

**Session 2019-21
No. 172**



**Monday
18 January 2021**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements1

Written Answers.....6

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

Members who want a printed copy of Written Answers and Written Statements should notify the Printed Paper Office.

This printed edition is a reproduction of the original text of Answers and Statements, which can be found on the internet at <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>.

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

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Agnew of Oulton	Minister of State, Treasury and Cabinet Office
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Berridge	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade
Lord Bethell	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Whip
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Stewart of Direleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord True	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Wolfson of Tredegar	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Justice
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Lords 2021

This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament licence, which is published at www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright/

Written Statements

Monday, 18 January 2021

Awarding Qualifications in 2021

[HLWS710]

Baroness Berridge: My Right Honourable Friend the Minister of State for School Standards has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

On Friday 15 January, Ofqual and the Department for Education published a joint consultation outlining detailed proposals for alternative arrangements for awarding general, vocational and technical qualifications in summer 2021.

This consultation, outlined in ‘[consultation on how GCSE, AS and A level grades should be awarded in summer 2021](#)’ and ‘[consultation on alternative arrangements for the award of VTQs and other general qualifications in 2021](#)’, will be open for two weeks ending on 29 January. Responses can be completed using the online response forms on gov.uk for [GCSE, AS and A levels](#) and for [vocational and technical qualifications](#).

In his statement to the House on 6 January, the Secretary of State confirmed proposals that students taking GCSE, AS and A levels this summer should be awarded grades based on an assessment by their teachers. Teacher’s judgement will be based on a range of evidence; Ofqual and the department will consult on the evidence needed to inform teachers’ assessments of their students’ grades, including providing externally set papers to support their assessments. Teachers will be provided with training and guidance to support them.

We recognise that students who are not studying within a school or college, for example because they are home educated, must be able to be issued with a grade. We are seeking views on the proposals that would enable them to do so.

The consultation also proposes that exam boards should both provide information for schools and colleges to inform their own quality assurance, and that the exam boards themselves should undertake checks of schools’ and colleges’ processes and the evidence for the grades submitted. We propose that all students will have a route to appeal their grades.

The approach set out in the consultation for vocational and technical qualifications which are taken instead of or alongside GCSEs, AS and A levels, is consistent with approach for these qualifications. For other general qualifications, such as Core Maths, Pre-U and the International Baccalaureate, the consultation also proposes the awarding approach should be similar to GCSEs, AS and A levels.

The consultation proposes that those vocational and technical qualifications with practical exams and assessments which are required to demonstrate occupational competence for employment and apprenticeships, should continue to take place where they

can be delivered in line with public health guidelines, including remotely.

‘On-demand’ assessments of shorter, focused qualifications such as Functional Skills that can be delivered in line with public health guidelines, including remotely, should be permitted to continue to proceed.

The consultation seeks the views of students, parents and carers, teachers, school and college leaders before decisions are made on final arrangements. We will also take into account the views of further and higher education and employers, to ensure that young people can move onto the next stage of their lives.

British Virgin Islands: Commission of Inquiry

[HLWS712]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Dominic Raab), has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The UK is extremely concerned about the state of good governance in the British Virgin Islands (BVI).

A consistent and deeply troubling array of concerns have been put to the Governor by local institutions and the community. The Governor has set out these concerns to me, they include, but are not limited to:

- Allegations of political interference and coercion in relation to appointments in the public service and statutory boards, the criminal justice system and individual criminal cases;
- Claims that people in public service, media and community leaders have been intimidated to such a degree that they describe living in a climate of fear;
- Allegations that funds set aside for struggling families during the pandemic may have been re-allocated to political allies;
- Concerns around spending on Government contracts without any proper procurement process; and
- Misuse of taxpayers’ money on infrastructure and transport projects.

Against this backdrop, we are also concerned about the potential vulnerability of the islands to serious organised crime. The scale of this was made clear in November 2020, with the seizure of more than two tonnes of cocaine, worth just under £190 million.

Successive attempts have been made to address these concerns through local institutions, many of which have done commendable work to bring them to light. However, the scope and seriousness of the concerns are now beyond local capacity to address.

The UK Government is responsible for ensuring the security and good governance of BVI. We have a constitutional and moral duty to protect the interests of the people of BVI. We cannot ignore such serious allegations.

With this in mind, on Monday 18 January, the Governor of BVI, supported by the UK Government, announced an independent Commission of Inquiry.

The Commission will inquire into whether there is information to substantiate claims that corruption, abuse of position and serious impropriety has taken place in public office in recent years, and it will make recommendations. The Commission will be led by the Right Honourable Sir Gary Hickinbottom, who will have the powers of a High Court Judge within the territory with respect to gathering evidence. The BVI Commission of Inquiry Ordinance makes provisions for the scope of the inquiry to be adjusted or extended should it prove necessary.

The Government expect the Commissioner to deliver his report to the Governor within six months. At this point, we hope that the UK and BVI will be able to consider the recommendations together in a constructive manner that best serves the people of BVI.

This Government's aim is to build stronger governance for the people of BVI and uphold our commitment to our Overseas Territories and their people.

Children's Social Care: Independent Review

[HLWS713]

Baroness Berridge: My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

This Government is committed to levelling up across the country. In order to do this, it is absolutely vital that we start with children and families – particularly the most vulnerable – so that we can realise the benefits of establishing firm and loving foundations, both to individuals and to society for generations to come.

Further to my Written Ministerial Statement of 12 February 2020, I am making this statement to launch the independent review of children's social care, which was committed to in the government's manifesto. I am pleased to inform Honourable and Right Honourable members that the review will be carried out by Josh MacAlister, who is the Founder and Chief Executive of the children's social work charity Frontline. Josh brings both an understanding of the challenges facing the system that supports vulnerable children and families and experience of developing and implementing innovative solutions.

The review will start from children's experiences and look at the whole system of support, safeguarding, protection and care and the children's journey into and out of that system, including relevant aspects of preventative service that are provided to children and families as part of early help. It will engage with children, young people, adults and families with direct experience of children's social care, in order to ensure those individuals' views and lived experience are fully embedded in the review's work. The review will aim to improve children and young people's lives and outcomes and address major challenges facing the system.

I am placing copies of the terms of reference in the libraries of the House, and it is also available on gov.uk alongside other documents that have accompanied the launch of the review.

Community Pharmacy and Care Home Vaccinations

[HLWS714]

Lord Bethell: My Hon Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for COVID Vaccine Deployment) (Nadhim Zahawi), has made the following statement:

I am tabling this statement for the benefit of Honourable and Right Honourable members to bring to their attention two contingent liabilities. One relating to clinical negligence liabilities incurred by pharmacy led Covid-19 vaccination sites between 1 January and 30 June 2021. And one relating to a targeted and time-limited state-backed indemnity to care homes, registered or intending to register as "Designated Settings", which are unable to obtain sufficient insurance cover.

On the first, you will be aware that we have initiated the Covid-19 vaccination programme to deliver the vaccine across England. As this programme continues to roll out, we are working with NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) to stand up sites in every community.

NHSE/I intend to administer the Covid-19 vaccine through Trusts, General Practice and community pharmacy-led settings to ensure adequate vaccination centre coverage across England. Healthcare professionals need clinical negligence indemnity for delivering Covid-19 vaccines. This is provided through the existing state schemes in England for NHS Trusts and GP Practices.

However, community pharmacy are not covered by state indemnity and are obliged to obtain their own commercial insurance. Following engagement with community pharmacy representatives, our assessment was that the insurance market would not be able to comprehensively provide cover for this risk at such short notice, and we agreed the state indemnity.

Without adequate indemnity cover, pharmacies would be unable to commit to the programme. Their participation is crucial as they have been selected to fill geographical gaps in cover or where NHS capacity is such that they are unable to participate. Therefore, DHSC has provided a time limited clinical negligence indemnity to community pharmacy to 30 June 2021, to enable them to engage at pace with this programme. The provision of such an indemnity enables pharmacy contractors to start to run services, whilst the Department and NHS England and Improvement continue to work with the community pharmacy sector on a longer-term approach to insuring community pharmacy for Covid-19 vaccinations. We had originally intended to time limit this to the end of March but with the decision to extend the period between vaccine doses, have decided to run the indemnity until the end of June.

All claims of clinical negligence will be managed through the provider of the current state backed schemes – NHS Resolution - in line with the existing schemes.

The need for the indemnity was extremely urgent as pharmacy led centres could not begin to vaccinate patients until this was in place and indeed vaccinations have begun at six centres as of 14 January 2021. Delaying would have postponed the roll out of this vital aspect of the vaccination programme, restricting access to the vaccine in some areas of the county. We concluded that such a delay was not acceptable, and I hope it is clear why this was indeed a case of special urgency. Therefore, the normal 14 sitting days for consideration has on this occasion not been possible.

I would also like to update the House on the DHSC's scheme to provide a targeted and time-limited state-backed indemnity to care homes, registered or intending to register as "Designated Settings", which are unable to obtain sufficient insurance cover.

The Government is committed to ensuring the best care possible for people with Covid-19. For people admitted to hospital who need social care support, we have worked closely with Local Authorities and the Care Quality Commission to register certain adult social care homes as Designated Settings. I welcome the response of the care sector to the demand for such care. It is our priority to ensure that people are discharged safely from hospital to the most appropriate setting, and that they receive the care and support they need.

I acknowledge the role of the insurance industry in continuing to provide cover, where possible, for this activity. However, we know that obtaining sufficient insurance to accept COVID positive patients and sign up to become a Designated Setting has been a barrier for some care home providers wishing to join the scheme. The designated setting scheme is for people who are medically fit for discharge from hospital (i.e., they do not require to be in an acute NHS bed) but whose ongoing care & support needs are such that they require full-time residential or nursing care. A large proportion of these people will already have been living in a care home.

The scheme forms part of wider policy on hospital discharge set out in [Hospital discharge service: policy and operating model](#) (August 2020) – which enshrines a principle of "Home First", whereby at least 95% of discharges from hospital should be to a person's own (private) home.

This is limiting the ability of a small number of Local Authorities to operationalise Designated Settings capacity, and in other areas is limiting the expansion of such capacity in response to rising demand.

Given the severity and immediacy of the pressures facing the NHS, we want to take all possible steps to remove obstacles to sufficient local Designated Settings provision. This includes ensuring that where the creation of Designated Settings has created barriers to insurance, the Government will introduce a targeted and time-limited indemnity offer to fill gaps in commercial cover.

The indemnity will cover clinical negligence, employer's and public liability where a care provider seeking to become a Designated Setting is unable to secure sufficient commercial insurance, or where an existing provider has been operating without sufficient cover. Employer's and public liability will be covered by a new indemnity scheme; clinical negligence will be covered by the Clinical negligence Scheme for Trusts, an existing state scheme. The indemnity arrangements will be supervised by DHSC and administered by NHS Resolution. The indemnity will cover Designated Settings until the end of March 2021, with a review point in mid-February.

I regret that in this circumstance, due to the need to take this action urgently to support timely discharge from the NHS at this stage of the pandemic, the normal 14 sitting days for consideration has not been possible. A departmental Minute has been laid in the House of Commons providing more detail on this contingent liability.

Coronavirus-related Assistance: Industrial Development Act 1982

[HLWS711]

Lord Callanan: My Honourable friend the Minister for London and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets) (Paul Scully) has today made the following statement:

I am tabling this statement for the benefit of Hon. Members to bring to their attention spend under the Industrial Development Act 1982. In addition to the obligation to report on spend under the Industrial Development Act annually, the Coronavirus Act 2020 created a new quarterly reporting requirement for spend which has been designated as addressing the effects of coronavirus. This statement fulfils that purpose.

The statement also includes a report of the movement in contingent liability during the quarter. Hon. Members will wish to note that measures such as Local Authority grants, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, and tax measures such as the suspension of Business Rates are not provided under the Industrial Development Act 1982 and hence are not included below.

This report covers the second quarter of 2020, from 1 April to 30 June 2020, in accordance with the Coronavirus Act. The Q1 Written Ministerial Statement was published on 9th July 2020.

Spend under the Coronavirus Act 2020

Under the Coronavirus Act 2020, there is a requirement to lay before Parliament details of the amount of assistance designated as Coronavirus related provided in each relevant quarter.

In the period from 1 April to 30 June 2020, the following expenditures were incurred:

Actual expenditure of assistance provided by Her Majesty's Government from 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020	£47,637,000
All expenditure of assistance provided by Her Majesty's Government from 25 March 2020	£47,637,000
<i>Expenditure by Department</i>	
Actual expenditure of assistance provided by:	
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	£47,600,000
Competition Appeal Tribunal	£37,000
<i>Contingent liability under the Coronavirus Act 2020</i>	
Contingent liability of assistance provided by the Secretary of State from 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020	£30,383,783,770
All contingent liability of assistance provided by the Secretary of State from 25 March 2020	£30,456,183,770

Planning and Heritage: Historic Statues, Plaques, Memorials and Monuments

[HLWS709]

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

Protecting our nation's heritage

I would like to update the House about the role of the planning system in relation to the protection of historic statues, plaques, memorials and monuments. I am concerned that, over the last few months, some such heritage assets may have been removed without proper debate, consultation with the public and due process.

Indeed, the removal of a statue in Bristol was an act of criminal damage. We should never tolerate criminal acts and mob rule.

This Government is committed to ensuring our nation's heritage is appropriately protected. It is important that all decisions on removing historic statues, plaques (which are part of a building and whose alteration or removal materially affects the external appearance of the building), memorials and monuments - even for a temporary period - are taken in accordance with the law and following the correct process. Decisions to remove any such heritage assets owned by a local authority should be taken in accordance with its constitution, following consultation with the local community and interested parties, and the rationale for a decision to remove should be transparent.

The planning system plays a crucial role conserving and enhancing our heritage. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, listed building consent from the local planning authority is required for the removal or alteration of a statue, plaque, memorial or monument which is designated as a listed

building, or which forms part of a listed building, where it affects the special historic or architectural character of the listed building.

Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework already states that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset. Paragraph 195 also requires that where development will lead to substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

I would also like to remind local planning authorities of the current requirements to notify Historic England and the national amenity societies of applications involving the demolition of a listed building. In those cases, where local planning authorities are minded to grant consent for the removal of a listed statue, plaque, memorial or monument despite an extant objection from Historic England or one of the national amenity societies, they are required to notify the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government who will then consider whether to call in the application or not. Where an extant objection is in relation to a listed building consent application made by Historic England or a local authority itself, the local planning authority must refer it to the Secretary of State for determination.

At present, these notification requirements do not apply in relation to Grade II listed buildings where the removal of a statue, plaque, memorial or monument constitutes an alteration to a listed building rather than demolition. I intend to exercise my powers to direct local planning authorities that these types of application are subject to the same notification requirements as for applications involving the demolition of a listed building.

It is also important that the removal of historic statues, plaques, memorials and monuments which are not listed are subject to proper process. These heritage assets can often be well known local landmarks, but unless they meet certain size thresholds, their removal will not be currently classified as development for planning purposes and so not subject to planning control.

I am today therefore setting out my intention to make the removal of any historic unlisted statue, plaque, memorial or monument subject to an explicit requirement to obtain planning permission. I also intend to require local planning authorities to adhere to similar notification requirements as for listed building consent applications involving listed statues, plaques, memorials and monuments. This will require Directions and changes to secondary legislation including the permitted development right for the demolition of buildings.

In considering any applications to remove a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether a listed building or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the government's clear policy on heritage (summarised as 'retain and explain') as set out by the Minister for Digital Infrastructure to Parliament on 25 September 2020. This statement now forms part of

national planning policy and should be applied accordingly.

Historic statues, plaques, memorials and monuments should not be removed before a decision on the application is made.

I would also draw local planning authorities' attention to the advice Historic England has published to support decision making involving heritage whose story or meaning has become challenged (*Checklist to help local authorities to deal with contested heritage listed building decisions*). As they note, "Our stance on historic statues and sites which have become contested is to retain and explain them; to provide thoughtful, long lasting and powerful reinterpretation that responds to their contested history and tells the full story."

The new legislation and Directions referred to in this Statement will come into effect in the Spring.

I would like to make clear that, as the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, I have wide discretion to 'call in' planning applications or recover appeals for my own determination, not least because of the controversy attached to such decisions. I will not hesitate to use those powers in relation to applications and appeals involving historic statues, plaques, memorials or monuments where I consider such action is necessary to reflect the Government's planning policies as set out above.

In conclusion, this Government believes it is always right to examine Britain's history, but the knee-jerk removal of statues does harm rather than good. Our aim should be to use heritage to educate people about all aspects of Britain's past rather than censoring our shared British history.

Written Answers

Monday, 18 January 2021

Armed Forces: Recruitment

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 3 November 2020 (HL9440), what resources are available for training new officers in the British Armed Forces to identify those under their command who are experiencing financial difficulties caused by gambling. [HL11898]

Baroness Goldie: Trainee Officers in the UK Armed Forces are provided with briefing to identify the various indicators that personnel under their command may be experiencing financial difficulties, including those caused by gambling. We also provide our Officers with briefings from the Royal British Legion MoneyForce initiative which aim to assist all Service personnel, their partners, families and dependants, to be better equipped to manage their money and financial affairs. When problem-gambling is identified, Officers are equipped with information and advice on where to signpost their personnel to receive help, including through specialist military welfare staffs (SSAFA), Service charities, the NHS Problem Gambling Clinic, Gamcare, the Gordon Moody Association and Gamblers Anonymous.

Officers can also signpost their personnel to the Joining Forces Credit Union which supplies bespoke products to move Service personnel away from Payday Loan Companies. Joint Forces Credit Union has also set up a specific COVID-19 support package. In addition, The Money and Pensions Service have also run a financial awareness campaign with the British Forces Broadcasting Service to highlight everything from savings/loans to pensions.

Asthma

Asked by *The Earl of Dundee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve asthma outcomes. [HL11648]

Asked by *The Earl of Dundee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of asthma on the lives of (1) those with the disease, and (2) their families. [HL11649]

Asked by *The Earl of Dundee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reduce the incidence of asthma in the UK. [HL11650]

Lord Bethell: The NHS Long Term Plan set out the commitments and objectives for the National Health Service for the next 10 years. The plan includes

respiratory disease as a national clinical priority, with the overarching objective of improving outcomes for people with respiratory disease, including asthma. This includes early and accurate diagnosis of respiratory conditions like asthma to provide the opportunity for better management which can help prevent exacerbations and avoidable emergency admissions.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have established 13 respiratory clinical networks across the country, to provide clinical leadership of respiratory services. One of their objectives focuses on improving clinical pathways for asthma. The Quality Outcomes Framework (QOF) ensures all general practitioner (GP) practices establish and maintain a register of patients with an asthma diagnosis in accordance with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence's guidance. An update to the GP Contract for 2020/21-2023/24 to be implemented in 2021 includes an improved QOF asthma domain. The content of the asthma review has been amended to incorporate aspects of care positively associated with better patient outcomes and self-management, including a review of inhaler technique and record of exacerbations.

Asthma: Health Services

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to develop a national comprehensive severe asthma guideline to ensure that people with severe asthma are identified and treated correctly. [HL11355]

Lord Bethell: NHS England and NHS Improvement have recently updated their specialised commissioning service specification for managing difficult and severe asthma. A copy of the service specification is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Specialised Respiratory Services [specialised-respiratory-services-adult-severe-asthma.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-12-10/HL11355>

British Transport Police: Coronavirus

Asked by *Baroness Harris of Richmond*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to include British Transport Police officers in the first round of those receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. [HL11929]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advised that Phase 1 of the vaccination programme should target individuals in order of age and risk. The vaccination programme will build up in the weeks and months ahead and extend to more and more people.

It is likely a number of transport workers and British Transport Police will be vaccinated in Phase 1 due to their

age or underlying health conditions. The JCVI have recommended that vaccination of those at increased risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 due to their occupation should be a priority in the next phase, including British Transport Police and Transport workers.

Building Safety Bill (Draft)

Asked by Lord Tope

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made towards preparing the Building Safety Bill for introduction into Parliament. [HL11844]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Building Safety Bill was published in draft on 20 July 2020 and has recently undergone pre-legislative scrutiny by the HCLG Select Committee. We are currently considering the Committee's report and recommendations and will introduce the Bill in due course. We recognise that these are important public safety measures; that is why the Government is committed to progressing the Bill as quickly as possible, so that reforms can be implemented in a timely manner and residents can feel safe, and be safe, in their homes.

Building Safety Fund

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Building Safety Fund imposes restrictions on recipients communicating with journalists about repairs without prior written approval; and, if so, why. [HL11960]

Lord Greenhalgh: The building safety fund does not impose restrictions on leaseholders or residents in their private capacity as individual flat owners commenting on remediation projects or government policy. Funding agreements for the fund include a clause which is standard in commercial agreements between building owners and funders of construction of work which applies to communication with the media about the individual construction project. The clause applies to applicants to the fund who we expect to discuss with delivery partners in the first instance any queries about the remediation project or the funding agreement. We want a constructive working relationship with building owners who apply to the fund, which ensures that the Government's provision of £1.6 billion of funding will make buildings safe for residents as swiftly as possible.

Care Homes: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Dynamic CO-CIN report to SAGE and NERVTAG (recent cases) and the Dynamic CO-CIN report to SAGE and NERVTAG (all cases), published on 29 September, that illustrated inpatient proportion and onset occurrence of hospital acquired COVID-19 since March, what criteria they used to assess (1) the

ethical issues, and (2) the clinical safety of vulnerable communities, when deciding to continue to discharge patients into care homes during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL9926]

Lord Bethell: The Department, working with Public Health England and the National Health Service, continue to closely monitor the emerging domestic and international evidence, and keep our policies under continuous review. Throughout the pandemic, it has continued to be our priority to ensure that people are discharged safely from hospital to the most appropriate place and that they receive the care and support they need.

All individuals must be tested, and receive their result, prior to discharge from hospital to a care home. Building on the commitments of the Adult Social Care Winter Plan, we are working with the Care Quality Commission and the NHS to ensure that anyone testing positive is discharged to a designated setting that is assured to be able to provide safe care. No care home should be forced to admit an existing or new resident to the care home if they do not feel they can provide the appropriate care.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend the furlough scheme beyond 30 April. [HL11745]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: As the Chancellor announced on 17 December 2020, the Government will provide a further update on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme at the Budget on 3 March.

Coronavirus: Government Assistance

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the total daily cost of their COVID-19 financial support packages. [HL11747]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: In their November 2020 forecast, the Office for Budget Responsibility estimated that costs associated with COVID-19 related support was approximately £280 billion. The OBR will publish a new estimate when they release their next forecast at the Budget on the 3 March.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether tests undertaken as part of plans to introduce same day mass testing for COVID-19 in England will be free at the point of delivery. [HL8445]

Lord Bethell: All testing carried out by National Health Service Test and Trace is free at the point of delivery.

Cybercrime: Home Office

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the current risk to the Home Office of a cyber attack; and (2) whether adequate resources are in place to respond to that risk. [HL11906]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Like all major government departments, the Home Office assesses threat from a range of different threat actors. The department uses this information to inform its risk assessments and action plans, both operational and tactical. Risk assessments are updated periodically and whenever a change in the perceived threat is noted.

The Home Office utilises a tiered system of risk assessment covering tactical (system level), operational (business level) and strategic (departmental level) cyber security risks. The Executive Committee has direct visibility of the Department's strategic cyber security risk and mitigation plans.

The Home Office deploys a range of controls designed to provide defence in depth for our systems, which are modelled against the advice provided by the National Cyber Security Centre and the Government's Minimum Cyber Security Standard. The status of these controls is under continual review by the Office of the Chief Information Security Officer, which routinely works with delivery teams to ensure that controls are practical, applicable and effective.

Robust cyber security capability requires continued funding and the availability of suitably qualified and experienced personnel. The Office of the Chief Information Security Officer is resourced for the requirements identified for FY 2021-22, balancing the need for investment against cost effectiveness for the tax payer.

Ethiopia: Humanitarian Situation

Asked by The Lord Archbishop of York

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the humanitarian situation in Tigray; and what steps they are taking in response to any such assessment. [HL11714]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has been at the forefront, liaising closely with the UN and partners, in calling for sustained, free and unfettered humanitarian access across Tigray, in line with the guiding principles laid down by UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Two joint UN and Government of Ethiopia assessment missions to Tigray have taken place, with assessment reports expected soon. We continue to press for the supply of humanitarian assistance to all those who need it. UK supported life-saving assistance including health, nutrition, non food items (such as blankets, shelter and cooking equipment) and water and sanitation has reached some of the conflict affected areas.

We continue to work with the UN to promote and monitor access and the delivery of humanitarian support to all those who need it, including to civilians in contested areas.

EU Budget: Contributions

Asked by Lord Green of Deddington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total UK net public sector contributions to the EU/EC budget between 1991 and 2019 at real 2019 prices. [HL11738]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The total UK Net Public Sector Contributions to the EU budget during the period 1991 to 2019, adjusted to real 2019 prices, is equal to £182.6 billion (average £6.3 billion per annum). This figure does not include receipts received by private UK entities, which would further reduce the UK's net contribution.

Festival UK* 2022

Asked by Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in planning Festival UK 2022; and whether events related to that Festival will be held in all countries of the UK. [HL11996]

Baroness Barran: In October last year we announced the 30 teams that have been selected to take part in the Festival R&D Project. This has provided paid work to our creative sectors, and an opportunity for them to work in new collaborations.

The 30 teams include two from Scotland, two from Northern Ireland, and two from Wales, and two from England. The remaining 22 teams are cross-UK teams, with representatives from at least two of the nations. They bring an extraordinary breadth of knowledge and creativity from the very best of our country's creative talent. The final 10 teams will be announced this year.

Football: Ethnic Groups

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support the Football Association in the recruitment of BAME referees in grassroots football. [HL11779]

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce a racial diversity threshold for boardrooms of all football organisations. [HL11780]

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the Football Association about increasing racial diversity amongst football managers. [HL11782]

Baroness Barran: The Government is in regular dialogue with the Football Association (FA) across a range of matters, including diversity. We welcomed the launch of the FA's 'Football Leadership Diversity Code' which is a step in the right direction to ensure English football better represents our modern and diverse society, on and off the pitch. The Code commits clubs to tackling inequality, including hiring targets, across senior leadership positions, broader team operations and coaching roles. The FA has also committed to following this with a version adapted for the National League System and grassroots clubs in Spring 2021.

Ministers discussed the Code with the FA, as well as other matters including tackling discrimination, in a roundtable with key football stakeholders in November 2020.

The Government is also committed to working with all sports to ensure opportunities to progress are open to all, from athletes to administrators, to board members. As an example of this, in July 2020 Sport England and UK Sport announced a joint review of the Code for Sports Governance. The Code sets out the levels of transparency, accountability and financial integrity required from those who ask for government and National Lottery funding. It currently says that organisations must show a "strong and public commitment" to progressing ethnic diversity. However, it is right to review this to ensure that opportunities to progress are open to all. The Government will be working with UK Sport and Sport England to set new expectations and ensure the sport sector leads by example.

However, there is still progress to be made and the Government will continue to liaise closely with the football authorities on their efforts to improve diversity in the sport.

Grenfell Tower: Fires

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether all those who were displaced due to the fire at Grenfell Tower are in permanent residential accommodation. [HL11880]

Lord Greenhalgh: All 201 households from Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk have accepted an offer of accommodation, and over 95% (194 households) have moved into a new permanent home.

Those households not in permanent homes, are currently living in high quality temporary accommodation; these households have either already accepted a permanent home, or have a suitable permanent home reserved for them. The Council is working with these households at a pace that suits them.

Homelessness

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of people who are (1) homeless, and (2) rough sleeping. [HL11881]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government is clear that no one should be without a roof over their head. That is why we are spending over £700 million this year and will be spending over £750 million next year to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping, further demonstrating the Government's commitment to end rough sleeping.

The latest homelessness and rough sleeping data can be found (attached) on the gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Rough sleeping snap shot [210112 Rough sleeping snapshot in England_ autumn 2019 - GOV.UK - HL11881.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-01-07/HL11881>

Hospices

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what additional funding they plan to allocate to (1)hospice, and (2) palliative, care services in the next five years. [HL9989]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure the future sustainability of the hospice sector. [HL9991]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the adequacy of funding for hospices. [HL9992]

Lord Bethell: The Department recognises that the hospice sector has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and that subsequent social distancing measures have affected some aspects of community fundraising. We regularly assess the effect of the COVID-19 outbreak on the hospice sector and through NHS England and NHS Improvement are in regular discussions with stakeholders in the sector about the challenges they face. A range of steps have been taken to support hospices.

We have provided over £150 million in additional funding to the hospice sector to date during the pandemic. Alongside this, hospices have benefited from the financial support offered by Her Majesty's Treasury to all charities, such as paying no business rates for their shops next year and applying for a Business Interruption Loan.

We continue to keep funding for hospices under review.

Housing: Construction

Asked by Lord Young of Cookham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the consultation paper by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Raising Accessibility standards for New Homes, published on 8 September 2020, when they plan to publish a response; and what plans they have to align the mandatory baseline for accessibility standards for new homes with the accessible and adaptable standard. [HL11853]

Lord Greenhalgh: Evidence gathered by the consultation on raising accessibility standards for new homes will help government consider whether to mandate a higher baseline accessibility standard or to reconsider the way existing optional standards are used. We are currently analysing responses and will publish a government response in due course.

Leasehold: Reform

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the response by Lord Greenhalgh on 5 January (HL Deb, col 11), whether they plan to introduce legislation relating to leasehold reform by 2022. [HL11848]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government remains committed to promoting fairness and transparency for homeowners and ensuring that consumers are protected from abuse and poor service.

Legislation will be brought forward in the second session of Parliament, to set future ground rents to zero. This is the first part of seminal two-part reforming legislation in this Parliament. We will bring forward a response to the remaining Law Commission recommendations, including commonhold, in due course.

Motor Vehicles: Air Pollution

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of air pollution from motor vehicles since the restrictions put in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic were eased in August 2020. [HL11771]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Despite increases in some areas as March lockdown measures eased, average roadside NO₂ concentrations are below levels observed in the previous 3 years. We continue our ambitious plans to improve air quality with our Clean Air Strategy, tackling NO₂ pollution and increasing active travel. Government continues working in partnership with local authorities to help them deliver Clean Air Zones. The Environment Bill will enable greater local action for tackling air pollution.

NHS: Compensation

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the NHS Redress Act 2006 in resolving clinical negligence claims. [HL11819]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to implement the NHS Redress Act 2006. [HL11820]

Lord Bethell: The Department is working intensively with the Ministry of Justice, other Government departments and NHS Resolution to address the costs of clinical negligence claims. We will publish a consultation on the next steps in 2021.

The Department has no plans to implement the NHS Redress Act 2006 and has not made a recent assessment of the effectiveness of the Act in resolving clinical negligence claims.

Passengers: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce a requirement, once possible, for air, sea and rail passengers arriving in England to have had a vaccination against COVID-19 as an alternative to such passengers being required to have a recent negative test result before entry. [HL11947]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government wants to open up international travel in a responsible and safe manner as set out in the recommendations of the Global Travel Taskforce Report, and we will continue to be guided by the science including whether COVID-19 vaccines could be used to facilitate international travel in future. We are working with partner countries on a range of issues to ensure an internationally recognised approach to enable travel.

Railways: Fares

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Transport Focus Fairer fares: the future of rail commuting published on 18 August 2020, in particular the recommendation to trial flexi-season tickets and other marketing initiatives to encourage rail travel as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted; and what discussions they have had with railway operators about conducting such trials. [HL11721]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department welcomes the Transport Focus report on the future of rail commuting post-Covid and considered it together with a range of surveys and evidence on expected future commuting patterns.

We are working closely with industry to develop a solution that offers better value and convenience for those who commute flexibly and will provide further details in due course.

Right of Abode: Hong Kong

Asked by Lord Craig of Radley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer from Baroness Williams of Trafford on 14 May 2020 (HL3768) and the letter sent by the Minister for Future Borders and Immigration on 9 June 2020 in the response to the letter from Lord Craig of Radley on 19 March 2020, whether they have made a decision on the requests of 64 Hong Kong Military Service Corps veterans for right of abode in the UK. [HL11870]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Under the British Nationality Selection Scheme, introduced in 1990 and run until 1 July 1997, a limited number of Hong Kong Military Service Corps personnel who were settled in Hong Kong could apply to register as British citizens.

We are giving careful consideration to representations made on behalf of those former Hong Kong Military Service Corps personnel who were unable to obtain citizenship through the selection scheme.

Hong Kong Military Service Corps personnel, who hold British National (Overseas) citizenship, may be eligible for the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa which opens on 31 January and provides a route to settlement in the UK.

Self-employed: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide financial support to those registered as self-employed who were excluded from previous COVID-19 financial support schemes. [HL11744]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government has provided, and will continue to provide, generous support to the self-employed during the COVID-19 pandemic through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS). The third grant, combined with up to £14,070 worth of support for each individual from the first and second grants, makes the SEISS one of the most generous schemes for the self-employed in the world. The Government continues to take a flexible approach and keeps all impacts and policies under review. Details of the fourth SEISS grant will be available in due course. The Self-Employment Income Support Scheme is one part of a substantial package of support available for the self-employed. Those ineligible for the SEISS Grant Extension may still be eligible for other elements of the support available. The Universal Credit standard allowance has been temporarily increased for 2020-21 and the Minimum Income Floor relaxed for the duration of the crisis, so that where self-employed claimants'

earnings have fallen significantly, their Universal Credit award will have increased to reflect their lower earnings. In addition to this, they may also have access to other elements of the package, including Bounce Back loans, tax deferrals, rental support, mortgage holidays, self-isolation support payments, and other business support grants.

Shipping: Radio Frequencies

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 10 December 2020 (HL10934), what tests they have conducted with British merchant ships contacting UK maritime authorities using (1) High Frequency, or (2) Single Side Band, radio communications from the (a) North Atlantic, (b) South Atlantic, (c) Indian, and (d) Pacific, oceans since the closure of Portishead radio station. [HL11793]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has not conducted any specific testing of radiocommunications with UK merchant ships.

Under the Safety of Life At Sea Convention, it is the responsibility of operators of merchant ships to ensure that those ships carry communications equipment that is consistent with the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), which provides an internationally operated maritime communications service.

UK-registered and regulated ships must have radio installations capable of GMDSS communications to shore for their sea areas of operation. In ocean regions they may choose to have either High Frequency (HF) radio or satellite communications, and in polar regions HF is mandatory.

Trade Agreements: USA

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with the government of the United States about any future trading relationship. [HL11687]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: The incoming US administration is currently in the process of nominating members of its Cabinet and appointing senior staff.

In line with previous practice, the transition team is limiting foreign government contact with the President-elect's appointees and nominees ahead of the inauguration and (where applicable) Senate confirmation process. We look forward to working closely with the new team following the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden on 20th January.

Department for International Trade (DIT) Ministers also engage senior US political figures on a bipartisan basis, including recent discussions on UK-US trade negotiations held between the Secretary of State and Senator Wyden (Dem) and Senator Portman (Rep).

Round five of Free Trade Agreement negotiations between the UK and US concluded on 30 October 2020. It was the most intensive round of negotiations held so far, with a significant proportion of legal text agreed across multiple chapters.

UK Trade with EU

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on consumers of EU-

based companies suspending deliveries to the UK because of documentation and taxation requirements for imported goods following the end of the transition period for the UK's departure from the EU. [[HL11746](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: As with all new tax measures the Government includes its assessment of the impacts of the changes in Tax Information and Impact Notes. Notes for measures recently legislated for in the Taxation (Post-transition Period) Act were published alongside that legislation.

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....1	
Awarding Qualifications in 20211	
British Virgin Islands: Commission of Inquiry1	
Children’s Social Care: Independent Review.....2	
Community Pharmacy and Care Home Vaccinations2	
Coronavirus-related Assistance: Industrial Development Act 1982.....3	
Planning and Heritage: Historic Statues, Plaques, Memorials and Monuments4	
Written Answers.....6	
Armed Forces: Recruitment6	
Asthma.....6	
Asthma: Health Services6	
British Transport Police: Coronavirus.....6	
Building Safety Bill (Draft).....7	
Building Safety Fund.....7	
Care Homes: Coronavirus7	
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.....7	
Coronavirus: Government Assistance7	
Coronavirus: Screening7	
Cybercrime: Home Office8	
Ethiopia: Humanitarian Situation8	
EU Budget: Contributions8	
Festival UK* 2022.....8	
Football: Ethnic Groups8	
Grenfell Tower: Fires9	
Homelessness9	
Hospices9	
Housing: Construction.....10	
Leasehold: Reform10	
Motor Vehicles: Air Pollution10	
NHS: Compensation.....10	
Passengers: Coronavirus.....10	
Railways: Fares10	
Right of Abode: Hong Kong11	
	Self-employed: Coronavirus..... 11
	Shipping: Radio Frequencies..... 11
	Trade Agreements: USA..... 11
	UK Trade with EU..... 12