in particular supporting countries most vulnerable to the impact of the virus, accelerating the search for a vaccine and new treatments and supporting the global economy. We recognise that there is a connection between healthy lives, healthy societies and a healthy environment.

The steps taken to rebuild economies will have a profound impact on future sustainability, resilience and wellbeing. The Prime Minister recently addressed a high-level event at the invitation of the United Nations Secretary General focussed on 'recovering better for sustainability,' and as we prepare for COP26, we are urging the world to take the opportunity to make the recovery clean, inclusive and resilient.

Asked by **Baroness Goudie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Department for International Development is providing support to (1) local markets, (2) small and medium-sized enterprises, and (3) the informal economy, in fragile and conflict-affected states during the COVID-19 pandemic; and what steps UK Aid is taking to protect livelihoods in such states. [HL5184]

**Baroness Sugg:** We are assessing secondary impacts on local agriculture and food markets in fragile and conflict affected states, and helping to mitigate these through multilateral initiatives such as the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP).

As a shareholder and leading donor to the Multilateral Development Banks, we have been working with them to ensure that they are rapidly providing much-needed working capital to SMEs and supply chains that workers and farmers in developing countries depend on. This includes \$8 billion of fast-tracked support from the International Finance Cooperation.

We are also exploring how DFID's private sector development finance programmes can respond and complement this support. For example, CDC is supporting its existing portfolio of investee companies, and their workforces, to weather the crisis, and is looking to make new investments that provide systemic liquidity to companies, including SMEs.

DFID currently supports social protection and/or humanitarian cash transfer programmes in 35 countries,

including Fragile and Conflict Affected States, which support people who are vulnerable to the economic impact of COVID-19.

## Patriarch Antonios

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Eritrea about the house arrest of Patriarch Antonios of the Eritrean Orthodox Church; and what responses they have received [HL5197]

**Baroness Sugg:** We remain concerned about the human rights situation in Eritrea, including the arrests of religious figures such as Patriarch Abune Antonios who has been detained for over 12 years. On 25 July 2019, we issued a tweet specifically calling attention to his apparent excommunication and his ongoing detention. We also raised his case in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's 2018 Annual Human Rights Report. There has been no response from the Government of Eritrea.

The UK Government, along with partners in the international community, have taken every opportunity to voice our concern about arbitrary arrests and detentions in Eritrea, and have called for their release. On 26 February, the UK's International Ambassador for Human Rights, Rita French, delivered a statement during the 43rd Session of the Human Rights Council expressing concern at continuing human rights abuses. Although welcoming Eritrean acceptance of Universal Periodic Review recommendations and offering UK assistance in support of their implementation, she said that the UK would continue to press for the release of arbitrarily detained individuals, and call for respect for freedom of religion or belief, especially for worshippers of unregistered religions.

Our Ambassador in Asmara raised arbitrary detentions of members of the Christian community with the Eritrean Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 20 May 2019 and with the President's senior adviser on 14 August 2019. During visits to Eritrea, the FCO's Head of East Africa Department, in November 2019, and the Home Office International Director, in February, both raised human rights issues with senior members of the Eritrean government. Eritrea remains a priority country for the FCO under our annual human rights reporting, and we will continue to monitor the situation there.

## Planning

Asked by **Lord Kerslake**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to change planning law to give control of decisions to Government-owned development corporations instead of local councils; whether they have established a panel to consider such plans and other changes to planning law; and if so, what is that panel's (1) terms of reference, and (2) membership. [T] [HL5382]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** I recognise the importance of Local Government's role in creating sustainable communities across the country. We value their relationship with local communities and the work they have done to ensure high quality development is delivered where it is needed. We have set out an ambitious programme to modernise our planning system. Our "Planning for the Future" reforms will support the delivery of homes that local people need and create greener communities with more beautiful homes. We look forward to saying more on this in the near future.

### Porton Down: Finance

*Asked by Lord Touhig*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much annual funding the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory received in (1) 2016, (2) 2017, (3) 2018, (4) 2019, and (5) 2020. [T] [[HL5442](#)]

**Baroness Goldie:** As a Trading Fund (up to 31 March 2017) or Executive Agency (from 1 April 2017) of the Ministry of Defence (MOD), Dstl is funded principally by revenue from customers rather than direct Government funding. Since 1 April 2017 capital expenditure only has been funded directly from MOD budget allocation. Previously as a Trading Fund, capital expenditure was funded from accumulated cash reserves, and was therefore deemed to be funded from within operating income (turnover).

For the year ended 31 March 2020 the accounts are yet to be audited and are currently scheduled to be laid before Parliament in September 2020.

Summary figures to the nearest £million are:

<i>Year Ended</i>	<i>Operating Income £m</i>	<i>Capital Funding £m</i>
31-3-2016	610	n/a – funded from income
31-3-2017	585	n/a – funded from income
31-3-2018	542	57
31-3-2019	626	63
31-3-2020	686 (budget)	71 (budget)

Full details of Dstl's total funding, principal customers and amounts spent externally via third parties are available from the Agency's published Annual Report and Accounts for all financial years up to 31 March 2019, available in the House of Commons library and at the following links:

*2015/16 - HC 36*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-science-and-technology-laboratory-annual-report-and-accounts-2015-to-2016>

*2016/17 - HC 83*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-science-and-technology-laboratory-annual-report-and-accounts-2016-to-2017>

*2017/18-HC1265*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-science-and-technology-laboratory-annual-report-and-accounts-2017-to-2018>

*2018/19-HC2244*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-science-and-technology-laboratory-annual-report-and-accounts-2018-to-2019>

### Pre-pack Administration Review

*Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to re-implement powers to make connected party pre-pack sales mandatorily referable for independent oversight, now that the powers they had to do so in section 129 of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 have lapsed. [[HL4892](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** The Insolvency Service is working with regulators and other insolvency industry stakeholders to examine whether existing non-legislative regulation for the practice of prepack administration can be further developed to provide additional scrutiny of connected party sales.

Government will monitor the outcome of this work to determine if further action is needed.

*Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to publish the results of their review into pre-pack sales. [[HL4893](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** The Insolvency Service is undertaking further work with regulators and the insolvency industry. It expects to publish its findings later this year.

### Public Expenditure: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Soley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much additional funding they have provided to (1) Northern Ireland, (2) Scotland, and (3) Wales, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and, in each case, how much that represents per head of population. [[HL5108](#)]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** We have so far announced £7.4 billion of additional funding to the devolved administrations to support people, business and public services in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This means £3.8 billion for the Scottish Government, £2.3 billion for the Welsh Government and £1.3 billion for the Northern Ireland Executive.

This is equivalent to £700 per head of the Scottish population, £730 per head of the Welsh population and £680 per head of the Northern Ireland population. The differences in these per head figures are partly due to the differing extent of devolved responsibilities and partly due to the nation-specific elements of the Barnett formula.

## Pupils: Eating Disorders

*Asked by Lord Lingfield*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what responsibilities and duties schools have specifically towards pupils who develop eating disorders; and what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of support offered by schools to pupils with eating disorders. [HL5213]

**Baroness Berridge:** When carrying out duties to safeguard children and young people, schools must have due regard to the statutory guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education', which defines safeguarding and promotes the welfare of children. The guidance is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>.

Governing bodies of maintained schools, academies (except 16–19 academies) and pupil referral units are also subject to a duty to support pupils with medical conditions. In meeting the duty, schools must follow statutory guidance, which is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>.

The department's mental health and behaviour advice includes information about how to identify pupils whose behaviour may be a result of an underlying mental health difficulty, linked to the SEND graduated response process, and provides guidance on how they can adapt their approaches to support these pupils with their individual needs.

It is vital that children and young people with eating disorders have access to effective specialist support. Through the NHS Long Term Plan, we are investing £2.3 billion a year into mental health services by 2023-24, which will see spending for children and young people's mental health services growing faster than the overall spend on mental health, which will itself be growing faster than the overall NHS budget. The NHS Long Term Plan also makes a specific commitment to boost investment in children and young people's eating disorder services over the five years of the plan.

Inpatient treatment should be a last resort, which is why the government announced in 2014 that it would invest £150 million to expand eating disorder community-based care. We are making good progress on this promise, and as a result 70 dedicated new or extended community services are now either open or in development.

## Religious Buildings: Coronavirus

*Asked by Baroness Mone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with faith leaders about piloting the opening of places of worship in advance of step 3 of their plan to lift restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic being in place. [HL5044]

*Asked by Baroness Mone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with faith leaders about the provision of all services and events in places of worship once those places are reopened. [HL5045]

*Asked by Baroness Mone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to the publication of Our plan to rebuild: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy on 11 May, what discussions they have had with faith leaders about the number of people who will be permitted to gather in places of worship for services and events. [HL5046]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Following publication on 11 May of "Our Plan to Rebuild", which outlined the steps we would be taking to ease the lockdown restrictions, the Government launched a Places of Worship Taskforce to look at how places of worship can reopen and operate safely.

The Secretary of State and I have held a series of meetings with the Taskforce as well as holding faith-specific roundtables to hear the views of our faith leaders on how our places of worship can reopen. This is to ensure that those who visit and those who work there are protected as far as possible. The Government is working with the Taskforce as we develop guidance for our faith communities on the safe reopening of our places of worship. This will include guidance on individual prayer, and services and ceremonies such as weddings. This will be published in due course.

## Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund and Small Business Grants Fund

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, where local authorities do not spend all of their allocation for the Small Business Grant Fund and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund, the recently announced top-up fund for Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund will have to come out of any such underspend. [HL5103]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government has confirmed to Local Authorities that the additional costs of the Discretionary Grants Fund will firstly be met in whole, or in part, from unused monies allocated to them for the Small Business and Retail Hospitality and Leisure Grants Funds. Only where Local Authorities have disbursed more than 95% of their original funding allocation will their funding will be topped up to ensure that they can provide the full value of the Discretionary Grants Fund.

We recognise that some Local Authorities may still have residual initial funding available even accounting for the Discretionary Grants Fund expenditure. Officials continue to stay in close contact with Local Authorities to understand how the schemes are performing and advising ministers on any additional support which could be offered to help businesses and support local economies.

No decisions have yet been taken, but the level of demand will continue to be monitored.

### **Rough Sleeping: Roma**

*Asked by Baroness Whitaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the task force on rough sleeping led by Dame Louise Casey will provide specific support for Roma rough sleepers to ensure that possible language barriers and concerns about dealing with officials are overcome. [HL5147]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** We want to ensure local areas have the tools they need to meet the diverse needs of anyone who has been sleeping rough, regardless of their background.

The recently announced taskforce spearheaded by Dame Louise Casey will work with local government, charities, businesses, faith and community groups, and other public sector partners across the country, leading the next phase of the Government's support for rough sleepers during the pandemic.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government maintains close contact with Roma stakeholder groups. Through this continued stakeholder engagement, we ensure all our policy approaches are informed by a wide range of considerations and meet the needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in the UK.

### **Saudi Arabia: Arrests**

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Saudi Arabia following the reported arrest of the brother and two adult children of Saad al-Jabri, who is in exile. [HL5198]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are aware of reports concerning the detention of Saad Al-Jabri's brother and two of his children. We remain concerned over the detention of a number of individuals in Saudi Arabia. We continue to raise our concerns about individual cases and are monitoring this case closely.

### **Schools: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Lord Warner*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to re-open the public consultation on "Regulating independent educational institutions"; and what measures they will be taking to protect pupils at risk in unregistered settings, including illegal religious schools, until the law is changed. [HL5139]

*Asked by Lord Warner*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the extent to which illegal schools have continued to operate during the COVID-19

lockdown; and how they intend to mitigate the risks to the pupils attending such settings as the lockdown is eased. [HL5140]

**Baroness Berridge:** The department intends to reopen the consultation on 'Regulating independent educational institutions' when stakeholders ability to respond is less likely to be significantly affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Responses received to date will be combined with responses received after the consultation reopens and fully reviewed after the consultation finally closes.

It is not yet appropriate to set a date for reopening the consultation as the situation in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak continues to change.

Ofsted continues to investigate potential illegal schools including consideration of new intelligence. Where appropriate, Ofsted have liaised with local authorities and other statutory bodies to consider whether there is appropriate action that should be taken, for example, to close settings where people are gathering illegally during the COVID-19 outbreak.

### **Sino-British Joint Declaration**

*Asked by Lord Willoughby de Broke*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that the government of China observes the conditions of the Sino-British Joint Declaration. [HL5148]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Foreign Secretary is engaging actively with a range of international partners to explain our position and impress on them the gravity of situation. We want to build up a groundswell of those who share our commitment to international law. We believe that is the most effective means of getting China to live up to its obligations and responsibilities as a leading member of the international community. We will also work within international institutions such as the UN Human Rights Council to ensure that China upholds the commitments they made as co-signatory to the Joint Declaration. The UK and the US raised the issue at the UN Security Council on 28 May.

### **Social Services: Financial Services**

*Asked by Lord Crisp*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether public-sector pension boards, pension companies and insurance companies are involved in the social care strategy. [HL4952]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government will consult with a range of sectors, including the financial services industry, when considering social care reforms.

The Government's priority for adult social care is for everyone who relies on care to get the care they need throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We know that this does not reduce the need for a long-term action plan for social care. Putting social care on a sustainable footing,

where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, is one of the biggest challenges that we face as a society.

There are complex questions to address, which is why we have invited cross-party talks. These will take place at the earliest opportunity in light of the current circumstances. The Government will then bring forward a plan for social care for the longer term.

### **Terrorism: Northern Ireland**

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consultations they (1) have undertaken, and (2) plan to undertake, in regard to the Victims Payments Scheme in Northern Ireland with (a) political parties that are not represented in the Northern Ireland Executive, and (b) civil society representatives in Northern Ireland. [HL5283]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The Government ran a public consultation in October and November last year on our proposals for legislating for a Victims Payments Scheme. The consultation provided an opportunity for anyone to comment on the shape of the proposed scheme.

In line with the Northern Ireland Office Equality Scheme, we notified our list of consultees - including a wide range of public bodies, political parties, religious and representative organisations - about the consultation. The consultation team also made itself available to meet a range of interested groups and parties to discuss the proposals and the issues arising from them.

We received 367 responses from a variety of parties, individuals, representatives and groups, including the Green Party NI. We carefully considered all written and oral feedback received in making final decisions about the shape of the scheme.

The Northern Ireland Office also engaged with the main parties on the detail of draft guidance that will support the scheme's independent board in making decisions to award payments.

### **Trade Agreements: Food**

*Asked by Lord Harris of Haringey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether talks relating to future international trade agreements will include possible reductions of the current food safety regulations; and whether chlorine-washing of chicken will continue to be contrary to UK food safety standards. [HL4983]

**Lord Grimstone of Boscobel:** HM Government has made it clear that any future trade deals must work for British consumers, farmers and companies. We are proud of our high standards in food safety and these will not be weakened. High standards and high quality are what our domestic and global customers demand, and that is what we will provide.

It is vital that we explore new trading opportunities, but these should not mean a dilution of the standards for which British food is world-renowned. The EU Withdrawal Act transfers all existing EU food safety provisions on to the statute book and we remain firmly committed to upholding our high food safety standards.

### **Travel: Republic of Ireland**

*Asked by Lord Empey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Sugg on 1 June (HL4768), whether they were consulted in advance by the government of Ireland about its decision to introduce a fourteen-day quarantine period on all passengers travelling to Ireland from Great Britain; and if so, when they received advance notice of this specific decision. [HL4960]

**Baroness Sugg:** Given our close relationship with the Irish Government we have regular conversations about emerging policy responses, including ahead of Ireland's decision to introduce a fourteen-day quarantine for all travellers coming into Ireland from 26 April. We continue to remain in regular contact at the highest levels with the Government of Ireland on our joint response to the Covid-19 pandemic, including discussions on the public health measures at the border.

### **Travellers: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Baroness Whitaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 6 May (HL3366) stating that they were "holding regular discussions with representatives from the Gypsy and Traveller communities to understand the issues they are facing, including what guidance and support is needed locally", what steps they are taking to ensure that local authorities reach vulnerable Gypsies and Travellers on the roadside without access to water or sanitation. [HL5146]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Government takes the welfare of all citizens seriously and we are working hard to ensure those most at risk are identified and supported including those in Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

We have been in close contact with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and are doing everything we can to support them through the pandemic.

All local authorities should consider how best to support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in their area. On 11 April, I wrote to all local authority chief executives to highlight that some such individuals may need specific support, including access to basic services such as water, sanitation and waste disposal (attached): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-mitigating-impacts-on-gypsy-and-traveller-communities>.

Local authorities may conclude that some Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, especially those lacking basic amenities, require alternative places to stop where access to facilities such as water pipes, water bowsers and portable toilets is provided, or can be made temporarily available.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Letter to Local Authority [200615 COVID-19\_-\_mitigating\_impacts\_on\_gypsy\_\_\_traveller\_communities - HL5146.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-06-02/HL5146>

## UK Trade With EU

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review trading arrangements with the EU. [HL5326]

**Lord True:** Last week the UK completed its fourth round of negotiations. Negotiations covered the full range of issues and were mostly constructive and positive in tone, including on the most difficult issues such as fisheries, governance, and the so called “level playing field” where our differences are the most acute.

We believe it still would be straightforward to agree a suite of agreements with a Free Trade Agreement at the core, like those the EU has agreed with other close partners around the world, and that this could be done quickly.

A Written Ministerial Statement ( [HLWS267](#) ) was made on 8 June to update the House on the progress of negotiations.

## Veterans: Northern Ireland

*Asked by Lord Maginnis of Drumglass*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what lessons they learnt from the (1) process followed by, and (2) conclusions of, the Iraq Historic Allegations Team; whether any such lessons are applicable to any ongoing investigations into soldiers who served in Northern Ireland between 1969 and 1994; and what plans they have, if any, to establish a similar team to oversee any such investigations. [HL5040]

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has made clear that the Government is committed to introducing legislation to address the legacy of the Troubles. This legislation will place information recovery and reconciliation at the heart of a revised legacy system that puts victims first. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has begun the process of engaging key partners on a way forward which will focus on reconciliation, delivering for victims and ensuring that all Service Personnel who served in Northern Ireland are treated as fairly as those who served overseas.

Where appropriate, we will draw on the lessons from the Iraq Historic Allegations Team. In Northern Ireland, during the Troubles, the Armed Forces acted in support of the civil powers, within the UK. This is different to military action outside the UK.

## Index to Statements and Answers

<b>Written Statements.....1</b>	
Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme .....1	Coronavirus: Screening ..... 10
Prüm: Data Sharing .....1	Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre 11
Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee: Second Meeting.....2	Cybercrime: China..... 11
<b>Written Answers.....3</b>	Disability and Special Educational Needs: Coronavirus ..... 11
Abortion: Drugs.....3	Driving Tests: Coronavirus..... 11
Accident and Emergency Departments: Admissions .....3	Economic Situation..... 12
Armed Forces: Cadets .....3	Economic Situation: Coronavirus..... 12
Armed Forces: Misconduct .....4	Economic Situation: Isles of Scilly..... 12
Aviation: Meetings .....4	Exercise Cygnus ..... 12
Biology: International Cooperation.....4	Football: Equality ..... 12
Brexit .....4	Free School Meals: Voucher Schemes ..... 13
Buchtar Tabuni .....5	Gender: Equality..... 13
Businesses: Retail Trade.....5	Health and Social Services: Migrant Workers... 13
Cancer: Medical Treatments.....5	Health Services: EU Countries ..... 13
Care Homes: Coronavirus .....5	Higher Education: Coronavirus ..... 14
Care Homes: Protective Clothing .....6	Homelessness: Coronavirus..... 14
Children: Coronavirus .....6	Hong Kong: Human Rights ..... 14
Children: Social Services .....7	Hong Kong: National Security ..... 15
Colombia: Security .....7	Hong Kong: Politics and Government..... 15
Colombia: Surveillance .....7	Hospital Beds: Coronavirus..... 15
Colombia: Violence.....8	Housing: Construction..... 16
Commonwealth Development Corporation: Coronavirus .....8	Leisure: Coronavirus ..... 16
Contact Tracing: Computer Software.....8	Mayflower: Anniversaries ..... 16
Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage .....8	Medical Equipment: Imports ..... 17
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Maternity Leave .....9	Medical Records: Data Protection ..... 17
Coronavirus: Clinical Trials .....9	Monetary Policy ..... 17
Coronavirus: Disease Control.....9	Myanmar: Coronavirus..... 17
Coronavirus: Mental Health .....9	Myanmar: Internally Displaced People ..... 17
Coronavirus: Older People and Pregnancy.....10	Neurology: Charities..... 18
Coronavirus: Protective Clothing .....10	Neurology: Health Services..... 18
	NHS: Coronavirus ..... 19
	Nigeria: Crimes against Humanity and Human Rights..... 19
	Nigeria: Overseas Aid ..... 19
	Nuisance Calls ..... 20

## Index to Statements and Answers

Overseas Aid .....	20
Overseas Aid: Coronavirus.....	21
Patriarch Antonios .....	21
Planning.....	21
Porton Down: Finance .....	22
Pre-pack Administration Review .....	22
Public Expenditure: Coronavirus.....	22
Pupils: Eating Disorders .....	23
Religious Buildings: Coronavirus .....	23
Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund and Small Business Grants Fund.....	23
Rough Sleeping: Roma.....	24
Saudi Arabia: Arrests .....	24
Schools: Coronavirus.....	24
Sino-British Joint Declaration .....	24
Social Services: Financial Services .....	24
Terrorism: Northern Ireland .....	25
Trade Agreements: Food .....	25
Travel: Republic of Ireland .....	25
Travellers: Coronavirus .....	25
UK Trade With EU.....	26
Veterans: Northern Ireland .....	26