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**Monday
22 February 2021**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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

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<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 Dirleton	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

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Written Statements

Monday, 22 February 2021

Advanced Research and Invention Agency

[HLWS780]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Kwasi Kwarteng has today made the following statement:

The UK has a proud history of scientific excellence and invention. Charles Babbage, Ada Lovelace, and later, Alan Turing pioneered early predecessors of the computer. Thomas Newcomen and James Watt gave us the steam engine, and Michael Faraday gave us the modern battery.

This Government is committed to continuing this tradition and cementing our role as a science superpower. That is why our manifesto committed to creating a new funding agency, focused on high-risk, high-reward research. I am pleased to update the House that we will be fulfilling this commitment through a new Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA), and we will also be introducing a Bill as soon as parliamentary time allows to create this body.

ARIA will have the sole focus to fund ground-breaking research – research that sparks transformational societal change through the creation of new technologies and new industries.

With £800 million committed to ARIA up to 2024/25, ARIA will form a central part of delivering on our R&D Roadmap, published in July 2020, to ensure the UK is the best place for scientists, researchers, and entrepreneurs to live and work, while helping to power up the UK's economic and social recovery.

As we have developed ARIA, we have sought best practice from international partners. Success stories include DARPA in the US, whose predecessor, ARPA, was instrumental in creating transformational technologies like the internet and GPS. More recently, DARPA has been behind precursors to technologies such as Apple's SIRI.

We have also listened to the scientific community about how these models can best be adapted for the UK to enhance our R&D offer. This includes ensuring ARIA complements existing funders and makes a distinct contribution to the wider R&D landscape. To this end, ARIA will have a bespoke purpose and structure, and will work in partnership with UKRI and across the ecosystem.

ARIA's key features will be:

- A singular focus on high-risk, high reward research funding. ARIA will provide support for transformational, long-term science and technology. ARIA will not be restricted in whether it funds pure science, applied science, or technological development

– in fact, often it will do aspects of each within a single programme.

- A high tolerance for risk and failure. Failure is part of the scientific process, and particularly central to finding the technological breakthroughs that have the potential to create the industries and jobs of the future. ARIA will not shy away from high risk, in the pursuit of high rewards.

- Minimal bureaucracy. The recent approach to COVID rapid response funds and the Vaccine Taskforce has led to a cultural shift around funding and decision-making, towards a more lean and agile system, and ARIA will continue this trend. It will have an innovative approach to funding, with the ability to use mechanisms such as seed grants and prizes to ensure the best support for the best ideas. ARIA's programme managers will be able to pull in scientists on projects within in a matter of weeks.

- To empower exceptional talent. ARIA will be run by exceptional scientists who have the expertise to identify the most exciting and ground-breaking research to invest in. Government will invest in these exceptional individuals, empowering them to use their expertise to identify what research to back rather than providing a research focus for the organisation, and giving them the freedom to start and stop projects quickly and redirect funding efficiently.

Alongside the Bill, we will recruit a visionary CEO and experienced Chair. They will develop ARIA by setting the agenda, shaping the culture, and building an exceptional team for the agency.

ARIA will further diversify our rich and dynamic R&D system, taking us to the next level of scientific and technological advances. Its successes stand to have an impact for how we fund R&D in the future, and ensure we maintain our outstanding global reputation for innovation and discovery.

Clerk of the Parliaments

[HLWS777]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: I informed the House on 30 September 2020 of Ed Ollard's intention to retire from the office of Clerk of the Parliaments with effect from 1 April 2021. A recruitment process for his successor as Clerk of the Parliaments has now concluded.

Four applicants from a wide and high calibre field were interviewed by a board consisting of myself, the Lord Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Liberal Democrats, the Convenor of the Crossbench Peers and Dame Sue Owen, a former DCMS Permanent Secretary and Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Champion.

The unanimous recommendation of the board is that Simon Burton should succeed Ed Ollard as Clerk of the Parliaments. We will have an opportunity to pay tribute to Ed's career in the House nearer to the date of his retirement.

With Simon's appointment, the post of Clerk Assistant will now fall vacant, so an open and fair recruitment process will now commence.

Department for Transport: Contingencies Fund Advance

[HLWS779]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

I hereby give notice of the Department for Transport having drawn advances from the Contingencies Fund totalling £4,000,000,000 to enable expenditure on COVID-19 support packages to be spent ahead of the passage of the Supply and Appropriation Act. The schemes include:

Emergency Recovery Measures Agreements with the Train Operating Companies; the COVID-19 Bus Services Support Grant; safeguarding critical ferry freight routes; and supporting regional transport networks such as Transport for London and light rail networks.

Parliamentary approval for additional resource of £4,000,000,000 will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for the Department for Transport. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £4,000,000,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

The cash advance will be repaid upon receiving Royal Assent of the Supply and Appropriation (Anticipation and Adjustments) Bill.

Departmental Contingent Liability Notification (UKAEA Fusion Liabilities)

[HLWS778]

Lord Callanan: My Honourable friend the Minister for Science, Research and Innovation (Amanda Solloway) 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 an amendment to the Contingent Liability for the fusion activities of the UK Atomic Energy Authority, here on referred to as UKAEA.

UKAEA operate experimental fusion reactors at Culham, Oxfordshire. Under the Nuclear Installations Act 1965, UKAEA are required to meet any third-party liabilities arising from an onsite incident resulting in exposure to ionising radiation.

A remote and unquantified contingent liability is in place which provides cover for such liabilities above £2.25m. UKAEA's captive insurer previously provided cover for such liabilities up to £2.25 million. This was wound up in 2019 as it did not provide good value for money to the taxpayer. Commercial arrangements to replace the captive insurer and cover nuclear liabilities – either in part or in full – would not provide good value for money. The best value for money for taxpayers would be

to amend the existing remote unquantified contingent liability held by BEIS to include all costs arising from exposure to ionising radiation due to the fusion activities of UKAEA.

This contingent liability will remain remote and unquantified. There is no expiry date so will be reviewed annually to ensure it continues to be good value for money for the taxpayer.

The Government will be subject to a new contingent liability for all liabilities from UKAEA fusion activities that lead to exposure to ionising radiation, and I will be laying a Departmental Minute today containing a description of the liability undertaken.

Research and Development Update

[HLWS781]

Lord Callanan: My Honourable friend the Minister for Science, Research and Innovation (Amanda Solloway) 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 support that the Government is providing to United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI) funded doctoral students to address the challenges related to COVID-19 restrictions.

When lockdown began last year, UKRI communicated immediately that PhD studentships should not be suspended ensuring students could continue to receive their stipends. In April 2020, £44m of urgent funding was announced for up to 6-month extensions for PhD students in their final year who could not complete their studies as originally planned due to COVID-19 restrictions. This was taken up by 77% of eligible students.

In November 2020, a further £19.1m was allocated to Research Organisations hosting UKRI funded students. This enabled those organisations to target additional support to those UKRI funded students who needed it most including those whose study had been impacted by caring responsibilities or health reasons, and those in their final year.

These two phases of funding amount to £63m of funding and will provide support to approximately 10,000 students.

Since the introduction of the current restrictions in January, the Government has continued to monitor the impact on the research sector. I asked UKRI to explore what else could be done to help and I can now confirm that we will be providing additional support to UKRI funded PhD students.

A further £7m will now be made available to allocate extensions, based on need, to those students still to complete their studies. Additionally, UKRI are exploring options to increase flexibility for grant holding organisations to allocate existing funding for training and cohort development activity to fund extensions.

Research England will also be delivering around £11m of block grant funding to English universities as a

contribution to their support for their postgraduate research communities, including to students funded by universities themselves and to self-financed students.

By the end of this phase of support funding, UKRI will have provided additional support totalling £70m, including extensions, to around half of all their funded students who were studying at the start of the first lockdown extension. This support has been targeted at

those most in need and with equality, diversity and inclusion considered throughout.

Ensuring that the research sector in the UK has the people and skills it needs is crucial to realising Government's ambition to cement our status as a science superpower. We will continue to monitor this situation closely, to ensure that we are able to consider additional support if necessary.

Written Answers

Monday, 22 February 2021

Afghanistan: Homicide

Asked by **Baroness Goudie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publicly condemn the killing of the two women Afghan Supreme Court judges in Kabul. [[HL12803](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government made strong public condemnations of the killings of the two female Afghan judges, Qadria Yasini and Zakia Herawi, in Kabul. On 17 January, the day of the killings, the Foreign Secretary, our Ambassador in Kabul and I released statements on social media condemning the attack and pressed for an urgent, transparent investigation. I spoke to Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Hanif Atmar the following day, during which I expressed my condolences to the people of Afghanistan and reiterated the UK's support for peace. The Government is extremely concerned about the increase in violence and targeted attacks in Afghanistan, particularly against human rights defenders. Joint statements were also released from European Human Rights Ambassadors on 21 January and from our Embassy in Kabul with other international partners' missions on 31 January calling for justice and the immediate end of these attacks.

Africa: Coronavirus

Asked by **Baroness Kennedy of Cradley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to assist African nations to access adequate supplies of COVID-19 vaccine. [[HL13105](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to rapid equitable access to safe and effective vaccines. The UK has committed £548 million to the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC) - the international initiative to support global equitable access to vaccines, of which the UK is one of the largest bilateral donors. Through match funding, the commitment encouraged other donors to commit \$1 billion by the end of 2020. Our commitment will contribute to the supply of at least 1.3 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines in 2021 for up to 92 countries in the global south, including 46 countries in Africa.

To ensure equitable vaccine access and delivery is achieved in Africa, FCDO has strengthened its engagement with regional bodies such as the African Centre for Disease Control and World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for Africa, alongside country relationships. FCDO is tracking assessments of country preparedness and is working at national and regional levels to support efforts to build country capacity to deliver vaccines and monitor vaccine roll-out, ensuring high risk groups are prioritised. The UK is also contributing up to £20 million to the African Union's continental response to COVID-19.

Agriculture: Research

Asked by **Baroness Jones of Whitchurch**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what additional funds are being allocated for agricultural research and development; and how applications for such funds will be administered. [[HL12816](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: As part of green growth, the Government is committed to investing in research and development to unlock innovation and drive up agricultural productivity, whilst enhancing the environment and helping the sector achieve net zero carbon emissions.

As highlighted in the recently published Agricultural Transition Plan, we will build on previous R&D funding, such as the £160m 2013 Agri-tech Strategy and the £90m Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund 'Transforming Food Production' initiative, to provide additional investment. This will be administered through a new R&D funding package for England as part of proposed productivity measures to stimulate innovation and boost sustainable productivity in agriculture.

Application guidance will be published prior to scheme launch, including a summary of application deadlines, funding criteria, timetable and themes. Competitions are expected to open in early 2022, with communication to farmers and growers in advance, and projects are expected to begin later that year.

Agriculture: Motor Vehicles

Asked by **Lord Empey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the requirement of 'wash certificates' for all second-hand agricultural vehicles moving from Great Britain to Northern Ireland; and what plans they have to provide financial assistance to traders of agricultural vehicles to cover the cost of those certificates. [[HL12887](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Now that the transition period has ended, Great Britain is treated as a third country by the European Union and vice-versa. Building on the existing practice established to maintain the Single Epidemiological Unit on the island of Ireland, both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland remain aligned with EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary rules. Consequently, used agricultural machinery exported from England, Scotland or Wales to Northern Ireland are subject to EU import controls including the requirement for a phytosanitary certificate. Used agricultural and forestry machinery must be cleaned free of soil and plant debris prior to shipping to meet EU import requirements and in order for a phytosanitary certificate to be issued.

Defra has put in place the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS) to support and assist traders moving plants, plant products, agrifood and agricultural machinery from GB to NI. In addition to providing advice and guidance through a dedicated helpline service, MAS

minimises business uncertainty by reimbursing or defraying some of the direct costs of certification that traders will incur as a result of the new requirements. Therefore, if a business is moving used agricultural or forestry machinery from GB to NI, they do not need to pay for the phytosanitary certificates. Defra will monitor the performance of the scheme and review it after three months to determine how to best provide ongoing support to traders.

Agriculture: Wales

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were employed in the agricultural sector in Wales in (1) 1991, (2) 2000, (3) 2010, and (4) 2019. [HL12843]

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

Professor Sir Ian Diamond | National Statistician

The Lord Roberts of Llandudno

House of Lords

London

SW1A 0PW

05 February 2021

Dear Lord Roberts,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question asking how many people were employed in the agricultural sector in Wales in (1) 1991, (2) 2000, (3) 2010, and (4) 2019 (HL12843).

Agricultural employment estimates are produced using a combination of DEFRA surveys and Office for National Statistics (ONS) employment surveys. Employment estimates by year, industry and geographic location are available to download on the employment surveys datasets area of NOMIS[1].

Table 1 below shows agricultural employment in Wales in 1991, 2000, 2010 and 2019.

Table 1: Agricultural employment in Wales[2]

Year	All employees, thousands
1991 [3]	20,000
2000 [4]	12,000
2010 [5]	15,000
2019 ⁴	14,000

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

[1]

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/select/getdatasetbytheme.asp?opt=3&theme=&subgrp=>

[2] Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand

[3] ONS source is the Annual Employment Survey

[4] ONS source is the Annual Business Inquiry

[5] ONS source is the Business Register Employment Survey

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money they estimate was provided by the European Economic Community to support agriculture in Wales in 1991; and how much such money was provided by the EU in (1) 2000, (2) 2010, and (3) 2019. [HL12844]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The following estimated amounts to support agriculture were paid by the Welsh Office Agriculture Department/ Welsh Government under Common Agricultural Policy schemes in the years shown:

- 1991 £42.757 million;
- 2000 £175.620 million;
- 2010 £321.185 million; and
- 2019 £318.311 million.

The above figures exclude market measures paid for the whole of the UK by the Intervention Board / Rural Payments Agency.

Alcoholic Drinks: Excise Duties

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential financial benefit of increasing alcohol duty to reduce the cost of alcohol-related illness and harms to the NHS. [HL12806]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: All taxes are kept under review and the impact of a change to alcohol duty is considered at each fiscal event, including its effect on health.

Amal Nakhleh

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about (1) reports that the administrative detention order of Amal Nakhleh has been extended, and (2) the need for Amal Nakhleh to access treatment for an autoimmune disease. [HL13139]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of Amal Nakhleh's case. According to international law, administrative detention should be used only when imperative reasons of security makes it necessary, rather than as routine practice and as a preventive rather than a punitive measure. We continue to call on the Israeli authorities to comply with their obligations under international law and either charge or release detainees. We remain committed to working with Israel to secure improvements to the practices surrounding children in detention and regularly raise this with the Israeli Ministry of Justice. We also fund projects providing legal aid to

assist children with legal representation and capacity building to local lawyers. Ultimately, a lasting peace agreement is needed which ensures that all those who are in need of medical attention have access to healthcare provisions.

Animal Welfare: Brexit

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what legislation is in place that expressly recognises animals as "sentient beings" and requires Government to pay full regard to animals as sentient beings in formulating and implementing policy, now that Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU no longer applies in UK law. [HL13000]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Now that we have established a new relationship with the European Union, we have a unique opportunity to shape future animal welfare policy in the UK to ensure our already high animal welfare standards are maintained and enhanced.

There has never been any question that this Government's policies on animal welfare are driven by the fact that animals are sentient beings. We have committed to bringing in new laws on animal sentience. Any necessary changes required to domestic legislation will be made in an effective and credible way and will be brought forward when parliamentary time allows.

The Government will ensure that animal sentience is not only recognised in domestic law, but that we will have an effective and proportionate means of taking animal sentience into account in policy making.

Here in the UK, we are already improving animal welfare standards without EU input and beyond the scope of Article 13. The Government is committed to taking action to improve animal welfare at home and abroad, including by increasing maximum sentences for animal cruelty, banning third party sales of puppies, and introducing one of the world's toughest bans on ivory sales. We have also made CCTV mandatory in slaughterhouses and we are planning other reforms. These steps show how seriously this Government gives regard to animal welfare.

Apprentices

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce "portable" apprenticeships. [HL12866]

Baroness Berridge: We are committed to ensuring that sectors where flexible working practices are commonplace, including short periods of project-based employment, are able to make full use of apprenticeships.

As my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, set out in his speech on 29 September 2020, we want more

apprenticeships to be transferable from company to company. During 2021-22, we will test approaches to supporting apprenticeships in these industries, including in construction and the creative industries, and will also consider the role that sectoral apprenticeship agencies might play.

Apprentices: Remote Education

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what arrangements they have put in place to ensure that laptops are provided for apprentices who have to work from home. [HL13134]

Baroness Berridge: We are committed to supporting apprentices and employers to safely continue with, and complete, their programmes during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Following the announcement of a new national lockdown on 4 January 2021, employers and training providers must ensure that training and assessment takes place remotely wherever possible. Face-to-face training and assessment can continue for vulnerable young apprentices, which includes 16- to 18-year-olds who may have difficulty engaging with remote training and assessment at home due to a lack of IT equipment or connectivity, and in employers' COVID-19 secure settings where it is essential for workers to attend their workplace, and where it is safe and practical to do so.

Employers are responsible for providing their employees, including apprentices, with the tools they need to work remotely and should support apprentices with the digital resources they need to also continue their apprenticeship training remotely.

To support businesses during this time, we have extended the incentive payments for employers of up to £2,000 for each new apprentice they hire until 31 March 2021. Employers can use this funding to help meet any of the costs associated with supporting a new apprentice in the workplace, including providing laptops and other resources for learning.

Askham Bryan College

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government which Government departments have relationships with Askham Bryan College; and which Department has overall responsibility for policies towards that college. [HL12886]

Baroness Berridge: Askham Bryan College's primary relationship with government is with the department and its executive agency, the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The department has overall responsibility for policies relating to the delivery of further education and higher education which are provided by Askham Bryan College.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations: Human Rights

Asked by Baroness Northover

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to promote human rights and democracy in Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries, and (2) to provide support for the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights and the further application of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration. [HL12830]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is a leading voice in upholding and defending human rights and democracy. We value our relationship with all ASEAN's Member States, who are committed to rule of law, good governance, and the principles of democracy and constitutional government, through the ASEAN Charter. Where we have concerns we raise these bilaterally, through our regular ministerial and official engagement with host governments, and multilaterally, including through UN Human Rights Council statements and the Universal Periodic Review process. The UK does not currently provide support for the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights.

Asylum: Children

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many unaccompanied asylum-seeking children reached Britain in each of the last three years; and what plans they have to ensure the (1) identification, (2) safety, and (3) wellbeing, of these children. [HL13095]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The number of unaccompanied children who make asylum claims is published in the quarterly immigration statistics. The latest statistics can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets#asylum-applications-decisions-and-resettlement>.

Protecting vulnerable children is a key priority for the Government and the Home Office takes its responsibility for the welfare of children very seriously. Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 requires the Secretary of State to make arrangements for ensuring that immigration, asylum and nationality functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in the UK.

All Home Office staff with responsibility for interviewing and making decisions on asylum claims from children will have received specific training as a precursor to considering claims from children.

In line with our published guidance on handling asylum claims from children, once a child is encountered, the relevant local authority children's services will be contacted and informed of the arrival and a referral made.

Any modern slavery or urgent welfare concerns must be dealt with as a matter of priority.

Thereafter Home Office staff have an ongoing obligation to escalate any welfare concerns they have to the local authority children's services throughout the course of the asylum process. In 2019, the UK received more asylum applications from unaccompanied children than any other country in Europe.

Asylum: Napier Barracks

Asked by The Lord Bishop of London

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the outbreak of COVID-19 at Napier Barracks, what plans they have to end the use of such barracks as asylum accommodation; and if they have no such plans, what steps they intend to take to ensure (1) that social distancing measures are adhered to, and (2) that the dignity and freedom of residents is upheld. [HL12824]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we have taken decisive action to ensure that those seeking asylum in the United Kingdom have the support they need.

Given the unique challenges over recent months, it has been necessary to use contingency accommodation, such as former military barracks, to ensure there is always sufficient capacity to deliver our statutory obligations to destitute asylum seekers.

These sites have accommodated soldiers and army personnel in the past and are safe, secure and suitable accommodation, in which asylum seekers receive three meals a day, all paid for by the taxpayer.

Despite our best efforts and the robust measures in place at our sites, a number of asylum seekers accommodated at Napier recently tested positive for coronavirus.

It was also incredibly disappointing that a number of individuals refused coronavirus tests and had refused to self-isolate or follow social distancing rules, despite repeated requests to do so.

In line with advice from Public Health England, over the last week the Home Office moved a number asylum seekers out of the site. The purpose of this move was to allow others at Napier to self-isolate more easily and facilitate a deep clean of the site.

A wide range of measures have been implemented to ensure guidance on social distancing and self-isolation are properly applied and we have worked closely with public health authorities throughout the pandemic to inform a national approach.

We take the wellbeing, dignity and freedom of those we support extremely seriously. Asylum seekers are not detained and are free to come and go from their accommodation, in line with coronavirus restrictions.

We continue to explore further options to ensure that we continue meet our statutory obligations to support and accommodate destitute asylum seekers at all times.

Atallah Mohammad Rayan

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about reports that the Israel Defence Force (1) denied medical aid to Atallah Mohammad Rayan after he was shot by soldiers, and (2) raided his family home. [HL12871]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not raised this case with the Government of Israel. Our Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises the importance of the Israel security force's adherence to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest. In instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we have advocated swift, transparent investigations. They also raise access to healthcare with the Israeli authorities. The long-lasting movement restrictions and the serious constraints imposed by the occupation can impact the provision of medical care. The wounded and critically ill should be able to access the urgent medical care they need.

Bahrain: Human Rights

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 6 May 2020 (HL3436) and the Minister of State at the Home Office on 11 January (HC130095), what assessment they have made of the role of Tariq Al-Hassan in human rights violations in Bahrain. [HL13132]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We work with a wide variety of partners in Bahrain, including the Ministry of Interior and its Chief of Public Security. As previously stated, any assistance we provide is kept under regular review to ensure it fully complies with our human rights obligations and the Overseas Security and Justice Assistance process.

Bahrain: Torture

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 25 January (HL12009), whether they will now answer the question put, namely, what assessment they made of reports that (1) torture, and (2) cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, has occurred in the Muharraq Security Complex in Bahrain; and whether they received any such reports (a) through the Torture and Mistreatment Reporting Guidance, published in March 2011, or (b) through public representations or records. [HL13131]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of allegations about the Muharraq Security Complex. We

monitor a number of sources of information on matters that relate to human rights in Bahrain and make assessments on that basis. Our latest assessment of the human rights situation in Bahrain was published as part of our Human Rights and Democracy Report in July 2020.

Bankruptcy: Wales

Asked by Lord German

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many businesses have declared bankruptcy in each parliamentary constituency in Wales so far in the 2020/21 financial year. [HL13073]

Lord Callanan: The Insolvency Service publishes National Statistics on insolvency cases for England and Wales combined. It is not possible to identify accurately companies that trade in Wales specifically, or companies that operated within specific parliamentary constituencies before entering insolvency. The data used for insolvency statistics is compiled from information at Companies House. The registered office address for a company may not be representative of its trading location, and often it is changed upon insolvency to the address of the appointed Insolvency Practitioner dealing with the case.

Subject to these caveats, the table below sets out the data on all company insolvencies registered at Companies House during the three quarters of 2020/21 ending December 2020:

Estimated number of registered company insolvencies in Wales by parliamentary constituency of company registered office¹

Estimated number of registered company insolvencies in Wales by parliamentary constituency of company registered office¹

1 April to 31 December 2020

<i>Constituency</i>	<i>Total Company Insolvencies</i>
Aberavon	0
Aberconwy	1
Alyn and Deeside	2
Arfon	1
Blaenau Gwent	1
Brecon and Radnorshire	0
Bridgend	1
Caerphilly	0
Cardiff Central	1
Cardiff North	10
Cardiff South and Penarth	37
Cardiff West	27
Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	1
Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire	0
Ceredigion	1

<i>Constituency</i>	<i>Total Company Insolvencies</i>
Clwyd South	0
Clwyd West	1
Cynon Valley	4
Delyn	1
Dwyfor Meirionnydd	0
Gower	0
Islwyn	0
Llanelli	0
Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney	0
Monmouth	0
Montgomeryshire	1
Neath	0
Newport East	0
Newport West	11
Ogmore	0
Pontypridd	0
Preseli Pembrokeshire	1
Rhondda	0
Swansea East	3
Swansea West	68
Torfaen	1
Vale of Clwyd	0
Vale of Glamorgan	2
Wrexham	1
Ynys Môn	0
Total	177

Source: Companies House, Insolvency Service

¹ Companies House supplies quarterly data on company insolvencies to the Insolvency Service.

The Insolvency Service also holds data on personal bankruptcies in Wales during 2020 where the individual concerned ran a business as a sole trader or partnership. This information will be available later this year following the summer release of the official statistics covering the location, age and gender of individuals that entered insolvency in 2020 (provisionally to be released in August 2020). The latest published statistics cover the period 2000 to 2019 and are available on the GOV.UK website.

Berwyn Prison: Welsh Language

Asked by Lord German

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by Independent Monitoring Board, Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP

Berwyn, published on 17 September 2020, what assessment they have made of complaints that prisoners have been threatened with sanctions for speaking Welsh; and what steps are they taking following those complaints. [[HL12890](#)]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: No sanctions or warnings have been issued at HMP Berwyn for use of the Welsh Language since the prison opened in 2017. There has been one instance where a prisoner was improperly challenged for speaking Welsh in 2019; the matter was investigated, and the member of staff corrected before they issued a behaviour warning to the prisoner. No further complaints of this nature have been reported.

HMP Berwyn is committed to supporting its prisoners, which includes meeting the expectations of the Welsh Language Commissioner and helping encourage the speaking of Welsh at the prison.

Every prison in Wales, including HMP Berwyn, has a Welsh Language Action plan. HMP Berwyn has a dedicated Welsh Language Lead who provides updates to the Diversity & Inclusion Committee, chaired by the Governor.

Betting

Asked by Baroness Mallalieu

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to consider, and (2) to publish, an impact assessment on industries interlinked with the UK betting sector before implementing the affordability checks proposed by the Gambling Commission. [[HL13276](#)]

Baroness Barran: The Gambling Commission's consultation and call for evidence on Remote Customer Interaction closed on 9th February. The Commission is currently considering responses and will be led by the evidence it received in deciding next steps. It would be for the Gambling Commission to consider the appropriate impact assessment, depending on what action it decides to take following the consultation, in line with Business Impact Target Assessment requirements.

Betting: Taxation

Asked by Lord Lipsey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Gambling Commission's consumer affordability proposals on tax receipts from betting. [[HL13110](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: No assessment has been made on the impact on receipts of the Gambling Commission's proposals, which are currently subject to consultation.

As is the case with all taxes, the revenue from gambling taxation is subject to constant evaluation.

Biotechnology

Asked by Lord Walney

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to undertake a strategic review of the role biologics manufacturing could play in pandemic responsiveness and resilience. [[HL12874](#)]

Lord Callanan: Currently the UK does not have the capability or scale to manufacture bulk levels of antibodies; the Vaccine Taskforce identified this as a potential weakness in the UK's future pandemic response.

As a result, the Government issued a Prior Information Notice in October 2020 to engage with the market to explore how UK antibody manufacturing capability can be developed to secure permanent UK access and build resilience. The findings from the market engagement exercise, and the wider landscape of the pandemic, has resulted in the need for a broader strategic review of the role that biologics manufacturing could play in pandemic responsiveness and resilience.

The Government has invested over £300 million to secure and scale-up the UK's vaccine manufacturing capabilities to be able to respond to the pandemic. This includes:

a) Facilities that have come online:

- £4.7 million for skills training through the Advanced Therapies Skills Training Network, which will be delivered through both virtual and physical centres;
- £8.75 million for the set-up of the rapid deployment facility at Oxford Biomedica in Oxfordshire;
- £65.5 million for the early manufacture of the University of Oxford / AstraZeneca vaccine; and
- Funding for fill and finish through a contract with Wockhardt in Wrexham, North Wales which is currently providing fill and finish capabilities to the University of Oxford / AstraZeneca vaccine.

b) Facilities that will come online later this year, to help provide longer term UK capacity and will help in pandemic preparedness:

- £93 million to accelerate the completion and expanded role of the Vaccine Manufacturing Innovation Centre in Oxfordshire; and
- £127 million for the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult Braintree in Essex.

In addition to the above, we have also funded the expansion of the Valneva factory in Livingston, Scotland.

Bivalve Molluscs: Imports

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they plan to make to the EU, if any, to remove its ban on the import of live molluscs from the UK. [[HL12930](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: It is wholly unacceptable that the European Commission has changed

its position regarding the export of live bivalve molluscs from Class B waters. There is no scientific or technical justification for this, and it is already impacting businesses on both sides of the channel. We are publishing a series of correspondence between Defra and the European Commission, which clearly reinforces our position.

The Secretary of State has written to Commissioner Kyriakides. We continue to seek urgent resolution with the European Commission, and we have offered to provide reasonable additional reassurances to demonstrate shellfish health, on the understanding that the Commission must recognise the existing high standards and history of UK-EU trade.

Brain: Tumours

Asked by Lord Crisp

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of research being undertaken into the (1) prevention, and (2) treatment, of brain tumours. [[HL13063](#)]

Lord Bethell: More research is needed on brain cancer. This is a challenging area as the research community is relatively small. We announced £40 million over five years as part of the Tessa Jowell Brain Cancer Mission. The planned designation of Tessa Jowell Centres of Excellence will be a major step forwards in enhancing both treatment and research for people with brain cancer.

British Nationals Abroad: EU Countries

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government how exempted professionals, including those in IT and engineering, who are UK citizens and resident in the EU should evidence their status on entry to an EU country under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. [[HL12987](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Withdrawal Agreement protects UK nationals and their family members who were lawfully resident in the EU by the end of the transition period, on 31 December 2020. Those in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement and their family members are exempt from the EU's temporary restrictions on non-essential travel due to Covid-19 and have a right to enter, exit and transit to their host Member State. To evidence their status, UK nationals must carry evidence of their residence in the EU, as well as a valid passport, to travel. Boarding should be permitted upon presentation of a residence permit; a certificate of application; a frontier worker permit; or any document that credibly evidences their status under the Withdrawal Agreement. Documents that could be used include proof of an EU address; payslips issued by an EU employer; EU bank account statements; or utility bills evidencing an EU address.

The separate provisions in the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement on entry and temporary stay for

business purposes apply to UK nationals living in the EU, in EU countries other than their Member State of residence or frontier work, in the same way as they do to UK nationals living in the UK. Member State rules vary and business travellers should check, prior to travelling, if they need a visa, work permit or other documentation. If a visa or work permit is needed, business travellers should apply well in advance of any travel. The Travel Advice pages published by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office provide the most up to date information on travelling to European countries.

British Overseas Territories: World Trade Organisation

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the UK's membership of the World Trade Organization includes the British Overseas Territories. [HL13100]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The United Kingdom's membership of the WTO does not currently include the Overseas Territories. The UK Government is constitutionally responsible for the international relations of the Overseas Territories, and should an Overseas Territory wish to participate in the WTO, the United Kingdom Government would look to assist in exploring the processes and options available.

British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many doses of COVID-19 vaccine have (1) been offered, and (2) been supplied, to each of the British Overseas Territories, broken down by (a) the total number, and (b) as a percentage of total population over the age of 18. [HL13106]

Asked by Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many doses of COVID-19 vaccine have (1) been offered, and (2) been supplied, to each of the Crown Dependencies, broken down by (a) the total number, and (b) as a percentage of total population over the age of 18. [HL13107]

Asked by Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the COVID-19 vaccination timeline for (1) British Overseas Territories, and (2) the Crown Dependencies, mirrors that planned for the UK; and if not, why not. [HL13108]

Asked by Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the supply of COVID-19 vaccines to residents of (1) British

Overseas Territories, and (2) the Crown Dependencies, is being given equal priority to the supply to UK residents. [HL13109]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government has procured COVID-19 vaccines on behalf of the Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories and is committed to continue to providing a proportionate supply in line with roll out of the vaccine in the UK. The governments of the Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories are responsible for the coordination of their own vaccination programmes. This includes setting their own frameworks for prioritisation based on demographics and their wider public health strategies. The Crown Dependencies have been supplied vaccine directly by Public Health England: details of their vaccination programmes, including up-to-date statistics on number of doses administered, can be found at gov.im, gov.je and gov.gg.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has been coordinating the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines to the Overseas Territories with the support of the Department of Health and Social Care, the Vaccines Taskforce, Ministry of Defence and Public Health England. Deliveries to the inhabited Overseas Territories began on 5 January and as of 15 February, the FCDO has organised 16 vaccine deliveries to 10 Overseas Territories to support their individual vaccination programmes for priority groups, with further deliveries scheduled over coming weeks in line with Territories' vaccination plans. Planning is also underway to deliver vaccines to the two outstanding inhabited Territories: Tristan da Cunha and the Pitcairn Islands.

- Ascension Island: deliveries began 15 February
- Anguilla: deliveries began 4 February
- Bermuda: deliveries began 8 January
- British Virgin Islands: deliveries began 4 February
- Cayman Islands: deliveries began 5 January
- Falkland Islands: deliveries began 1 February
- Gibraltar: deliveries began 9 January
- Montserrat: deliveries began 3 February
- Pitcairn Islands: delivery being arranged
- St Helena: deliveries began 11 January
- Tristan da Cunha: delivery being arranged
- Turks and Caicos Islands: deliveries began 7 January

Public Health England have been providing expert advice to the Overseas Territories on deploying the vaccines. The FCDO have provided support to the Overseas Territories throughout the pandemic, enabling seven islands to begin testing for COVID-19 for the first time, the others to continue testing, ensuring none ran out of Personal Protective Equipment, funding two military deployments and sending medical staff, ventilators and other equipment.

Business: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses' ability to trade. [HL12837]

Lord Callanan: We know that businesses across all sectors have faced enormous challenges throughout this pandemic, that is why the Government has spent over £280bn to put in place an unprecedented package of support to protect jobs and help businesses continue trading where possible.

We are also investing in the development, purchase, and deployment of vaccines in order to lift restrictions once the health data indicates it is prudent to do so.

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with business representative organisations about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses. [HL12838]

Lord Callanan: Ministers and officials have engaged closely with business representative organisations throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and we continue to do so.

BEIS Ministers hold regular sector calls with all the industries that BEIS covers, including but not limited to manufacturing, energy, construction, life sciences, professional services, retail and hospitality. The industry representatives include business organisations and trade associations. We use these ongoing engagements to collect direct intelligence on the impacts of Covid-19 on industries and sectors that informs the response from BEIS and other Government departments and ensures the effectiveness of the Government's response to the Covid-19 outbreak and economic recovery.

Asked by Lord Stunell

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend the underwriting of insurance costs of care homes to businesses in the (1) hospitality, (2) adult, and (3) retail, sector to support the reopening of such businesses once restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic are lifted. [HL12859]

Asked by Lord Stunell

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with the insurance industry about flexibility in the provision of Employer Liability Insurance for businesses in the (1) hospitality, (2) adult, and (3) retail, sectors, to support such businesses to reopen when the restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic are lifted. [HL12860]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government recognises the essential role of the insurance industry in providing the cover businesses need to operate. We are working closely with the insurers, the trade bodies and regulators

to understand what more the industry can do to help individuals and businesses as the economy reopens, and to monitor the availability of cover and the impact this is having on the sector.

As measures to control the virus change, it is right that government support should also evolve. Because of this, we continue to take a flexible approach and keep all impacts and policies under review.

Business: UK Trade with EU

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with business organisations about the impact of the UK's trading relationship with the EU on businesses. [HL12842]

Lord Callanan: Ministers and officials have engaged closely with business organisations throughout the negotiations with the EU and we continue to do so. BEIS Ministers hold regular calls with all BEIS sectors, including but not limited to manufacturing, energy, construction, life sciences, professional business services, retail and hospitality. We use these ongoing engagements to collect direct intelligence on the impacts of the Trade Co-operation Agreement (TCA) on industries and sectors that informs the response from BEIS and other Government departments, and ensures the effectiveness of Government's advice and support to businesses. In addition, my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster chairs the Brexit Business Taskforce comprising a wide group of businesses and business organisations that regularly meet to discuss the impacts and opportunities for businesses from the UK leaving the EU.

Cambodia: Human Rights

Asked by Baroness Northover

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support democracy and human rights in Cambodia in view of the treason charges brought against 121 members of the Cambodia National Rescue Party for treason. [HL12829]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is concerned about the trajectory of democracy in Cambodia. The UK plays a vocal role in the promotion of democracy. We raise concerns about democratic space and other human rights issues with the Cambodian authorities. The British Embassy in Phnom Penh has and will continue to meet with members of the Cambodian opposition and representatives from the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) to hear their concerns. Embassy staff have attended court hearings, including of some of the 121 CNRP members, and will continue to do so in partnership with like-minded foreign missions.

The UK also uses multinational fora to raise concerns. At sessions of the UN Human Rights Council in June 2020, the UK publicly urged the Cambodian authorities to

lift restrictions on political debate and to create the conditions for a proper functioning democracy. We also voiced concern regarding the repeated arrests and intimidation of those seeking to be part of a public discourse about the future of Cambodia.

Cancer: Drugs

Asked by Lord Walney

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for greater UK manufacturing capacity of monoclonal antibodies; and what steps they intend to take to secure such capacity. [\[HL12873\]](#)

Lord Callanan: Currently the UK does not have the capability or scale to manufacture bulk levels of antibodies; the Vaccine Taskforce has identified this as a potential weakness in the UK's future pandemic response.

As a result, the Government issued a Prior Information Notice in October 2020 to engage with the market to explore how UK antibody manufacturing capability can be developed to secure permanent UK access and build resilience. The findings from the market engagement exercise, and the wider landscape of the pandemic, has resulted in the need for a broader strategic review of the role that biologics manufacturing could play in pandemic responsiveness and resilience.

The Government has also invested £127 million in the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult Braintree, which as well as vaccine drug substance manufacture, has the capability for antibody scale-up and clinical scale production of neutralising antibodies for prophylactic and therapeutic treatment.

Care Homes: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decision for inspectors from the Care Quality Commission to be permitted to visit care homes without having undergone a COVID-19 test; and what evidence they have that this does not pose a risk to the residents of those homes. [\[HL8798\]](#)

Lord Bethell: Our first priority continues to be to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in care homes and prevent future outbreaks, and to ensure the health and safety of both care workers and residents. To help reduce the risk of transmission, we have provided the Care Quality Commission (CQC) with test kits so CQC inspectors can undertake weekly polymerase chain reaction asymptomatic testing.

Regular testing will help identify positive cases in the CQC's inspectors without symptoms and enable action to be taken to limit the spread of the virus, supporting the CQC to continue their vital work in ensuring services meet fundamental standards of quality and safety. As with all testing policies, this remains under review.

Census: Staff

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what will be the duties of those employed to carry out the census canvass in May 2021. [\[HL12955\]](#)

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

Professor Sir Ian Diamond | National Statistician

The Lord Greaves

House of Lords

London SW1A 0PW

10 February 2021

Dear Lord Greaves

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question asking what the duties will be of those employed to carry out the census canvass in May 2021 (HL12955).

Census 2021 will be a digital-first census and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) will be encouraging people to respond online if they can on their mobile phones, laptops, PCs or tablets, and providing a comprehensive range of support (including paper questionnaires) for those who are not able to complete the census online. The ONS expects 70 percent of households to respond without needing a reminder letter or visit from field staff. However, where it is necessary for the field staff to be involved and carry out their assigned duties, please be assured that safety is our number one concern.

For Census 2021, due to take place on the 21 March 2021, the ONS will have up to 40,000 census field staff working across England and Wales. The majority of the field force, who are ONS staff, are due to start the main follow-up work following Census day and no field staff will be knocking on doors until after that day.

An initial tranche of field staff is due to start earlier than this, undertaking tasks that do not require them to interact with members of the public nor knock on doors of households. They will be out and about from 8 March performing duties such as checking addresses of undelivered mail, understanding the local area and understanding the access to buildings etc.

Following Census day, field staff will start following up only those households who have not yet responded to the initial invitation and reminder letters. The primary role of these field officers is to give help and encouragement to those who have not yet filled in their census questionnaire online or on paper, and to direct them to the support services they need. Field staff will never enter people's houses; they will be supplied with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), will always be socially distanced and will work in line with all government guidance.

All field staff will have been instructed in how to follow a precise door knocking routine to maximise safety

for themselves and the public. Field officers will record the status of their visits by recording outcomes on the electronic Field Work Management Tool which has been developed for this purpose. A few examples of the many possible outcomes would be: they may record if the property is derelict, there was no answer (so they left a card), there was a hard refusal to complete. Officers can also collect paper questionnaires and post them for a household if the householder has completed one but is unable to post the return (for example, if the householder is housebound and has no family/friends to post the return for them).

There are also field officers that are responsible for encouraging census returns from communal establishments (CEs), who will start this work on 23rd February. The CEs will be sent out an information pack by post and then the CE officers will contact the managers of each of them. They will discuss with the managers of each establishment the best way to enumerate and they will request an invitation to visit in a COVID secure way, that will follow the protocols established by that establishment, to hand deliver the Census packs to a member of the CE staff, as laid out in regulations. They will always follow local and central government guidelines. There is not a need for CE officers to meet with the residents of the establishment, as the managers of the CEs will organise for the census forms to be filled in by each of the residents.

For more detailed information on ONS field staff roles, the ONS has published a Local Authority Partnership Guide^[1] which includes a timeline of key activities during the Census 2021 operation (section 3), factsheets on field staff roles and responsibilities (section 7.2), recruitment allocation and dates for field staff (section 7.3).

The health and safety of census field staff and the public are of the utmost importance to the ONS. Prior to going out into the field, all field staff will be given comprehensive COVID-19 training. This will include detailed guidance on how to use the PPE provided, in addition to the other control measures the ONS has established to ensure everyone's safety. Full details of the safety measures are available on the Census 2021 jobs website.^[2] As set out on that web page, the items of PPE issued to field staff will include, but is not limited to, face coverings, hand sanitiser and sanitising wipes.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

[1]

https://census.gov.uk/assets/Census2021_A4_English_LocalAuthorityGuideVersionTwo_LAGD1-A.pdf

[2] <https://www.censusjobs.co.uk/covid-19-update/>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Local Authority Partnership Guide
[Census2021_A4_English_LocalAuthorityGuideVersionTwo_LAGD1-A.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-03/HL12955>

Central African Republic: Politics and Government

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the current situation in the Central African Republic; and what action they are taking to support the UN Secretary-General in his call for all parties in that country to cease hostilities ahead of the second round of legislative elections expected on 14 February. [HL13004]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government is concerned about the humanitarian and security situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) following presidential and legislative elections. Ahead of the second round of legislative elections on 14 February, we have repeatedly called on all parties to cease violence including through a UN Security Council (UNSC) statement and a tweet from the Minister for Africa, both of which were issued on 21 January. On 24 February the UK, as President of the UNSC for the month, will chair a meeting on CAR to re-assess the situation a month after its last discussion, renew its calls for a cessation of hostilities and consider any further action.

The UK supported election preparations in CAR through a £500,000 contribution to the UN Development Programme's basket fund for elections, to support procurement of critical election materials and greater participation of women and marginalised groups. The UK contributes approximately £40 million annually to the UN peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA) which continues to provide security across the country. The UK is also contributing £21.5 million towards the humanitarian effort in 2020/2021, delivering emergency health, nutrition, food security and livelihoods support to a million Central Africans.

Child Trust Fund: Disability

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children in receipt of (1) Disability Living Allowance, and (2) personal independence payment, received an additional Child Trust Fund (CTF) payment in each year since 2005; and what estimate they have made of the number of such children who have been able to access savings held in a CTF (a) with, and (b) without, a court order. [HL12885]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Estimates of the number of children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and/or personal independence payments who received additional Child Trust Fund payments would only be available at a disproportionate cost.

HMRC has created a [simple online tool to help young people find out where their account is held](#). If someone does not know where the CTF is held, they can use this service at any time. This will provide the details of the account. For those who do not have the identifying information required to access the tool, HMRC will provide alternative, non-digital routes to finding a CTF provider upon request. HMRC and [The Share Foundation](#) are also working together to help children in need of further support. Further information can be found: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/teenagers-to-get-access-to-child-trust-funds-for-first-time>.

Data is not available for those that have accessed CTFs with or without a court order. However, On 1 December the Government made an announcement regarding the clarification of guidance on court fees and CTFs.

China and Hong Kong: British National (Overseas)

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) practical, and (2) political, implications of the announcement that the governments of China and Hong Kong will not recognise British National (Overseas) passports as valid travel documents. [[HL12753](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are disappointed but not surprised by the Chinese decision not to recognise British National (Overseas) passports. However, whatever obstacles China puts in the way of BN(O)s leaving Hong Kong, we will do all we can to enable them to come to live, work and study in the UK. BN(O)s and their families will be able to use documentation other than BN(O) passports to take up this visa. We look forward to welcoming those who wish to settle here.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decision by the governments of Hong Kong and China not to continue to recognise British National (Overseas) passports as valid travel documents. [[HL12854](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are disappointed but not surprised by the Chinese decision not to recognise British National (Overseas) passports. However, whatever obstacles China puts in the way of BN(O)s leaving Hong Kong, we will do all we can to enable them to come to live, work and study in the UK. BN(O)s and their families will be able to use documentation other than BN(O) passports to take up this visa. We look forward to welcoming those who wish to settle here.

China: Embassies

Asked by Lord Hammond of Runnymede

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made towards the development of a new British

Embassy in Beijing; and whether permission for the construction of that new embassy has been approved by the government of China. [[HL13081](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Chinese government has agreed in principle to our project to build a new British embassy in Beijing. We are at the initial stages of our planning application process, with detailed submission and approval not anticipated until later this year. The design stage for the project is underway, and subject to agreement on logistics, planning and funding approval, construction on the new British embassy is expected to start in 2022.

China: Foreign Relations

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 22 January (HL11916), and reports of (1) hostile espionage, (2) threats to Taiwan, and (3) the persecution of Uighurs in Xinjiang, by the government of China, why the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office continues to refer to that government as a strategic partner. [[HL12772](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Our approach to China remains clear-eyed and rooted in our values and our interests. As two global leaders with permanent seats on the UN Security Council, it is right for the UK and China to pursue a strong and constructive relationship in many areas. This does not mean that we hesitate to raise concerns and intervene where needed. This resolve was highlighted by the Foreign Secretary's announcement of new, targeted measures in respect of Xinjiang on 12 January. While we continue to engage, we will always protect our national interests and hold China to its international commitments and promises.

China: Uighurs

Asked by Lord Pendry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of China about reports of human rights abuses against Uighur people including the use of (1) detention camps, (2) forced labour, (3) torture, (4) rape, and (5) sterilisation. [[HL13115](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have repeatedly raised our deep concerns about the human rights situation in Xinjiang at senior levels with the Chinese Government, including the Foreign Secretary raising directly with his Chinese counterpart, Foreign Minister and State Counsellor Wang Yi on a number of occasions in the past year. Through these representations we have underlined a wide range of specific concerns, including the extra-judicial detention of Uyghurs and other minorities and the credible reports of forced labour, torture, rape and forced sterilisation.

The UK has also repeatedly taken a leading international role in holding China to account for these human rights violations, including at the UN. For example, in a joint statement at the UN General Assembly Third Committee in October 2020, alongside Germany, we brought together a total of 39 countries to express grave concern at the situation in Xinjiang, referenced detention camps and reports of forced labour and forced sterilisation. The UK's national, Item 4 statement at the UN Human Rights Council in September 2020 also underlined our concern about these issues.

Clean Air Zones

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in relation to the Clean Air Zones Central Services (Fees) (England) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/1444), what restrictions there are on the amount that local authorities can charge different types of non-compliant vehicles which enter a clean air zone; whether local authorities can retain such charges; whether local authorities are required to use the central services set out in these regulations; and what is the charge per transaction for the use of these services payable to the Department of Transport. [\[HL13048\]](#)

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The purpose of this instrument is to enable the Secretary of State to charge local authorities in England for using the Clean Air Zones Central Services ("CAZ Central Services"). The Government is creating the Services to support the practical implementation of Clean Air Zones ("CAZs"). A CAZ is an area where targeted action is taken to improve air quality, which can include a charging scheme. The CAZ Central Services are national infrastructure services that can be used to administer CAZ charging schemes and include a digital service (including the ability to make payments online) and technical and customer contact support.

a) *What restrictions, if any, are there on the amount that local authorities can charge different types of non-compliant vehicles which enter a Clean Air Zone.*

The ability for charging authorities to introduce a charging scheme, and therefore a Clean Air Zone, is set out in the Transport Act 2000. Part 3 of the Act empowers local authorities (as "charging authorities") to make a local charging scheme in respect of the use or keeping of motor vehicles on roads.

Charge levels for non-compliant vehicles (those that do not meet the requirements of that particular Clean Air Zone) should be set appropriately based on the local circumstances of the local authority and should consider the behaviour change needed to deliver the ambitions for the zone; the local economic and social factors of the zone and surrounding areas; and the operational costs of running a scheme. There are no restrictions on the amount that local authorities can charge but local authorities should not set the level of charge as a revenue raising measure.

b) *Whether local authorities can retain such charges.*

Under the Transport Act 2000 the net proceeds of any charging schemes made under the Act can be retained but are only available to the local authority for the purpose of facilitating the achievement of its local transport policies. This can include the promotion of cycling and walking and other sustainable transport alternatives. A local authority has to give an indication of their plans for use of net proceeds in the Charge Scheme Orders that establish their road user charging schemes. This is a legal requirement that comes from the Transport Act 2000 powers, where the local authority has to relate their decision back to the relevant Transport Plan.

c) *Whether local authorities are required to use the Central Services set out in these Regulations, and what is the charge per transaction for the use of these services payable to the Department for Transport.*

Local authorities are not required to use the CAZ Central Services and can choose to use an alternative service provider if it does not negatively impact upon the time in which it takes to achieve compliance with legal levels for air quality (value for money must also be considered). Local authorities that use the service, will be charged a transaction charge of £2 for each CAZ charge that is processed through the Services (when a motorist uses the CAZ Central Services to successfully pay a CAZ charge imposed by a charging scheme made by the local authority, for driving in a zone).

Climate Change and Nature Conservation: Education

Asked by Lord Knight of Weymouth

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether (1) the causes of climate change, and (2) actions that can benefit and decrease any negative impact on the natural environment, are taught in schools in England. [\[HL12822\]](#)

Baroness Berridge: It is vital that young people are taught about climate change. For this reason, related topics are included throughout both the science and geography curricula and GCSEs. In primary science and geography, pupils are given a firm foundation for the further study of the environment in secondary school. For example, in primary science, pupils are taught about how environments can change as a result of human actions. They will learn about animals' habitats, including that changes to the environment may pose dangers to living things. In primary geography, pupils will be taught about seasonal and daily weather patterns, climate zones and human geography, including land use, economic activity and the distribution of natural resources.

In secondary science, pupils are taught about the production of carbon dioxide by human activity and the effect this has on the climate. This is expanded on in GCSE science where pupils will consider the evidence for additional anthropogenic causes of climate change. In secondary geography, pupils will look at how human and

physical processes interact to influence and change landscapes, environments and the climate. As part of GCSE geography, pupils will look at the causes, consequences of, and responses to extreme weather conditions and natural weather hazards. In 2017, the department also introduced a new environmental science A level. This will enable pupils to study topics that will support their understanding of climate change and how it can be tackled.

School and teachers can go beyond the topics set out in the national curriculum, or do more in-depth teaching of these topic areas, if they so wish.

Coal: Cumbria

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they did not call in the plans for an inquiry into the new coal mine in Cumbria. [[HL13102](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Secretary of State's powers to call in a case are used very selectively, and on 6 January 2021 he decided not to call in this application. The responsibility for determining it is with Cumbria County Council. Further representations to MHCLG when received are carefully considered.

Company Voluntary Arrangements

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for altering the voting procedure for Company Voluntary Arrangements. [[HL12746](#)]

Lord Callanan: The Government has no plans to alter the voting procedure for company voluntary arrangements.

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Company Voluntary Arrangements were made in the last 12 months for which data is held. [[HL12748](#)]

Lord Callanan: There were 286 Company Voluntary Arrangements registered in the UK between January and December 2020.

These data have been extracted from the publicly available quarterly insolvency statistics published on GOV.UK.

Competition: EU Law

Asked by Baroness Walmsley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that UK complaints to the European Commission under the Competition Directive made prior to the UK's departure from the EU are scrutinised by the EU in a timely fashion. [[HL12922](#)]

Lord Callanan: Until the end of the Transition Period, the European Commission could investigate the effect on

UK markets of a breach of EU competition law. To avoid a delay to enforcement, the Withdrawal Agreement gave the European Commission jurisdiction to complete its investigations that relate to UK markets if they began before the end of the Transition Period. The Competition and Markets Authority can work with the European Commission on these cases in the way it could before the end of the Transition Period.

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the environmental impact of the UK joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. [[HL12983](#)]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: The Government shares the public's high regard for the UK's environmental protections and has made clear it will not sign trade deals that compromise these. We will continue to ensure a high level of protection of the environment in new trade agreements. The UK has long supported the promotion of our environmental values globally and this will continue if we join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

The Government will ensure that accession negotiations with CPTPP are consistent with the UK's environmental interests and the Government's policies and priorities. We will be outlining our specific position on environmental standards in our Outline Approach and will publish a scoping assessment, including an assessment of the potential impacts on the environment, at the outset of negotiations.

Construction: Employment

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of labour shortages in the construction industry on (1) their plans to support house building; and (2) costs in the construction sector. [[HL13001](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government has regular contact with the housebuilding sector. Since the start of the year developers have not reported any significant labour shortages or cost increases. We continue to monitor as part of our engagements with the sector.

The construction industry is responsible for training the workforce it needs. The industry, via its Industry Recovery Plan, is currently focussing on measures to address the pandemic and ensure resilience in the sector as a priority.

There is a cross-Government programme to address the construction skills challenge, including the Construction Skills Fund and the new Construction T Levels, which launched in September 2020.

The Government has also introduced new financial incentives for employers to hire apprentices and provided £111 million for traineeships, so that firms can continue to provide opportunities for people starting out in their careers in construction and invest in upskilling their workforce.

This is in addition to the ongoing work to improve skills provision, support modernisation and increased productivity, and create a fair migration system.

Construction: Migrant Workers

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, (1) to review the immigration criteria for construction industry specialists, and (2) to amend the shortage occupation list to include (a) bricklayers, (b) plasterers, (c) plumbers, (d) carpenters, and (e) quantity surveyors. [\[HL13002\]](#)

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Given the wider economic impact of the global pandemic and the number of UK based workers facing uncertainty about their employment or the need to find a new job at this time, the Government believes it is right our global points-based systems encourages employers to look to domestic recruitment and skills training in the first instance, rather than immigration.

In March 2020, the Government commissioned the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to advise on the composition of the Shortage Occupation Lists (SOL) in light of the expanded skills threshold of the new Skilled Worker route, which came into effect on 1 December.

The MAC published its findings and recommendations on 29 September. The Government welcomed the MAC's comprehensive advice, which included a recommendation to add bricklayers and masons; however, we do not consider changes to the immigration rules or the SOLs should be made at this time, before assessing how the UK labour market develops post-Covid 19 and in response to the introduction of the new Points-Based Immigration System. Immigration policy should be considered alongside the strategies for the UK Labour Market not in isolation to them.

As published on 22 October, the Immigration Rules for the new Points-Based Immigration System include an Appendix Shortage Occupation Lists. This replaces the existing lists under Appendix K. The contents are the same.

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the finding in the report by Gleeds Charting the Course: Winter 20/21 UK Market Report, published on 3 February, that there is a shortage of skilled labour available to the UK construction industry. [\[HL13096\]](#)

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the finding in the report by Gleeds Charting the Course: Winter 20/21 UK Market Report, published on 3 February, that the number of EU citizens employed in the construction industry has fallen by 28 per cent in the past year. [\[HL13097\]](#)

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the finding in the report by Gleeds Charting the Course: Winter 20/21 UK Market Report, published on 3 February, that 80 per cent of respondents to Gleeds' Autumn 2020 survey believe that tighter immigration controls will worsen labour shortages and lead to higher construction costs. [\[HL13098\]](#)

Lord Callanan: On 1 January 2021, the UK implemented a points-based immigration system that treats EU and non-EU citizens equally. The Government has introduced greater flexibility for business and migrants, while supporting the economic need of the country. A Skilled Worker visa route is open to all nationals who wish to come to the UK to do an eligible job with an approved employer. A range of skilled occupations in construction are included in the list of eligible occupations.

The Government is supporting the construction sector in its drive to increase investment in skills development, and to equip workers with the skills that they will need for the future. This will be achieved through a joint commitment to implement reforms to the Construction Industry Training Board to make it more strategic and industry-led, and to enable the sector to make best use of funding from the Apprenticeship Levy.

On 1 June 2020, the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) published its Industry Recovery Plan. Employment and skills in the construction sector are identified as a priority, and a focus of the 'Restart' phase of the Plan is to maximise employment opportunities.

The Government has welcomed the Plan and is collaborating with the CLC and industry to ensure that the proposals are implemented.

Contraceptives: Females

Asked by Baroness Grey-Thompson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) costs, and (2) benefits, of providing women with post-delivery contraception; and what plans they have to include such provision in their sexual and reproductive health strategy. [\[HL13080\]](#)

Lord Bethell: In 2018, Public Health England (PHE) made an Economic Analysis Estimation of the Return on Investment (ROI) for publicly funded contraception in England. This cost-benefit analysis showed a significant ROI of publicly funded contraception, £9 for every £1 invested over 10 years. PHE is developing an extension of

the original ROI tool to estimate the specific ROI of post-delivery contraception provision, which will be published in spring 2021.

The Government plans to publish a sexual and reproductive health strategy in 2021. Whilst details of the scope and objectives will be announced in due course, improving access to contraception will be a key theme of the new strategy.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Wales

Asked by Lord German

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much has been paid in payments under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme in each parliamentary constituency in Wales to date. [\[HL13075\]](#)

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The value of claims split by Parliamentary Constituency is not available. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme provides funds to PAYE schemes to support employers to pay a proportion of the wages of furloughed staff. The registered address for PAYE schemes can be in a different area to that where their employees live and work. In addition, for PAYE schemes claiming for between 1 and 99 employments there has been no requirement to specify the amount claimed for each employment. As a consequence, it is not possible to provide reliable figures for the monetary value of the support provided by geographical area.

Coronavirus: Cumbria

Asked by Lord Walney

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to align the COVID-19 restriction level in Ulverston, Cumbria, with Barrow-in-Furness. [\[HL9896\]](#)

Lord Bethell: As of 6 January, all areas have been moved into tier 4 and the Government will review the tiering allocations every 14 days.

Coronavirus: Disadvantaged

Asked by Baroness Coussins

To ask Her Majesty's Government, since the publication of their report Quarterly Report on progress to address COVID-19 health inequalities on 22 October 2020, what (1) actions have been taken, and (2) progress has been made, in relation to implementing Recommendation 12 of that report, regarding public health advice in languages other than English. [\[HL12936\]](#)

Baroness Berridge: The Government has made significant progress in implementing Recommendation 12 and addressing COVID-19 health inequalities. This includes regularly translating public health communications into other languages and formats, including Easy Read, and working with local authorities to translate assets according to local need. Translated

materials are routinely shared in editable formats so they can be useful by as wide an audience as possible.

The Minister for Equalities will shortly be publishing her second quarterly progress report to the Prime Minister and the Health Secretary, which will include a more detailed update against this and the other recommendations from her report of 22 October.

Coronavirus: Disease Control

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the total cost to HM Treasury of providing COVID-19 financial support to those who are ineligible for such support. [\[HL12918\]](#)

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Throughout this crisis, the government has sought to protect people's jobs and livelihoods while also supporting businesses and public services across the UK. To do this, the government has put in place an economic package of support worth over £280 billion this year. These support measures are carefully designed to complement each other to ensure we protect jobs and livelihoods. All our support is targeted to make sure public funds are used responsibly, helping those who need it most as quickly as possible, while minimising fraud risk.

Individuals have benefited from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) and the temporarily increased generosity of the welfare system. On the SEISS eligibility, the scheme is designed to target those who need it most, and who are most reliant on their self-employment income. Around 95 per cent of self-employed people who receive more than half of their income from their self-employment are eligible.

Businesses have benefited from a range of grants, loans and tax reliefs. In January, the Chancellor announced £4.6 billion of further support for the most affected businesses. This includes an additional £500 million, to a total of £1.6 billion, of discretionary funding for local authorities to support their local businesses, known as the Additional Restrictions Grant. As part of the new support package, the Chancellor also confirmed that a further £734 million of additional funding will be provided to devolved administrations to reflect the further increases in support in England.

We must recognise that it will not be possible to preserve every job or business indefinitely or stand in the way of the economy adapting and people finding new jobs or starting new businesses.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the letter sent by the Leader of Newcastle City Council, the Leader of Leeds City Council, the Leader of Manchester City Council and the Mayor of Liverpool to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on 6 October; and in particular, the

concerns expressed about the (1) efficacy, and (2) clarity, of restrictions introduced to address the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL8902]

Lord Bethell: The Department responded to the letter on 23 November 2020.

As the pandemic has progressed, we have gained a better understanding of the virus and how it spreads. When reviewing the efficacy of restrictions, the Government assess a range of indicators which currently includes:

- Case detection rates in all age groups;
- Case detection rates in the over 60 year olds;
- The rate at which cases are rising or falling;
- Positivity rate or the number of positive cases detected as a percentage of tests taken in the general population; and
- Pressure on the National Health Service, including current and projected occupancy, admissions, staff absences.

These indicators are under constant review, regardless of the level of restrictions. Since March 2020, the Government has put in place national restrictions which have led to reduced case rates and hospital admissions.

The Government endeavours to communicate changes to restrictions clearly through the media. Additionally, the Contain framework sets out how national and local partners work with the public at a local level to prevent, contain and manage outbreaks, including through communication. Contain facilitates engagement with local authorities through regional partnership teams, including the Department, Joint Biosecurity Centre and Public Health England, ensuring local stakeholder views are part of the decision-making process.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what the process is for determining a change in the local COVID-19 alert level; and why the Liverpool City Region is subject to a higher alert level than other cities facing similar levels of cases. [HL9214]

Lord Bethell: In reviewing alert levels, the Government takes into consideration all the available data for the local situation, including incidence, test positivity and growth rate amongst other factors, to reduce the spread of the virus and bring 'R' back below 1.

Decisions on the response to suppress the virus in places at local COVID alert level very high, including Liverpool, were made in consultation with local authorities and directors of public health to ensure that the measures are relevant to that area's economic, social and public health situation.

Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make new COVID-19 regulations specifically to protect BAME communities from the virus. [HL8648]

Lord Bethell: For each change in restrictions, formal assessments are made through a Public Sector Equality Duty analysis, under section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. This along with other appropriate assessments considers the potential impacts on groups with protected characteristics as a result of restrictions.

Where outbreaks occur in areas where there are large black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, local authorities should use their local knowledge to engage with and support those communities and we work with local authorities to consider whether national interventions are needed to protect people living in the area.

Coronavirus: Homelessness

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many homeless people have been admitted to hospital with COVID-19 in England. [HL13232]

Lord Bethell: This information is not held in the format requested. NHS Digital collects data on an admission, not individual, basis therefore an individual may be recorded more than once.

Coronavirus: North West

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to respond to the open letter from the leaders and chief executives of Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds city councils to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care which raised concerns that local restrictions put in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic pose a "huge, disproportionate" economic impact; and if so, when they intend to respond. [HL8574]

Lord Bethell: Evidence indicated that reduced operating hours allowed businesses to trade for the majority of the evening while also controlling transmission rates. This aimed to minimise damage to the economy and society, jobs and livelihoods and safeguard education in schools, colleges and universities.

COVID-19 support is available to employers and the self-employed, including sole traders and limited company directors and includes loans, tax relief and cash grants, whether a business is open or closed.

Coronavirus: Nottinghamshire

Asked by Lord Mann

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people have been tested for COVID-19 in Nottinghamshire since the announcement of mass COVID-19 testing in that county. [[HL11672](#)]

Lord Bethell: We do not publish data in the format requested.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment has been made of funding and creating extra capacity in (1) NHS, (2) private, and (3) other laboratories, before 31 March 2021. [[HL8219](#)]

Lord Bethell: HM Treasury approved £22 billion of spending this year for the NHS Test and Trace programme. This covers testing to meet demand over the winter. We are providing an additional £7 billion for NHS Test and Trace to support increased testing, including community testing and ongoing improvements to contact tracing. Eighty per cent of this will be directly spent on laboratories, tests and testing kits.

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many COVID-19 tests were processed on each day between 7 and 14 October; and how long did it take to notify individuals of the results of those tests. [[HL9512](#)]

Lord Bethell: The following table shows the number of tests processed on each day between 7 to 14 October 2020:

7 October 2020	152,051
8 October 2020	153,713
9 October 2020	168,783
10 October 2020	150,743
11 October 2020	155,667
12 October 2020	146,207
13 October 2020	146,073
14 October 2020	164,270

The following table shows the median time for pillar 2 testing from test to notification from 1 to 14 October 2020:

	1-7 October 2020	8-14 October 2020
Regional test sites	28 hours	45 hours
Local test sites	29 hours	47 hours
Mobile testing units	78 hours	41 hours
Home testing kits	75 hours	78 hours

Asked by Lord Walney

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people in total have referred themselves for a NHS COVID-19 test; and what estimate they have made of the percentage of those people who self-referred who had (1) a cough, (2) a temperature, (3) a loss of taste, (4) multiple symptoms, and (5) no symptoms. [[HL9691](#)]

Lord Bethell: We do not publish data in the format requested.

Coronavirus: Travel

Asked by Baroness McGregor-Smith

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they have received from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies on the ability of testing international arrivals for COVID-19 to provide a safe travel system. [[HL8127](#)]

Lord Bethell: The Government has taken scientific advice into account at each step of the development of COVID-19 border measures. The Government has recently introduced a suite of border measures to protect public health. These measures include introducing a pre-departure testing regime for international arrivals and the suspension of all travel corridors to England, meaning that all non-exempt international arrivals must self-isolate for 10 full days.

From 15 February, all travellers who in the 10 days prior to their arrival have been in a country from which travel to the United Kingdom is banned will be required to quarantine in Government managed facilities. All international arrivals will be required to take a mandatory COVID-19 test on day two and day eight of their quarantine period. The Test to Release scheme will remain available to international arrivals from countries that are not on the 'red list'.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by Baroness Hayman of Ullock

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the concerns expressed by the Alzheimer's Society on 1 February about the impact of delaying the second dose of COVID-19 vaccination on care home residents. [[HL12998](#)]

Lord Bethell: Both the Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines provide a high degree of protection after the first dose. The decision to update the dosing interval is based on advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and is designed to save lives. It was made following a thorough review of the data and was in line with the recommendations of the UK's four Chief Medical Officers. The JCVI advised that we should prioritise giving as many people in at-risk groups their first dose,

rather than providing two doses in as short a time as possible.

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Durham***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether migrants who have not paid the International Health Surcharge will be charged for a COVID-19 vaccination; and whether there will be any checks on a person's immigration status before such vaccinations are carried out. [[HL13250](#)]

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Durham***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether COVID-19 vaccinations will be made available to EU nationals who have not confirmed their status under the EU Settlement Scheme after the 30 June deadline for applications has passed. [[HL13251](#)]

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Durham***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether NHS staff organising COVID-19 vaccination appointments are required to ask patients for proof of residence in the UK. [[HL13252](#)]

Lord Bethell: Vaccination against COVID-19 is a primary care service and is free to everyone living in England, including all overseas visitors, regardless of their immigration status or nationality. This includes anyone living in the United Kingdom without permission. This service is not within scope of the National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 2015 and as no charges apply, immigration status checks are not required in order to assess eligibility.

Coronavirus: Vitamin D

*Asked by **Baroness Masham of Ilton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what research they are (1) undertaking, or (2) supporting, into (a) the use, and (b) the benefits, of taking vitamin D supplements to help people who are susceptible to (i) COVID-19, (ii) the long term effects of COVID-19, and (iii) osteoporosis, to keep well. [[HL13113](#)]

Lord Bethell: Existing United Kingdom vitamin D recommendations are based on advice from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN). The SACN carried out an extensive and robust assessment of the evidence on vitamin D and a wide range of musculoskeletal and non-musculoskeletal health outcomes, including fractures and falls which are a consequence of osteoporosis. The SACN recommended a reference nutrient intake of 10 micrograms vitamin D per day for adults and children over the age of one year.

Public Health England (PHE), the SACN and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) concluded that there is currently not enough evidence to support taking vitamin D solely to prevent or treat COVID-19. The expert panel supported current Government advice for everyone to take a daily 10

microgram supplement throughout the autumn and winter for bone and muscle health. NICE, PHE and the SACN are continuing to monitor evidence as it is published and will review and update guidance if necessary.

Corporal Punishment: Females

*Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have raised the caning of women for breaking dress codes with the governments of (1) Sudan, (2) Saudi Arabia, and (3) Iran; and, if so, what responses they have received from those governments. [[HL12751](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Respect for human rights and democratic freedoms underpins the UK's foreign policy. Our Annual Human Rights Report sets out in detail the UK's approach to human rights priority countries, and the work we have undertaken to promote and protect human rights around world. The UK Government has designated 30 countries as Human Rights Priority Countries, these include Sudan, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

UK Ministers and officials consistently raise a range of human rights issues with their counterparts. The UK welcomes the steps taken by the transitional Government of Sudan in this area, including the repeal of the public order law in 2019, removing corporal punishment for the violation of dress codes.

Corruption: Prosecutions

*Asked by **Lord Sikka***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) commercial organisations, and (2) individuals, have been prosecuted each year under the Bribery Act 2010 for failure to prevent bribery; and what outcome was secured in each such case. [[HL12913](#)]

Lord Stewart of Dirlerton: Section 7 of the Bribery Act 2010 provides that a commercial organisation is guilty of an offence of failing to prevent bribery if a person associated with the organisation bribes another person, intending to obtain or retain business or an advantage for the company. The offence can only be committed by a corporate body.

In respect of the two prosecuting agencies that the Attorney General superintends:

- The Crown Prosecution Service has prosecuted one commercial organisation under Section 7, securing a conviction against Skansen Interiors Ltd in 2018.
- The Serious Fraud Office ('SFO') has prosecuted one commercial organisation under Section 7, with Sweett Group plc pleading guilty in 2015. The SFO has also separately entered into six Deferred Prosecution Agreements ('DPAs') with companies for this offence:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of DPAs</i>	<i>Company</i>
2015	1	Standard Bank
2016	1	Sarclad
2017	1	Rolls-Royce
2018	0	
2019	1	Guralp Systems Ltd
2020	2	Airbus SE Airline Services Ltd

Criminal Records: EU Nationals

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether all historic data of criminal convictions in the UK affected by the technical issues with the Police National Computer, reported in January, have now been passed to relevant EU member states; and if not, why not. [HL12905]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK's Criminal Records Office (ACRO) has worked closely with technical teams in the Home Office who manage the Police National Computer (PNC) to implement a technical fix to ensure the data is shared with affected Member States.

Each affected Member State was informed when the historic data held on the PNC became available. ACRO has now sent the majority of those notifications to Member States.'

The latest issue on PNC deletions does not affect our transmission of data to the EU.

Customs: Kent

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 29 January (HL12331), whether they have set out the environmental effects of developing an Inland Border Facility at Dover; and whether they have sought separate approvals for (1) a Construction Management Plan, (2) an Operational Management Plan, and (3) a Reinstatement Plan. [HL12761]

Lord Greenhalgh: My Department has not received any submission seeking the Secretary of State's approval to the development and use of a specific site in Dover as an Inland Border Facility.

For my Department to consider any such request the Special Development Order approved by Parliament requires an evidenced proposal for consideration. This must include an analysis of the likely environmental effects of the development.

No plans for the construction, operation or reinstatement of an Inland Border Facility in Dover are with my Department.

As my Ministerial colleague will be taking decisions on any site-specific proposals it is not appropriate for me to comment on sites that are or may be the subject of a proposal; we will take decisions without pre-determination and on the basis of the evidence and advice in front of us.

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 29 January (HL 12331), whether they have (1) consulted with local residents and others affected by any new Inland Border Facility at Dover, and (2) they have published any application documents. [HL12762]

Lord Greenhalgh: My Department has not received any submission seeking the Secretary of State's approval to the development and use of a specific site in Dover as an Inland Border Facility.

Substantive engagement is a requirement on the relevant border department ahead of seeking approval for any site-specific proposal from my Department.

I understand that the Government's border facing departments have provided a website with information on the Government's plans for delivering inland border facilities. The website can be found at: <https://inlandborderfacilities.uk/>.

As my Ministerial colleague will be taking decisions on any site-specific proposals it is not appropriate for me to comment on sites that are or may be the subject of a proposal; we will take decisions without pre-determination and on the basis of the evidence and advice in front of us.

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 29 January (HL 12331), whether the Department for Transport has provided a demonstration of need for an Inland Border Facility at Dover; and whether any alternative sites have been considered. [HL12763]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Further to the Written Answer provided by Lord Greenhalgh on 29 January, I can confirm that the Department for Transport (DfT) is progressing plans for the White Cliffs Inland Border Facility. The site will act as a location for starting and ending the transit of goods to and from the UK for Department of Environmental, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Several other sites were considered but White Cliffs was the only one that met the requirements of my department and HMRC. Official Controls Regulations state that inbound consignments requiring Sanitary and Phytosanitary checks must be carried out at a Border Control Post (BCP) located either at the port or point of entry, or at the nearest site suitable for the provision of all infrastructure and facilities required to comply with the

official controls regulations governing BCP functions for the commodities to be controlled there.

White Cliffs Inland Border Facility will include a BCP to support the Port of Dover where inbound consignments to the UK may be inspected in a bio secure facility, such as plants, animals and products of animal and plant origin (e.g. food). It will include parking areas for Heavy Goods Vehicles, while waiting to be processed, and other vehicles as well as security measures and facilities to enable the checking of vehicles and goods entering and exiting the site.

DfT's proposed use of the site will require approval, which is being sought by the Government under the requirements of a Special Development Order (SDO). The White Cliffs Inland Border Facility proposals are planned for temporary use and are designed to ensure that there are no significant or long-term environmental effects. DfT does not expect to use this site as a temporary lorry holding facility. DfT, alongside other Government departments, has undertaken a review of options for the use and layout of the site and based on current planning, expect the site to be needed for up to five years. The terms of the SDO require the development to end by December 2025 and reinstatement works to be completed by December 2026.

Government recognises the importance of engagement and we will continue to engage with the community and relevant stakeholders throughout the process to ensure transparency. Details can be found on the Inland Border Facilities website at: <https://inlandborderfacilities.uk>.

Customs: Northern Ireland

Asked by The Duke of Montrose

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is a facility in Northern Ireland which will be able to carry out the batch testing and certification by a qualified person of packs of medicines being traded from Great Britain to Northern Ireland from 1 January 2022; and if so, whether any such facility will have (1) responsibility for, and (2) capacity to, process such certification for veterinary medicines. [HL12906]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) can confirm that there are currently facilities in Northern Ireland authorised to carry out veterinary medicines quality control (QC) batch testing and batch release/certification. These facilities will remain authorised to conduct these activities from 2022. We are currently working with industry and other government departments to establish the capacity and capability in NI to meet the requirement for batch testing and certification by a Qualified Person from 1 January 2022.

Cyprus: Politics and Government

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the proposal by the UN Secretary General to expand negotiations relating to the future of Cyprus to include the government of (1) Greece, (2) Turkey, (3) the Republic of Cyprus, and (4) the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, alongside the UK and UN; whether they support such a proposal; if not, why not; and what discussions they have had with the government of (1) Greece, and (2) Turkey, about participating in such negotiations. [HL12880]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains a strong supporter of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus issue, based on the internationally accepted model of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation as set out in relevant Security Council Resolutions. To that end, we welcome the UN Secretary General's ongoing commitment to work with the parties to conduct in-depth consultations and we look forward to the possibility of an informal meeting hosted by the UN which includes the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders, and the Guarantor Powers, Greece, Turkey and the UK.

We are engaging all parties regularly. The Foreign Secretary met with Greek Foreign Minister Dendias on 2 February, spoke to Turkish Foreign Minister Cavusoglu on 3 February, and travelled to Cyprus on 4 February, to urge all sides to engage constructively ahead of the talks and to demonstrate flexibility in their approach so the Settlement process can progress.

Defence: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Tunnicliffe

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) how many, and (2) what, declaration forms under the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland the Ministry of Defence has to complete to move personnel and equipment to Northern Ireland. [HL12980]

Baroness Goldie: The Protocol is clear that it respects the essential state functions and territorial integrity of the UK. It therefore places no restrictions on military movements between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

There is no additional paperwork required to move personnel and equipment to Northern Ireland.

Department for Education: Staff

Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their White Paper Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth, published on 21 January, whether they have appointed a bill team to work on the

primary legislation they intend to introduce to implement the reforms to the further education and technical training system; if so, how many staff have been appointed; and what is the duration of the contracts of any such staff. [HL13032]

Baroness Berridge: The department is aware that legislation may be needed to deliver some of the ambitious reforms set out in our White Paper and have recently been recruiting a Bill team to lead this work. When fully staffed, the team will comprise 6 officials, who will work with other colleagues across the department. Recent appointments to the team have been fixed term until the end of August 2022.

Designated Landscapes Review

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their report Landscapes Review, published in September 2019, what plans they have to introduce a National Landscape Service. [HL12818]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The independent Landscapes Review, led by Julian Glover, set out a compelling vision for more beautiful, more biodiverse and more accessible National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

We welcome this ambition, as the Government is committed to ensuring our protected landscapes flourish as havens for nature and are places that everyone can visit and enjoy.

The Landscapes Review included recommendations for long-term structural changes, such as creating a new National Landscape Service and changing National Park and AONB statutory purposes, that would require legislation were they to be taken forward.

We are taking time to consider carefully the recommendations and working with partner organisations to inform and develop our response to the review, which we will publish in due course.

Devolution: White Papers

Asked by Lord Heseltine

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish their devolution white paper. [HL12999]

Lord Greenhalgh: Levelling up all areas of the country remains at the centre of government's agenda. We want to devolve and decentralise to give more power to local communities, providing an opportunity for all places to level up. That is why we intend to bring forward the Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper in due course. This will cover how the UK government will partner with places across the UK to build a sustainable economic recovery and set out our plans for future devolution arrangements.

Diplomatic Service: Staff

Asked by Baroness Helic

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) UK national, and (2) locally engaged, staff were employed in the British embassies in (a) Slovenia, (b) Croatia, (c) Bosnia-Herzegovina, (d) Serbia, (e) Montenegro, (f) North Macedonia, (g) Kosovo, and (h) Albania, in the (i) 2015/16, (ii) 2016/17, (iii) 2017/18, (iv) 2018/19, (v) 2019/20, and (vi) 2020/21, financial years. [HL12644]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As at 31 March 2020, the FCDO UK based headcount band for each Embassy requested is set out in the table below.

	(i) 31st March 2016		(ii) 31st March 2017		(iii) 31st March 2018		(iv) 31st March 2019		(v) 31st March 2020		31st December 2020	
Country and Embassy (PQ HL12645)	FCDO UKB staff- Band	FCDO CBS- Band	FCDO UKB staff- Band	FCDO CBS- Band	FCDO UKB staff- Band	FCDO CBS- Band	FCDO UKB staff- Band	FCDO CBS- Band	FCDO UKB staff- Band	FCDO CBS- Band	FCDO UKB staff- Band	FCDO CBS- Band
a) Slovenia	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	fewer than 10	fewer than 10	fewer than 10	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19
b) Croatia	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29
c) Bosnia and Herzegovina	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29
d) Serbia	fewer than 10	50-59	fewer than 10	50-59	Oct-19	50-59	Oct-19	50-59	Oct-19	50-59	Oct-19	50-59
e) Montenegro	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19

	(i) 31st March 2016		(ii) 31st March 2017		(iii) 31st March 2018		(iv) 31st March 2019		(v) 31st March 2020		31st Decemb er 2020	
f) North Macedonia	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19	fewer than 10	Oct-19
g) Kosovo	fewer than 10	30-39	fewer than 10	30-39	fewer than 10	30-39	fewer than 10	30-39	fewer than 10	30-39	fewer than 10	30-39
h) Albania	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29	fewer than 10	20-29

UKB – UK Based Staff

CBS – Country Based Staff

Directors: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 25 January that "I and my officials do not believe that [the directors income support scheme] as framed overcomes the fundamental issues of protecting taxpayers' money and safeguarding it against fraud and abuse" (HC Deb, col 137), which aspects of the proposal for a directors income support scheme by the Federation of Small Businesses do not (1) protect taxpayers' money, and (2) safeguard against fraud and abuse. [[HL12749](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Directors Income Support Scheme, as currently framed, is intrinsically reliant on self-certification. As the Government cannot readily verify this information, an effect of this reliance on self-certification is to open the scheme up to an unacceptable level of fraud by organised criminal groups and others who would seek to exploit these schemes. The Government cannot expose the tax system to these risks, but continues to engage with the FSB regarding these concerns.

Disability: Elections

Asked by Baroness Jolly

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the closure of the EnAble Fund, what support they plan to provide for people with disabilities to stand for elected office. [[HL13181](#)]

Asked by Lord Tyler

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reinstate the EnAble Fund for Elected Office to encourage disabled people to participate as candidates in the May 2021 elections. [[HL13289](#)]

Lord True: It is the Government's ambition to see more disabled people in public office.

The Government has been clear that the responsibility for supporting disabled candidates sits with political

parties and that the EnAble Fund was an interim measure to give parties time to put their own support in place.

Ministers wrote to the main Parties twice in 2019 to ask them how they intend to support their candidates on a long-term basis.

East-West Rail Link

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the new direct railway line from Cambridge to Oxford will be completed; and when the first (1) passenger, and (2) goods, trains will run in each direction [[HL13322](#)]

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the estimated cost of completing the Cambridge to Oxford direct rail link. [[HL13323](#)]

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures, if any, they are taking (1) to ensure the economic sustainability, and (2) to mitigate the environmental impact, of the Cambridge to Oxford direct rail link. [[HL13324](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The full East West Rail (EWR) scheme (Oxford to Cambridge) is planned to be delivered, and operational for passenger and freight services, by the end of the decade. We are currently working hard with the East West Railway Company and Network Rail to develop the right future service patterns for the scheme. This will help ensure that EWR objectives are achieved and provide the best possible connectivity for the communities and customers.

Plans, including costs, for the whole scheme are still in development. We will release further details in due course.

Environmental implications and ensuring economic sustainability have been important parts of the decision-making process for the EWR scheme.

- A strategic objective of EWR is to provide a sustainable and value for money transport solution to support economic growth in the area. This is to be achieved by improving transport connections within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, and ensuring the line supports new housing development in the area.

- The EWR scheme aims to become a net-zero carbon railway. It is committed to protecting the environment by finding approaches to delivery that avoid, minimise or mitigate negative environmental impacts. As part of this, for example, the East West Railway Company has committed to delivering biodiversity net gain in the area.

East-West Rail Link: Electrification

*Asked by **Baroness Randerson***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the planned rail link between Oxford and Cambridge will involve electrification of the entire line; and if not, why not. [[HL13118](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government is committed to decarbonisation, including delivering a net-zero carbon railway. The case for the electrification of East West Rail is being considered, which includes consideration of full electrification along the whole route, as well as options for partial electrification using battery-electric hybrid rolling stock, or hydrogen traction.

Education: Coronavirus

*Asked by **Lord Storey***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to close any legal loopholes which allow (1) home education, and (2) unregistered schools, to operate. [[HL12857](#)]

Baroness Berridge: The government's aim is to ensure all young people receive world-class education which allows them to reach their potential and live a more fulfilled life, regardless of background. That education should be provided in a safe environment, whether at school or at home.

Parents have a right to educate their children at home, and the government wants the many parents who do it well to be supported. Most parents who take up the weighty responsibility of home education do a very good job, and many children benefit from being educated at home.

However, others are deemed to be 'home educated' but, in reality, such education as they get is mainly or entirely through attendance at unsuitable settings such as unregistered independent schools or multiple part-time settings. There is also likely to be a number of children for whom the education being provided is unsuitable, because their parents cannot educate them effectively at home, or the children are simply not being educated.

In the spring of 2019, a consultation was held on proposals for a mandatory register of children not attending state or registered independent schools to help local authorities carry out their responsibilities in relation to children not in school. The consultation closed in June 2019. Responses to the consultation have been considered and a formal government response document setting out the next steps is expected later this year.

Any education setting which provides full-time provision to 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age (or one or more pupils of compulsory school age who is looked after or has an education, health, and care plan) is required to register with the Department for Education as a school. It is a criminal offence to conduct an independent school that is not registered.

The current definition of full-time education does not capture settings which offer only a narrow curriculum even if this teaching takes place throughout all, or most, of the school day. The department consulted on proposals last year to change the definition of independent schools in primary legislation to incorporate such settings. We are currently considering responses to this consultation and will confirm further steps in due course.

The Department for Education and Ofsted are continuing to investigate any settings where intelligence or evidence suggest the operation of an unregistered school.

Education: Mental Health

*Asked by **Lord Watson of Invergowrie***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to establish a Department for Education Mental Health Action Group. [[HL13031](#)]

Baroness Berridge: My hon. Friend, the Minister for Children and Families, and my hon. Friend, the Minister of State for Universities, have convened a mental health in education action group to look at the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and staff in nurseries, schools, colleges, and universities. It will consider how to support mental wellbeing while children and young people are being taught remotely, as they return to education settings and with transitions between education settings in September 2021.

In the first instance, Ministers will engage with health experts to bring together the evidence of impact on children and young people to identify the existing range of support and make sure it is easy to access and has the greatest possible impact. They will also engage with education stakeholders, including staff and leadership unions, to ensure that we understand the issues that are facing staff in nurseries, schools, colleges and universities and how those can be supported in the coming months. Ministers will also work with the existing higher education task force to ensure that the issues it is considering around mental health are reflected.

Electronic Government: Data Protection

*Asked by **Lord Clement-Jones***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are their current requirements for the geographic location of servers used to store public data when procuring cloud services. [[HL13302](#)]

Lord True: When procuring cloud services, departments should use the Technology Code of Practice principles and follow the government Cloud First policy. They should also follow NCSC security guidance and the Information Commissioner's Office's guidance on adequacy of a country's level of data protection. These policies and guidance provide clear guidelines of the things a department should consider, including security classification and best value for the taxpayer.

Employment Agencies: EU Countries

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government to define whether hybrid companies, which offer both services and recruitment services in the EU, would be categorised as agencies or as service companies under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. [\[HL12986\]](#)

Lord Callanan: Whether the activities of a UK company comprise recruitment agency services or other services (or both) under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) will depend on the nature of those activities in each specific case, and may vary over time or between different contracts for the same company.

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement restricts service provision to a maximum of 12 months. [\[HL12988\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The UK-EU Trade & Co-operation Agreement (TCA) is based on best precedent set by the EU's trade deals with Japan and Canada. The TCA ensures that both Parties offer a minimum standard of treatment for business travellers, such as guaranteed lengths of stay of up to 12 months for contractual service suppliers and independent (self-employed) professionals, subject to Member State reservations. This is in line with EU-Japan and CETA precedent, reflects the domestic immigration systems of most of the signatories of the agreement, and is more generous than the typical range of WTO commitments for this category of service suppliers.

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their understanding of the term 'agency' as it appears in the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement in the context of the employment of 'contractual service suppliers' under Article SERVIN.4.1: Scope and definitions 5(b); and whether this definition includes recruitment or language services. [\[HL12989\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) uses the United Nations' Central Production Classification (CPC) (prov., 1991) to identify individual sectors and sub-sectors. Where the TCA says 'other than through an agency for placement and supply services of personnel', it is referring to CPC 872.

CPC 872 includes, but is not limited to, executive search services (87201) ('services consisting in the search for, selection and referral of executive personnel for employment by others'); placement services of office support personnel and other workers (87202) ('services consisting in selecting, referring and placing applicants in employment by others on a permanent or temporary basis, except executive search services'); and supply services of office support personnel (87203) ('services consisting in supplying on a fee or contract basis to the clients, whether on a temporary or long-term basis, office support personnel hired by the supplier, who pays their emoluments').

Her Majesty's Government understands the term 'agency' to mean a business or organisation providing a particular service on behalf of another business. Her Majesty's Government understands 'an agency for placement and supply services of personnel' to include recruitment services, of the kind described under CPC 872, but not language services. Language services may be better categorised under the subsector 'translation and interpretation services' (see Annex 19 (previously Annex SERVIN-4)).

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, contract brokers are to be treated as service providers in a business-to-business relationship with the contracted services provider, or as recruitment agencies. [\[HL12990\]](#)

Lord Callanan: Under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) the classification of the activities carried out by each UK and EU firm will depend on the specific services it provides, which may vary over time or as between different contracts. It would be possible for a single firm to carry out multiple activities at the same or different times (for example, to act both as a contract broker and as a recruitment agency).

Employment: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with manufacturers about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment levels. [\[HL12840\]](#)

Lord Callanan: Throughout the Covid-19 outbreak, we have engaged closely with manufacturing industry through sector roundtables and by talking directly to businesses. This has helped shape the Government's unprecedented package of support which has included loan schemes, grant funding, tax deferrals and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, all of which is designed to be accessible to businesses in most sectors including manufacturing.

Energy: Housing

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 28 January (HL12149), whether they will reconsider the recommendation made by the Policy Exchange in their report *Efficient Energy Policy: How to encourage improvements in domestic energy efficiency*, published on 2 March 2016, to link Stamp Duty Land Tax to the energy performance of a dwelling, in the light of their finding that it would result in 2,700,000 homes being upgraded over a ten year period and be revenue neutral. [HL12794]

Lord Callanan: As with all tax policy, Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) is kept under review, but the Government does not currently have any plans to link SDLT on properties with their relative energy efficiency. As set out in the Energy White Paper, we will be consulting on regulatory options to improve the energy performance of owner occupier homes this year.

Entertainers: EU Countries

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the UK–EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement and the changes to the level of mobility and bureaucracy for touring performers, what plans they have to provide additional funding for the performing arts sector to mitigate against any potential (1) additional costs, and (2) loss of work, for such performers. [HL12934]

Baroness Barran: We know that while leaving the EU will bring changes and new processes to touring and working in the EU, it will also bring new opportunities. Leaving the EU has always meant that there would be changes to how practitioners operate in the EU.

Going forward we will continue to work closely with the sector, including with representative organisations, to assess the impact and to ensure businesses and individuals have the advice and guidance they need to meet new requirements. This includes the creation of a DCMS-led working group to bring together sector leads and other government departments to look at the issues facing these sectors when touring in the EU and explore what further steps could be taken to support them.

This Government recognises the importance of our world leading creative and cultural industries. That is why it provided an unprecedented £1.57bn package of support to help these sectors through the COVID-19 pandemic. To date over £1 billion has been awarded to over 3000 organisations, with 75,000 jobs saved so far, and many more freelancers also benefiting from new work that can now be created. This demonstrates our firm commitment to ensuring that UK culture continues to thrive.

Entertainers: Visas

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to extend the Permitted Paid Engagement route from 30 days to 90 days (1) to allow for longer opera seasons and tours and (2) to form the basis of a reciprocal arrangement with the EU. [HL12766]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Permitted Paid Engagement visitor route currently allows professionals in several sectors to enter the UK for up to one month to undertake permitted paid engagements, where they have been invited by a UK-based organisation and without the need to apply through the sponsored work routes. In line with our commitment to a global points based system eligibility for it does not vary based on nationality.

Non-visa nationals can apply for entry under this route at the border. Visa nationals must apply for entry clearance under this route before travel. The requirements of the Immigration Rules are otherwise the same for both cohorts.

Those wishing to undertake longer tours in the UK can make use of the T5 Creative concession, which allows non-visa nationals to enter the UK for up to three months without an entry clearance if they have a Certificate of Sponsorship. For visa nationals, or those wishing to remain in the UK for up to 12 months, the T5 Creative route is also available.

We will continue to keep our policy under close review, including through wide engagement and dialogue with stakeholders from a range of sectors.

Environment Bill

Asked by Baroness Hayman of Ullock

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the announcement of delays to the consideration of the Environment Bill, what assessment they have made of the impact on the proposed deadline of 31 October 2022 in that Bill for establishing long-term environmental targets; and what steps they are taking, if any, to ensure that such deadlines are met if the Bill has not been given Royal Assent by 31 October 2022. [HL12960]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Environment Bill requires that Statutory Instruments setting out the targets must be brought forwards by 31 October 2022 and will come into force once approved by Parliament. Work is continuing to meet this deadline.

We will continue to develop targets through the robust, evidence-led process set out in our policy paper, published in August 2020. This timetable is unaffected by the pause to the Bill. This process seeks independent expert advice, provides a role for stakeholders and the public, as well as scrutiny from Parliament. We are working towards a public consultation that will include proposed targets and an assessment of their impacts in early 2022.

Environmental Land Management Scheme

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish further details of the National Pilot for Environmental Land Management Schemes for farm support. [HL12815]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: We will be publishing more information about how we will be piloting the new environment schemes in spring 2021. Around that time, we will be inviting expressions of interest from farmers who want to take part in the first phase of piloting covering the Sustainable Farming Incentive Scheme. Following that call for interest, around 1,000 farmers will be invited to join piloting in early summer.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that farmers involved in the Environmental Land Management Scheme are adequately compensated for the impact of introducing nature-based solutions on future flood risk on their land. [HL12974]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: We are working with stakeholders and end users to determine the specific land management actions that will be paid for under the Environmental Land Management scheme. We will set out more details on this later this year. The Path to Sustainable Farming: An Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024' set out examples of the types of actions that we envisage paying for under the Environmental Land Management scheme. This included the potential to contribute to reducing the risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding with natural flood management. We will set out more details on what the Environmental Land Management scheme will pay for this later this year.

We are in the process of developing our approach to making payments under the scheme. We recognise that providing the right level of payment to participants will be critical to this. We are therefore exploring how best to balance providing a fair payment to farmers and ensuring delivery of environmental objectives, against maximising value for money and respecting our international obligations. We will also set out more details on this later this year.

Equality: Travellers

Asked by Baroness Whitaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to implement the undertakings they made in their response to the House of Commons' Women and Equalities Committee report Tackling inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, published on 5 April 2019. [HL13146]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government made a number of commitments across departments in its response to the

Committee's report in July 2019. While the Government's top priority has been to respond to the unprecedented challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, we are continuing to progress the measures we outlined in our response to the Committee, chief among them our commitment to deliver a cross-government strategy to tackle the inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

In our response to the Committee we committed to tackle inequalities in a number of areas, including education. My department has invested £400,000 into education and training programmes for over 100 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people, to receive extra tuition to catch up on lost learning during the pandemic, one-to-one support and expert guidance to help them progress in education or find employment.

This is in addition to the Department for Education's National Tutoring Programme, worth £350 million, which will increase access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged young people over the 2020-21 academic year. The Department of Education also recently made the announcement about additional laptops and tablets to be made available in 2021 for schools and colleges.

Ethiopia: Eritrea

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations, if any, they have made to the government of Eritrea to encourage its military withdrawal from Ethiopia. [HL12852]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are concerned by involvement of Eritrean forces in hostilities throughout the Tigray region of Ethiopia and the growing weight of credible evidence of their involvement in human rights violations. We have raised our concerns with Ministers in both governments, making clear the overriding need to protect civilians and adhere to international law and international human rights law. We continue to urge all parties to bring an end to fighting, prioritise the protection of civilians and allow unfettered humanitarian access. The Foreign Secretary raised these points when he met with Prime Minister Abiy on 22 January.

European Anti-fraud Office: Criminal Investigation

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the European Anti-Fraud Office about its investigation into allegations of harassment, misconduct and migrant pushback. [HL12901]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Where the UK has concerns about human rights we raise them directly with governments concerned. We have not received any request from the European Anti-Fraud Office to

contribute to its investigation, nor have we made any representations.

Fairgrounds: Coronavirus

*Asked by **Baroness Bull***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the list of businesses eligible for local authority financial support as a result of COVID-19 includes travelling and permanently-sited fairground businesses. [[HL12779](#)]

Lord Callanan: In order to be eligible for the grant funding which is available for closed businesses there are three key considerations for Local Authorities when determining the eligibility for a grant under mandatory closure schemes:

- Is the business paying business rates?
- Is the main service of that business required to close due to local or national restrictions?
- Is the business able to self-declare that it meets all scheme conditions, including eligibility and subsidy control requirements?

Where an organisation meets all these criteria, they are considered eligible for the Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed). Both static and fixed fairground businesses may be eligible if they currently pay ongoing fixed property costs.

Where businesses are not eligible to receive support from mandatory grant schemes, they may be able to access support from Local Authority discretionary grant schemes including the Additional Restrictions Grant.

Farmers: Broadband

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Whitchurch***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the report by the National Farmers Union NFU digital survey results, published on 8 February, and (2) the finding in that report that more than four in ten farmers do not have access to fast and reliable broadband. [[HL13190](#)]

Baroness Barran: The Government has delivered superfast broadband to over five million premises, mainly in rural areas, which means that 96% of UK premises have access to superfast speeds and the UK has one of the highest rates of rural superfast coverage in Europe.

However, the Government recognises that further investment in rural broadband is needed, as the National Farmers Union's recent report demonstrates. That is why the Government is investing an unprecedented £5 billion to further subsidise deployment of gigabit broadband in the hardest to reach 20% of the country. The majority of this funding will be deployed in rural areas, and will connect farms in these areas. The £5 billion investment will prioritise deployment to premises without access to superfast broadband, where possible.

Financial Markets

*Asked by **Lord Myners***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they, or any regulators, have reviewed the adequacy of the capitalisation of securities and derivative clearing houses since the introduction of restrictions on dealings in GameStop and AMC Entertainment; and what assessment they have made of the robustness of resolution plans for clearing houses [[HL12827](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: GameStop and AMC Entertainment are companies that are listed in the US and therefore fall within the remit of the relevant US regulators.

More broadly, however, the UK has a robust oversight and resolution regime in place for UK clearing houses ("CCPs"). The Government is committed to ensuring the highest regulatory standards for CCP oversight and resolution and keeps the regulatory framework under regular review.

Any restriction in the trading of specific UK shares would not itself have a detrimental effect on a UK CCP's resources, as it would only mean less transactions cleared through the CCP.

However, if a clearing firm was unable to meet existing obligations to a UK CCP, the CCPs require their members to provide pre-funded resources to mitigate against this risk. Firstly, UK CCPs require clients to post collateral to help cover their trades if they should default on their obligations. CCPs then also require their clients to contribute to a mutualised pool of resources, to be used in the event the collateral provided by a defaulter is insufficient. This pool should, at a minimum, cover the default of the CCP's two largest clients simultaneously.

In the unlikely circumstances where these pre-funded resources provided by its clients are insufficient, UK CCPs are also required to maintain a recovery plan to ensure the continuity of its services.

The Bank of England, as the regulator responsible for supervising CCPs in the UK, has close oversight of the requirements on firms set out above and is responsible for making sure that CCPs' recovery plans are robust and up to date.

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the actions of some retail stock brokerages preventing retail traders from purchasing specific stocks on 28 January; and what plans the Financial Conduct Authority has to investigate the matter. [[HL12850](#)]

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) benefits to institutional finance firms, and (2) costs to retail traders, of the decision by some retail stock brokerages to prevent

traders from taking long positions on specific stocks on 28 January. [HL12851]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) is the UK's financial markets conduct regulator and is responsible for protecting consumers, ensuring market integrity and promoting effective competition. As set out in the FCA's statement of 29 January, broking firms are not obliged to offer trading facilities to clients and may withdraw or suspend services if it is necessary or prudent to do so. The FCA's statement also said that they would take appropriate action wherever they see evidence of UK firms or individuals causing harm to UK consumers or markets.

The Government recognises that the pace and creativity of innovation in UK financial services creates new opportunities for businesses and consumers to participate in markets through technologies such as app-based platforms. However, investors should be aware that investing in securities comes with risks. The FCA's statement of 29 January warned consumers that any losses that result from such investments are unlikely to be covered under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Foreign Investment in UK: Caribbean and Latin America

Asked by Baroness Anelay of St Johns

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the progress achieved by the Latin America and Caribbean Investor Club since its establishment by the Department of International Trade in April 2019. [HL12879]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: Since the launch of the Latin American and Caribbean (LatAC) Investors Club, established to foster business connections between the United Kingdom and the region, the club has brought together over 180 participants, from overseas investors, HM Government, and British companies for two annual events (in 2019 and 2020).

These events provided opportunities for HM Government to strengthen its relationship with investors from the LatAC region, helping us to better support and maintain Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and map potential expansions. Since its launching, club members have supported British growth through at least six new expansion projects, contributing to 73 jobs across the United Kingdom.

In 2021, we are expanding the programme to strengthen contact with investors to address requests for assistance and provide a forum to on how to improve Britain's competitiveness. It will support account management of around 200 existing LatAC investors in the United Kingdom, in coordination with the Department for International Trade's FDI officers, Ministers, Trade Envoys, Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner, and

Ambassadors, to build and maintain strong relationships at senior levels.

Fossil Fuels

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact that ceasing to use fossil fuels would have on (1) controlling climate change, and (2) preventing the extinction of species. [HL12966]

Lord Callanan: Ceasing emissions from the use of fossil fuels would substantially reduce future warming, however continued emissions from other sectors, including agriculture, cement and waste, would still result in rising temperatures, albeit at a slower rate of warming. If we reach net zero carbon dioxide emissions across all sectors, and stabilise or reduce emissions of short lived greenhouse gases such as methane, then at that point, our best current understanding is that warming would cease.

There is a strong scientific consensus that climate change is impacting on biodiversity, including contributing to species extinction, and that tackling global warming would have significant benefits for the natural world. Those impacts are predicted to grow substantially without action to limit future warming.

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to set a target for eliminating the use of fossil fuels by the UK; and if not, why not. [HL12967]

Lord Callanan: The Government is committed to acting on climate change by reducing our emissions to net zero by 2050. As part of this we must move away from fossil fuels and towards cleaner energy sources. This is why we are one of the first countries to commit to ending unabated coal generation, which we intend to do by 2024, subject to consultation. Closing our remaining coal plants by this date would mean that in 10 years we have reduced our reliance on unabated coal generation from almost a third of our electricity supply to zero.

Our Energy White Paper, published last December set out plans for the transformation of our energy system as we move towards fully decarbonised electricity generation by 2050, including working with the oil and gas sector to transform the UK Continental Shelf to be a net zero basin by 2050. As these fossil fuels play a smaller role in our energy mix over time, the government will agree a North Sea Transition Deal to deliver new business opportunities, jobs and skills and protect the wider communities which rely on the sector. My Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan further demonstrates the government's commitment to investing in clean technologies as we move away from fossil fuels.

Ahead of COP26, we will set out further plans for decarbonising key sectors across the economy, culminating in a Net Zero Strategy which sets out our vision for the transition to 2050.

Free Zones

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their proposed sites for freeports and free zones include the seven UK sites that had this status until 2012. [[HL13117](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Freeport locations will be chosen according to the fair, open and transparent selection process, as set out in the Freeports Bidding Prospectus. This is a competitive process and all ports across the country were eligible to apply for Freeport status, regardless of whether or not they had Freeport status until 2012.

Free Zones: Money Laundering and Tax Evasion

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what safeguards they plan to put in place to ensure that planned UK freeports and free zones are not susceptible (1) to tax evasion, and (2) to money laundering, activities that have been reported in relation to the freeports and free zones in EU member states. [[HL13116](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The UK plays a key role in tackling cross-border illegal activity and this is not going to change. Freeports are commonly used across the globe, and we have learnt from these examples to build upon our current expertise to ensure cross-border illegal activity is thwarted.

1) The government's commitment to combatting abusive tax practices, such as avoidance and evasion, has been a key consideration throughout the design of the Freeports tax offer. To ensure they are claimed only for legitimate purposes in support of the Freeport objectives, each relief has been designed with strict eligibility criteria. The legislation governing each relief will also contain mechanisms to prevent or combat illegitimate claims of those reliefs, such as clawback mechanism.

2) Freeports will have to adhere to the OECD Code of Conduct for clean Free Trade Zones and must maintain the current obligations on Freeports set out in the UK's Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017.

G7

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the UK members of the G7 Gender Equality Advisory Committee will be selected. [[HL12809](#)]

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether UK civil society organisations have put forward a representative for the G7 Gender Equality Advisory Committee. [[HL12810](#)]

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether members of the Women 7 will be asked to participate in the G7 summit; and, if so, how their views will feed into the discussions. [[HL12814](#)]

Lord True: The Government is engaging regularly with UK civil society and other organisations, including the Women 7, to inform our Presidency policy agenda. We look forward to this dialogue continuing as we prepare for the G7 Leaders' Summit. Details on the Advisory Council will be set out in due course.

G7: Cornwall

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what gender policies they plan to take forward as part of the foreign and development track at the G7. [[HL12811](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Gender Equality will be central to our G7 Presidency and will be reflected across multiple strands of G7 work. Within the Foreign and Development track, we aim to secure G7 agreement on ambitious new access and learning targets for girls' education, as well as G7 policy and financial commitments, including a successful replenishment of the Global Partnership for Education. The track will also seek to strengthen the G7's commitment to women's political and economic empowerment and to ending violence against women and girls.

Gambling

Asked by Lord Browne of Ladyton

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Baroness Barran on 7 January (HL Deb, col 281), and the statement that "the vast majority of people who gamble do not experience harm", what assessment they have made of the report by Naomi Muggleton et al The association between gambling and financial, social and health outcomes in big financial data, published in Nature on 4 February. [[HL13301](#)]

Baroness Barran: The 2016 combined Health Surveys, estimated that 1.2% of people who gamble are likely to be problem gamblers, with a further 2% at moderate risk, and 4.4% at low risk of experiencing some harm related to gambling. The Health Surveys use two validated screening questionnaires to assess problem gambling, which ask whether respondents have experienced a range of negative behaviours and outcomes related to gambling including spending more than they could afford to lose, chasing losses and borrowing money to pay gambling debts.

Recently published analysis of banking transaction data has demonstrated a correlation between higher rates of gambling spend as a proportion of income and indicators of lower financial inclusion, wellbeing and healthiness. These correlations were generally strongest after the 75th

percentile of spend levels. The analysis found that the majority of people who gamble spend only a small proportion of their income on gambling, and did not establish a causative link between gambling spend and the indicators identified.

The government launched its Review of the Gambling Act 2005 on 8 December with the publication of a Call for Evidence. The Review will be wide-ranging and evidence led, and aims to make sure that the regulation of gambling is fit for the digital age.

Gambling: Females

Asked by Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top

To ask Her Majesty's Government what research they have commissioned into the most common pathways to gambling disorder for women. [[HL12757](#)]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England is currently carrying out an evidence review on the prevalence, determinants and harms associated with gambling, and the social and economic burden of gambling-related harms. This includes reviewing the evidence on young people, men and women. The review is expected to be completed in March 2021.

Gambling: Rehabilitation

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what treatments are available for women affected by gambling addiction; and what assessment have they made, if any, of the percentage of women gamblers receiving treatment. [[HL12797](#)]

Lord Bethell: The NHS Long Term Plan committed to expanding the geographical coverage of treatment services by opening up to 15 specialist problem gambling clinics by 2023/24. Gambleaware commissions the National Gambling Treatment Service which offers a wide range of treatment services for gambling related harms, including for women.

The Government does not hold centrally information on the number of women gamblers receiving treatment.

Gaming: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of adult gaming centres that have ceased trading during the past twelve months. [[HL13162](#)]

Baroness Barran: The government recognises that the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be extremely challenging for businesses, including the arcades sector.

We are continuing to work with organisations in the land-based gambling sector to understand the impacts and how the government may be able to support them.

Currently, we estimate that up to 5% of adult gaming centres have ceased trading in the past twelve months. This estimate is based on recent discussions with Bacta, the trade association for the arcades sector.

Gaza: Overseas Aid

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the health situation in Gaza; and how much financial assistance they intend to provide to that region to meet any health-related need. [[HL12968](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains concerned about the ongoing humanitarian situation in Gaza and the impact of COVID-19 on an already fragile healthcare system. We are pleased that the OPTs will be among the first to benefit from the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC) - the international initiative to support global equitable access to vaccines, with delivery of a first batch of more than 37,000 doses of the of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine anticipated in mid-February.

The UK was one of the first donors to provide funding to support the health and humanitarian response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the OPTs. We have provided £1.25m funding (WHO with £630,000 and UNICEF with £620,000) to purchase and co-ordinate delivery of medical equipment, treat critical care patients, train frontline health workers and scale up laboratory testing capacity - mainly in Gaza. The FCDO is currently running a prioritisation exercise across all its programmes, to ensure that every pound we spend goes as far as possible. The Foreign Secretary will communicate the outcome shortly.

General Practitioners: Asylum and Migrants

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what funding has been provided to local authorities (1) to support (a) asylum seekers, (b) refugees, and (c) migrants, to register with a GP, and (2) to ensure that those people are factored into COVID-19 vaccination plans. [[HL13248](#)]

Lord Bethell: The COVID-19 vaccine is available free of charge to anyone living in England, including those here without permission. The terms under which general practices are commissioned to deliver vaccination services enable practices to vaccinate unregistered patients. Individuals who are not registered with a practice will therefore be able to access the vaccine in line with the priority groups outlined by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisations (JCVI). However, we would strongly encourage everyone to register so that they may be more easily invited for vaccination.

NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with local government, voluntary, community and social enterprise partners and Healthwatch England on a

campaign to support all people, particularly those in inclusion health groups, to register with a general practitioner (GP), which supports the identification of those who should be prioritised for the vaccine.

NHS England and NHS Improvement fund health assessment services commissioned by clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) for destitute asylum seekers in the six Home Office-commissioned initial accommodation centres in England. In 2020/21, approximately £3.2 million was allocated to those CCGs. These services are in place to avoid disproportionate impact on local GP services and health assessment services may refer individuals for GP registration, which now includes prioritisation for COVID-19 vaccination in line with the JCVI's advice.

Genito-urinary Medicine: Females

Asked by Baroness Grey-Thompson

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they are drafting a sexual and reproductive health strategy separately from a broader women's health strategy. [[HL13077](#)]

Lord Bethell: The Government is committed to developing a Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy, which we plan to publish in 2021. Development of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy will be separate from the Women's Health Strategy. However, Departmental officials are working closely together to ensure coherence between the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Women's Health Strategies.

Whilst details of the scope of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy will be announced in due course, the topics considered for inclusion are broader than those that only affect women and we will be taking a whole population approach.

Genocide

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether it remains their policy that the determination of genocide is a matter for international judicial systems. [[HL12754](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Genocide is an international crime with a strict legal meaning. It is the policy of the UK Government that any judgment on whether genocide has occurred is a matter for competent courts, rather than for governments or other nonjudicial bodies. Competent courts include international courts, such as the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, and national criminal courts that meet international standards of due process.

George Taylor

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have received any representations over the past 30 years in

relation to the death of George Taylor following a bomb explosion in Abergele on 1 July 1969; and if so, (1) from whom they received any such representations, and (2) what was their response in each case. [[HL13015](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: An answer to the question by the Noble Lord cannot be obtained as to do so would be at a disproportionate cost to the Department.

We would in any event be unable to confirm with certainty what representations were received in the last 30 years, as it is possible that such representations would have been destroyed in accordance with information retention and disposal schedules.

Getters Talmud Torah

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that the Getters Talmud Torah school is continuing to operate as an unregistered school. [[HL12858](#)]

Baroness Berridge: The Department for Education has not seen any recent evidence in relation to whether the Getters Talmud Torah setting is operating as an independent school. If the noble Lord is aware of such information I would be most grateful if he would share it with me or inform the appropriate inspectorate.

An independent school is a setting which provides a full-time education to 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age (or one or more pupil who is looked after or has an education, health and care plan). The current definition of full-time education does not capture settings which offer only a narrow curriculum, even if this teaching takes place throughout all, or most, of the school day. The department consulted on proposals last year to change the definition of independent schools in primary legislation to incorporate such settings. We are currently considering responses to this consultation and will confirm further steps in due course.

All settings, whether registered or unregistered, must also comply with relevant regulations relating to COVID-19. Failure to do so will be a breach of legislation and poses a risk to public health.

Goldman Sachs: Corruption

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the fine issued by the US Department of Justice to Goldman Sachs for its role in a conspiracy to bribe high-ranking foreign officials to obtain business, what discussions they have had with financial regulators in the UK about investigating Goldman Sachs for any similar practices in the UK. [[HL12912](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Financial Conduct Authority is the regulator responsible for supervising the conduct of financial institutions operating in the UK and is independent from the UK government. The Treasury

discusses a wide variety of issues with the FCA regularly. However, the Treasury has no general power of direction over the FCA and any enforcement decisions by the FCA are independent of government.

Government Assistance

Asked by Baroness Walmsley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the UK's departure from the EU, what system has been put in place to scrutinise illegal state aid complaints in the UK. [HL12921]

Lord Callanan: EU State aid rules no longer apply to subsidies granted from 1 January 2021 in the UK, except for aid within scope of the Withdrawal Agreement, including aid under Article 10 of the Northern Ireland Protocol. However, public authorities must comply with our international commitments on subsidies in the UK-EU Trade and Co-operation agreement (TCA), and other trade agreements, as well as the World Trade Organisation rules on subsidies.

Since the 1 January 2020, subject to any applicable exemptions, a subsidy in scope of the TCA must follow and apply the principles and prohibitions in the agreement before it can be awarded. The TCA also requires certain information about the subsidy award to be made publicly available. The Department has developed a new publicly accessible transparency database for public authorities to record subsidies, which will be launched shortly. An interested Party can take steps for the award of the subsidy to be Judicially Reviewed if they consider that the public authority has not complied with its duties under the TCA or acted in a way that is inconsistent with general public law principles (for example, if the public authority acted unlawfully, irrationally, or with procedural unfairness).

On 3 February, the Government published a consultation on the design of the future UK subsidy regime. This consultation invites views from stakeholders on a number of areas, including oversight and enforcement in the subsidy control regime. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, the Government will bring forward legislation in due course and before the end of the year.

Government Departments: Freedom of Information

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Freedom of Information (FOI) requests they have not responded to within 20 working days; and whether they have any plans to improve the efficiency of the FOI request system. [HL13320]

Lord True: The Cabinet Office publishes information on the handling of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests across Government on a quarterly basis on Gov.uk.

Covid-19 has put particular pressures on public officials, but as the published figures demonstrate that between July and September 2020, departments received around 8,000 freedom of information requests and responded to almost 90% of them within 20 working days or with a permitted extension. This reflects the Government's commitment to fulfill its freedom of information obligations, despite the pressures of responding to COVID-19.

Green Homes Grant Scheme

Asked by Lord Stunell

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Green Homes Grant vouchers have been (1) submitted to ICF for payment, and (2) paid out by ICF to contractors presenting vouchers, in each month since September 2020. [HL12861]

Lord Callanan: Official scheme statistics will be published in due course. BEIS will continue to monitor application data as the scheme progresses.

Asked by Lord Stunell

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the contractual maximum period for honouring vouchers tendered to ICF by contractors under the Green Homes Grant scheme; what proportion of payments have exceeded that period since September 2020; and what steps they are taking to accelerate such payments to contractors who have completed eligible works. [HL12862]

Lord Callanan: ICF will honour vouchers in line with the Green Home Grant Scheme terms and conditions.

The payment process is a four-step process that requires: the customer to confirm the work has been completed, the installer to record the work on the TrustMark database, the scheme administrator to check the conditions of the voucher issued have been met, and then the scheme administrator to make the payment. The scheme administrator check is to ensure consumer protection and value for money, including undertaking fraud checks.

The scheme administrator aims to pay as soon as possible after this process is complete. We are working with consumers and installers to ensure they are clear on the information and checks required, so that vouchers can be paid as quickly as possible. The scheme administrator is prioritising the payment of the vouchers as a matter of urgency. Official scheme statistics will be published in due course.

Asked by Lord Grantchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total value of contracts awarded to ICF to run the Green Homes Grant scheme. [HL12893]

Lord Callanan: In line with Public Contracts Regulations (2015) and Policy Procurement Note 07/16,

BEIS will be publishing a redacted contract and the legally required information on GOV.UK in due course.

Asked by Lord Grantchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many meetings Ministers had with ICF before the Green Homes Grant scheme contract was awarded. [HL12894]

Lord Callanan: The Department contracted ICF to administer the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme, following a competition, using the Crown Commercial Grants and Programme Services framework.

Asked by Lord Grantchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average number of days people wait to receive a voucher from the Green Homes Grant scheme after the application has been approved. [HL12895]

Lord Callanan: Official scheme statistics will be published in due course.

We have designed the voucher process to automate checks where possible and minimise the time taken for voucher approval. However, applications must be thoroughly checked for compliance with the scheme rules to help ensure value for money, consumer protection, and detect malpractice. We will continue to work to reduce the time between application and issuance, where possible.

BEIS will continue to monitor application data as the scheme progresses.

Asked by Lord Grantchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the target number of days for vouchers to be sent out once an application to the Green Home Grant scheme has been approved. [HL12896]

Lord Callanan: We have designed the voucher process to automate checks where possible and minimise the time taken for voucher approval. However, applications must be thoroughly checked for compliance with the scheme rules to help ensure value for money, consumer protection, and detect malpractice. We will continue to work to reduce the time between application and issuance, where possible.

Asked by Lord Grantchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people who have received a voucher from the Green Homes Grant scheme are (1) recipients of benefits, (2) not recipients of benefits, and (3) landlords whose applications will benefit their tenants. [HL12897]

Lord Callanan: As of 8th February 21,947 vouchers have been issued. Further scheme statistics will be published in due course.

Asked by Lord Grantchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications for the Green Homes Grant scheme have been declined. [HL12898]

Lord Callanan: Official scheme statistics will be published in due course. BEIS will continue to monitor application data as the scheme progresses.

Asked by Lord Grantchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications for the Green Homes Grant scheme have been turned down by International Climate Finance because they were unable to verify the identity of the applicant. [HL12951]

Lord Callanan: Verifying the identity of applicants is part of ensuring applications contain sufficient evidence for approval and that government funding is spent appropriately. Under the Green Homes Grant, additional information may be sought from customers when processing applications in order to progress them. More vouchers are being issued every day.

Official scheme statistics will be published in due course.

Asked by Lord Grantchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many builders have been (1) accredited for, and (2) turned down for accreditation by, the Green Homes Grant Scheme. [HL12952]

Lord Callanan: The Green Homes Grant scheme opened for installer applications on 30 September. As of 04 February, the total number of installers registered with the scheme was 911.

Official scheme statistics will be published in due course.

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the Green Homes Grant scheme. [HL13120]

Lord Callanan: The Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme opened for applications in September 2020.

As of 8th February, 22,165 vouchers have already been issued with more being issued every day.

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the voucher scheme, including a comprehensive analysis of scheme outcomes and evidence collected from scheme applicants and other stakeholders will be undertaken.

We continue to listen to and act upon feedback from stakeholders as we have done since the formation of the scheme.

*Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with industry bodies about the effectiveness of the Green Homes Grant scheme. [HL13121]

Lord Callanan: We engage regularly with industry stakeholders across a range of Certification Bodies, Trade Associations and Industry Groups including TrustMark and MCS. We are listening to their feedback and working closely with those bodies to ensure their members are fully informed of the requirements of the voucher scheme.

We have numerous channels for dialogue with the supply chain and consumer groups, including roundtables with certification bodies, trade bodies and representatives from the industry. In December, the Department held its first installer Webinar, taking questions and walking through the scheme details and processes with over 150 installers in attendance.

There will be an independent evaluation of the processes and effectiveness of the voucher scheme, including a comprehensive analysis of scheme outcomes and evidence collected from scheme applicants and other stakeholders.

*Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support contractors with the administration of the Green Homes Grant scheme. [HL13122]

Lord Callanan: We are listening to feedback from installers and are working closely with Trade Associations and Certification Bodies to ensure their members are fully informed of the requirements of the scheme.

We have provided guidance for quotes to both installers and homeowners, so they are clear on the information needed for the scheme administrator to approve an application and we have updated other aspects of the guidance available for installers, for example around payment processes. We have already made improvements based on feedback received and are working closely with the scheme administrator to identify further improvements and support increasing numbers of vouchers and payments to be issued.

BEIS officials will continue to work closely with ICF to identify areas where the process could be improved.

Gulshan Abbas

*Asked by **Baroness Whitaker***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of China about parole for Dr Gulshan Abbas on humanitarian grounds. [HL13145]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are concerned at reports of the sentencing of Dr Gulshan Abbas to 20 years in jail, and note the health concerns expressed by her family. The Foreign Secretary has raised our serious

concerns about the human rights situation in Xinjiang directly with his counterpart, China's Foreign Minister and State Counsellor Wang Yi. The UK has also repeatedly taken a leading international role in holding China to account internationally. For example, our joint statement at the UN General Assembly Third Committee in October 2020, where alongside Germany, we brought together a total of 39 countries to express grave concern at the situation in Xinjiang, and called for China to allow unfettered access to the region for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and other independent observers.

Hala Mash'hour Qutt

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about (1) reports that Hala Mash'hour Qutt was injured during (a) attacks on her family home, and (b) an attempted kidnap, by Israeli settlers; and (2) the steps being taken by that government (i) to investigate, and (ii) to charge, anyone involved in perpetrating any such attacks. [HL12872]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Whilst we have not made representations on these reports, the UK condemns violence by settlers against Palestinians. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population. We urge them to thoroughly investigate every instance of settler violence and bring those responsible to justice.

Hassockfield Secure Training Centre

*Asked by **Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish their plans relating to the former Hassockfield Young Offenders Centre in Medomsley. [HL12755]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The immigration removal estate is kept under ongoing review to ensure that the Home Office has sufficient capacity, in the right places and that it provides value for money.

The Home Office has acquired the former Hassockfield Secure Training Centre in County Durham and will open it as an immigration removal centre by the Autumn. Initial discussions with the planning authority have taken place and work will commence at the site shortly.

In order to meet operational needs and demands, we will continue to operate the immigration removal estate, in a flexible manner.

Health Services: Coronavirus

*Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what additional (1) clinical, and (2) palliative, care support, other than

access to tele-medicine, has been available to carers providing end of life care (a) in residential care homes where there is no nursing presence, and (b) at home, during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL12652]

Lord Bethell: NHS England and NHS Improvement have published a range of online only guidance and resources to support healthcare professionals, carers and those less accustomed to providing end of life care in a variety of settings including in-home care.

In addition, local areas provide access to medication and equipment, direct and specialist support, and education and training for care home staff. Supporting this, NHS England and NHS Improvement have also supplied pulse oximeters and iPads to care homes to enable them to connect better with general practice.

Health Services: Females

Asked by Baroness Grey-Thompson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to create a comprehensive women's health strategy which includes provisions for (1) improving sexual and reproductive health, and (2) menstrual wellbeing. [HL13078]

Asked by Baroness Grey-Thompson

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether plans to improve (1) diagnosis, and (2) treatment, of heavy menstrual bleeding will be included in (a) the sexual and reproductive health strategy, or (b) any broader women's health strategy. [HL13079]

Lord Bethell: Work on both the sexual and reproductive health strategy and the women's health strategy was paused due to COVID-19. For both, the work has now restarted. Heavy menstrual bleeding will not be covered in the Sexual and Reproductive Health strategy. However, the Government agrees that it is important for women to have access to support, including on information, diagnosis and treatment, for conditions such as heavy menstrual bleeding.

The women's health strategy will consider priorities for women's health and further detail regarding the strategy will be announced in due course.

Healthy Start Scheme: Vitamin D

Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) level, and (2) adequacy, of Vitamin D content in Healthy Start vitamins. [HL13257]

Lord Bethell: Healthy Start Vitamins are made available free to people on Healthy Start, as a public health intervention to support the adequate daily intake of key micronutrients. Healthy Start Vitamins tablets for women and Healthy Start Vitamins drops for children

both contain a daily dose of ten microgrammes of vitamin D.

Healthy Start Scheme: Vitamins

Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the shelf life of Healthy Start vitamins; and what steps they take to ensure that such vitamins are delivered within at least three months of expiry. [HL13258]

Lord Bethell: The shelf-life of Healthy Start Vitamins tablets for women is 24 months and the shelf-life of Healthy Start Vitamins drops for children is 15 months. The Service Level Agreement under which Healthy Start Vitamins are supplied to local areas ensures that stocks with sufficient shelf-life should be dispatched and this should be a minimum of three months.

Honey Bees: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Swinfen

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether honey bees moved from Northern Ireland to the rest of the UK must be destroyed; and if so, why. [HL13024]

Asked by Lord Swinfen

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland impacts the movement of Italian bees from Northern Ireland to the rest of the UK. [HL13025]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: It is not the case that honey bees moved from Northern Ireland to other parts of the UK must be destroyed.

EU member states may export bees to Northern Ireland in line with intra-Union trade rules. Queen honey bees can be imported into any part of the UK from Italy and other EU countries but packages and colonies of honey bees can only be imported into Northern Ireland. There is, and will remain, unfettered access for honey bees which qualify as a Northern Ireland good to the rest of the UK market. The basis on which businesses may qualify for unfettered access is clearly set out in legislation passed last year.

Hong Kong: British National (Overseas)

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they provide to people in Hong Kong who only hold a British National (Overseas) passport who wish to travel to the UK. [HL12878]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The vast majority of BN(O) passport holders will have another passport, such as the Hong Kong SAR passport which they can use to travel on. We have not been made aware of anyone who has been unable to travel.

We understand there may be a very small number of individuals who may only hold the BN(O) document and we are working with the Home Office to explore options for this group.

We look forward to welcoming those who wish to settle here.

Hospices

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the increase in demand for hospice care due to delays in the diagnosis of terminal illnesses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; and what steps are they taking to address that increase. [HL9987]

Lord Bethell: No specific assessment has been made. The Department has been working with NHS England and NHS Improvement to monitor the availability and use of hospice capacity since April.

We are aware of an overall increase in demand, but it is currently too early and complex to provide detailed information on how much, if any, is currently due to delays in diagnosis.

Since April, the hospice sector has worked hard to re-design service in response to the pandemic by shutting day services that cannot run in line with COVID-19 guidance and increasing community services, enabling an overall increase in available capacity.

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. We continue to keep the situation under review as further information becomes available.

Housing: Construction

Asked by Lord Crisp

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 29 January and the statement that "new homes in England delivered through any Permitted Development Right must meet this [the Nationally Described Space Standard] space standard as a minimum", why all new homes developed in England do not have to meet the Nationally Described Space Standard. [HL12781]

Lord Greenhalgh: I refer the Noble Lord to the answer given to PQHL12277 and note that the draft National Model Design Code was published on 30 January 2021, and we are seeking views on its content.

We agree that ensuring a good standard and quality of internal space is important to achieving well-designed homes for all, as emphasised in our National Design Guide.

Space standards are an optional technical standard in our national planning policies and local authorities can choose to adopt them locally, if they can demonstrate

need and that there will be no negative impact on viability.

As my Noble Lord is aware, we announced last year that all new homes in England delivered through any Permitted Development Right must meet this space standard as a minimum. This will apply to proposals from 6 April 2021.

Looking to the future, as noted above we recently published the draft National Model Design Code, in which we intend to emphasise the ingredients for well-designed homes, including the application of the Nationally Described Space Standard that can be included in local design codes, guides and policies.

Housing: Energy

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many new homes that have an energy efficiency rating below EPC band C were built in each of the last three years; and what steps they are taking, or intend to take, to ensure that in all new homes are built with at least an EPC band C rating. [HL12889]

Lord Greenhalgh: The number of new homes, including change of use or the conversion of existing properties, that have an energy efficiency rating below EPC band C built, in each of the last three calendar years for which published figures are available, are; 14,772 in 2019, 15,264 in 2018 and 11,168 in 2017.

From 2025, the Future Homes Standard will ensure that new homes are future-proofed with low carbon heating and high levels of energy efficiency to produce at least 75 per cent lower CO₂ emissions compared to those built to current standards, which represents a considerable improvement in energy efficiency standards of new homes.

This year we will introduce an interim uplift to the energy efficiency standards that delivers a meaningful reduction in carbon emissions and provides a stepping-stone to the Future Homes Standard in 2025. This uplift will be expected to produce 31 per cent less CO₂ emissions compared to current standards. This will deliver high-quality homes that are in line with our broader housing commitments and encourage homes that are future-proofed for the longer-term.

Housing: VAT

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on carbon emissions of charging VAT on the repair and maintenance of residential properties; and what plans they have to ensure that the VAT treatment of (1) constructing new build, and (2) repairing and maintaining existing, residential property is aligned. [HL12747]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government currently maintains a zero-rate of VAT on the construction of new

build residential properties. This is to provide a lower burden of tax for purchasers of new homes. The supply of existing homes is exempt from VAT for the same reason. Renovation and conversion costs are also eligible for a reduced rate of VAT, providing conditions are met.

While all taxes are kept under review, the Government has no plans to review the VAT treatment of housebuilding and repair at this time.

Human Trafficking: Children

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many child trafficking cases in the National Referral Mechanism have been suspended before a conclusive decision was made in the past three years. [HL13069]

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many adult trafficking cases in the National Referral Mechanism have been suspended before a conclusive decision was made in the past three years. [HL13070]

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in cases where a child awaiting a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) decision has been reported missing and does not return within 48 hours, how long is the NRM case file held open for before it is suspended. [HL13071]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: When the Single Competent Authority becomes aware that an individual is missing, their National Referral Mechanism (NRM) case can be suspended unless there is already sufficient information available on which to make a decision. Suspended cases can be reopened at any time.

Sections 14.194 - 14.204 of the Modern Slavery: Statutory Guidance for England and Wales (under s49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015) and Non-Statutory Guidance for Scotland and Northern Ireland Version 2.0 sets out the actions the SCA takes when suspending a case.

The Home Office publishes quarterly and annual statistics regarding the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) the latest published NRM statistics can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>. However, the statistics do not currently contain data on the number of cases suspended prior to a Conclusive Grounds decision.

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of COVID-19 on (1) the level of child trafficking in the UK, and (2) their efforts to combat such trafficking. [HL13072]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: This Government is committed to protecting those at risk from abuse and exploitation, including during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Home Office publishes statistics on National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals on a quarterly basis, and reports up to Q3 2020 can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>

NRM referrals for individuals who were potentially exploited as children for quarter 1 (January to March), quarter 2 (April to June) and quarter 3 of 2020 (July to September) were 1,237, 1,274 and 1,159 respectively. Quarter 4 statistics (October to December 2020) are being prepared and the release date will be confirmed here. national referral - Research and statistics - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

During the Covid-19 pandemic, NRM referral rates may have been affected by a number of factors. This includes reduced levels of travel from other countries to the UK, and lockdown measures in the UK meaning victims have been less likely to interact with First Responders.

The Home Office recognises victims are coming into contact with different services during the pandemic and we have worked to raise awareness of the indicators of modern slavery with the providers of these services to ensure victims continue to be identified and supported.

The Home Office continues to work with a range of partners to identify and deliver effective prevention activity. This includes successful awareness raising initiatives such as the Government's 'Hidden in Plain Sight' campaign and the #SlaveryonYourDoorstep campaign led by CrimeStoppers. We also have a dedicated GOV.UK resources page that provides up-to-date information on how to spot the signs of modern slavery and report concerns.

Throughout the pandemic, we have worked closely with law enforcement partners to monitor risks and ensure that social distancing measures do not impede their ability to carry out work to prevent and tackle crime or prevent victims coming forward.

Hydrogen: Investment

Asked by The Earl of Shrewsbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to incentivise private investment in the UK hydrogen market. [HL13023]

Lord Callanan: We recognise the importance that government ambition, coupled with a supportive policy framework, has had in building investor confidence in the development of low carbon technologies in the UK.

My Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution will mobilise £12 billion of government investment to unlock three times as much private sector investment by 2030.

The Ten Point Plan and Energy White Paper both set out that the Government, working with industry, aims to have 5GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity in the UK by 2030.

In support of this we have announced a £240m Net Zero Hydrogen Fund for co-investment in new low carbon hydrogen production, to bring forward a combination of CCUS-enabled 'blue' hydrogen and electrolytic 'green' hydrogen projects. This year, we are bringing forward detail on hydrogen business models and the revenue mechanism, to stimulate private investment in new low carbon hydrogen production facilities.

The Government will publish a dedicated Hydrogen Strategy in the first half of this year. This will offer more detail on how we will work with industry to meet the 2030 ambition.

Hydrogen: Job Creation

*Asked by **The Earl of Shrewsbury***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase manufacturing jobs in the UK hydrogen market. [[HL13022](#)]

Lord Callanan: My Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution will mobilise £12 billion of government investment to unlock three times as much private sector investment by 2030. The Ten Point Plan and Energy White Paper both set out that the Government, working with industry, aims to have 5GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity in the UK by 2030.

The Government will publish a dedicated Hydrogen Strategy in the first half of this year. This will offer more detail on how we will work with industry to meet the 2030 ambition.

Driving the growth of low carbon hydrogen could deliver support for up to 8,000 jobs by 2030, potentially unlocking up to 100,000 domestic and export jobs by 2050 in a high hydrogen scenario.

To ensure we have the skilled workforce to deliver net zero, including our commitments on hydrogen, the government has launched the Green Jobs Taskforce, working in partnership with business, skills providers and unions, to help develop plans for new long-term good quality, green jobs by 2030.

Immigration: Afghanistan

*Asked by **Baroness Anelay of St Johns***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to issue visas to those Afghan nationals who worked as translators with the British Armed Forces; and whether such visas will be issued on the same basis as the process already launched in the United States for Afghan nationals who worked as translators with the United States military. [[HL13041](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government recognises the vital role of interpreters and local staff in operations in Afghanistan. That is why there are two dedicated schemes designed to help them relocate to the UK: the ex-gratia scheme and the intimidation policy. Over 1,300 former Afghan interpreters, and their family

members, have been relocated to the UK under these schemes since 2014.

Those who apply and are approved for relocation are brought to the UK as soon as suitable accommodation has been sourced and support arrangements are in place.

Immigration: EEA Nationals and EU Nationals

*Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) EU, and (2) EEA, citizens with settled status have been denied citizenship because they did not have Comprehensive Sickness Insurance during their qualifying period of residence. [[HL12927](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We are not aware of any applications for British Citizenship being refused purely based on the requirement for Comprehensive Sickness Insurance under EEA Regulations.

Holding Comprehensive Sickness Insurance is not a mandatory requirement for the award of British citizenship or for being awarded Settled Status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

Immigration: Hong Kong

*Asked by **Lord Greaves***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the number, and (2) the circumstances, of Hong Kong residents of South Asian descent who are UK citizens, including UK citizens by descent, who do not have British National (Overseas) status; in what ways such citizens and their families can emigrate to the UK; and what steps they intend to take to support those people. [[HL12992](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: UK Citizens have right of abode in the UK, including those who acquire it by descent.

UK Citizens can sponsor their dependents to come to the UK under the Family Migration Rules. Similarly, their dependents and families may also apply for any other migration route for which they are eligible, including the new Hong Kong BN(O) route if they hold this status.

India: Human Rights

*Asked by **Lord Hussain***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of (1) internet blockades, (2) use of force, (3) intimidation by state policy, and (4) human rights abuses, against farmer protestors in India. [[HL13093](#)]

*Asked by **Lord Hussain***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect the rights under international law to freedom of association and peaceful assembly in India. [[HL13094](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The right to gather lawfully and demonstrate a point of view is common to all democracies. Governments also have the power to enforce law and order if a protest crosses the line into illegality. We look to India to uphold the freedoms and rights guaranteed in its strong constitution and the international instruments to which India is a party. We were aware that some restrictions on internet connectivity were imposed at protest sites and welcome their removal. During his visit to India in December 2020, the Foreign Secretary discussed the protests with his Indian counterpart, whilst making clear that agricultural reform is an internal matter for the Indian authorities.

Indonesia: Corporal Punishment

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that two gay men have been subjected to public beatings by the religious police in Indonesia; when they last raised the use of public beatings with the government of Indonesia; and what response they received. [\[HL12750\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK opposes all forms of discrimination and is committed to protecting the rights and freedoms of LGBT people around the world. We regularly press legislators and the Indonesian Government not to discriminate against minority groups, including the LGBT community. We urge Indonesia to adhere to its founding principles by ensuring that its laws, both at national and local level, are non-discriminatory and celebrate the diversity and tolerance of its people.

Infectious Diseases: Livestock Industry

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the number of novel infectious diseases in humans that have resulted from industrial animal farming practices over the past 10 years, and (2) the risk of future human pandemics emerging from zoonotic diseases. [\[HL12963\]](#)

Lord Bethell: In the past decade, approximately 75% of newly emerging infections have been of zoonotic origin. While this does not identify the exact number of novel infectious diseases in humans that have resulted from industrial animal farming practices, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Animal and Plant Health Agency and the Health and Safety Executive conduct routine surveillance on farms for zoonotic pathogens.

The Government has procedures in place to risk assess novel pathogens and their potential impact on human health. This is led by specialist groups, such as the Human Animal Infections and Risk Surveillance group and the Advisory Committee for Dangerous Pathogens, who produce and publish expert-authored risk assessments.

These risk assessments support the United Kingdom's response system for infectious disease outbreaks, which focuses on minimising the impact of infectious diseases, including zoonotic diseases associated with farming and farming products, on human health and consequently the risk of future human pandemics.

Integrated Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy Review

Asked by Lord Tunncliffe

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to carry out a national security risk assessment as part of the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy; whether any such assessment will be published; and if so, where. [\[HL13026\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Integrated Review will cover all aspects of international and national security policy - defence, diplomacy, development and national resilience. Uniting development and diplomacy in one department brings together Britain's international effort to have even greater impact and influence on the world stage as we recover from the coronavirus pandemic. The Review will assess what will be needed to deliver our new strategy, in addition to seizing the opportunities offered by the new Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

The full conclusions of the Integrated Review will be announced in March.

Iraq: Politics and Government

Asked by Baroness Eaton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support the government of Iraq in (1) establishing its authority in that country, and (2) reducing the influence of other governments. [\[HL12788\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to preserving the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and is supporting the Government of Iraq to achieve this. We continue to provide technical and military assistance to Iraq, equipping the government to counter threats from Daesh and other destabilising influences from within the country and the wider region.

We regularly engage with the Government of Iraq and the international community on Iraq's security challenges and regional tensions. The Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary met Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi in London on 22 October and pledged the UK's continuing support for the Iraqi government. Minister Cleverly reiterated the UK Government's commitment to Iraq's sovereignty, security and economic stability when he visited Iraq in November.

Israel: Nuclear Weapons

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Israel about (1) whether that country possesses nuclear weapons, and (2) any plans by that government to declare any such possession. [[HL12869](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Israel has not declared a nuclear weapons programme. The UK Government has called on Israel to join the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear weapon state and to upgrade its arrangement to a full scope Comprehensive Safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Israel: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about reports that Palestinians have been attacked in response to the killing of an Israeli citizen by the Israeli police on 21 December 2020 in the West Bank. [[HL12868](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are not aware of these reports. The UK condemns any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have made any assessment of the number of indictments of Israeli citizens by the government of Israel for charges relating (1) to the assault of Palestinians, and (2) to damage to Palestinian property; and if so, what steps they are taking in the light of any such assessment [[HL12920](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not made this assessment. We welcome the Government of Israel's strong condemnation of settler violence, as well as the establishment of a special governmental unit and legislative changes. Nonetheless, we continue to urge the Israeli authorities to thoroughly investigate every instance and to bring those responsible to justice and end the culture of impunity. We have stressed the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of the arrest and subsequent treatment by Israel Police of a 13-year old Palestinian in Isawiya on 28 January. [[HL13142](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation, including the treatment of Palestinian children. We continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, in particular the need to protect children. As the Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa said on 9 December 2020, in instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we have advocated swift, transparent investigations.

Issa Amro

Asked by Baroness Blackstone

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement by Amnesty International on 5 January that Issa Amro is "facing politically motivated charges for his peaceful activism against Israel's military occupation and illegal settlements"; and what representations they have made to the government of Israel about the conviction of Issa Amro. [[HL12935](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of the 5 January statement by Amnesty International about Issa Amro's case. Officials from our Consulate-General in Jerusalem attended Mr Amro's court hearing on 6 January. We continue to urge the Israeli Government to fully respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of human rights defenders and organisations. We have also raised concerns with the Palestinian Authority about the narrowing of space for civil society to operate in the West Bank.

Jagtar Singh Johal

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of India about (1) the allegations of torture and mistreatment, and (2) the right to a fair trial, of Jagtar Singh Johal; and what response they have received to any such representations. [[HL12933](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We regularly make representations on Mr Johal's case to the Government of India highlighting his right to a fair trial, and calling for an independent investigation into his allegations of torture. During his visit to India in December 2020, the Foreign Secretary raised Mr Johal's case with his opposite number, the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar. I last raised Mr Johal's case with the Indian High Commissioner in London on 28 January 2021, and with the Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla, on 3 November 2020.

Land: Prices

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the cost per hectare of (1) prime arable land, (2) new woodland, and (3) mature woodland. [HL13099]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Defra purchased arable land price data until 2018, sourced from the Royal Agricultural University Rural Land Market Survey, run by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Defra has also sourced RICS transaction-based data (that include a residential component) for 2019, which is the latest available data set. The data covers the UK and includes regional estimates.

Data for "prime" arable land is not available, and the data is for all classifications of arable land.

The table below shows the latest available arable land price estimates (£/hectare) for the six months to the end of 2018 for survey and the first 6 months of 2019 transaction data respectively:

Country	2018 RICS Survey price (£/ha)	2019 RICS Transaction price (£/ha)
England	20,650	22,258
Scotland	14,826	(Not Available)
Wales	22,857	20,059
Northern Ireland	28,934	28,280

Regional prices in England (2018 RICS survey estimates) range from £19,151 to £22,610 per hectare.

Currently there is no assessment on the cost per hectare of new woodland, and mature woodland as the cost of these woodlands vary significantly depending on location and quality, with many factors contributing to their value.

The general consensus is that established woodland has a typical value of around £10 - 15k per hectare with significant variation around this range depending on size of wood, species composition and volume of timber standing.

Lebanon: Demonstrations

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking, if any, to increase support to Lebanese citizens following the recent protests in Lebanon. [HL13006]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is a long-standing friend of Lebanon and the Lebanese people. Since 2011, the UK has allocated over £700 million in humanitarian and development funding to Lebanon. We were one of the biggest donors following the devastating Beirut Port explosion, providing a £27 million package of assistance to support the most vulnerable. The UK and other members of the International Support Group for

Lebanon have consistently called for the swift formation of an effective government which reflects the aspirations of the Lebanese people, and stressed that the right of peaceful protest must continue to be respected. We stand ready to support the people of Lebanon but look to a new government to urgently demonstrate its commitment to reform.

Libya: Bilateral Aid

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current level of bilateral UK aid to Libya; and whether they co-operate with the government of Italy in its aid programmes in that country. [HL12973]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK expects to spend up to £10 million in Libya this financial year through the Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF). This aims to support the UN-led political process, and build the foundations for longer term stability, including through mine action, a stronger civil society and a more dynamic private sector. Libya also benefits from programmes focused on supporting vulnerable migrants, improving humanitarian coordination and improving access to mental health service. The UK coordinates closely with a number of international partners, including Italy, who we work with as one of several key donors to Libya, to maximise the impact of our aid programmes and deliver support for the most vulnerable.

Libya: British Nationals Abroad

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the present security situation in Libya, and (2) the safety of UK citizens resident in that country. [HL12972]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We welcome recent positive developments and the commitment shown by Libyans to engage constructively in the UN-led political process. These include agreement on a ceasefire, a unified transitional executive, and a roadmap to elections in December 2021. The UK is actively engaged in international diplomatic efforts, in support of the UN, to help Libyans find a sustainable, inclusive political settlement for all Libyans.

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advises against all travel to Libya. Consular support is not available from the British government from within Libya, as consular operations remain suspended. Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/libya>.

Libya: Detention Centres

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to support efforts to close detention centres in Libya for refugees and migrants. [HL12900]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has repeatedly raised its concerns with the Libyan authorities about the treatment of migrants and continues to press for a better functioning migration system that respects human rights.

We support the UN's call for detention centres across Libya to be closed, and call on all parties to engage with the UN and the humanitarian community so that all migrants and refugees can be evacuated safely in accordance with international human rights law.

Life Sciences: Economic Situation

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prioritise the life sciences sector in any economic recovery policies. [[HL13124](#)]

Lord Callanan: We have a long-term ambition for the UK to become the leading global hub for life sciences through the implementation of the Life Sciences Industrial Strategy; the last year has accelerated and deepened that commitment. The UK is at the forefront of cutting-edge technologies: for example, we have launched genome sequencing of 500,000 Biobank participants; developed a national infrastructure for advanced therapy manufacturing; and establishing the Accelerated Access Collaborative to deliver a step change in the uptake of innovative treatments in the NHS.

We continue this work in collaboration with our life sciences partners in order to build back better, boosting resilience in the sector and strengthening our science base. This is supported by the Government's target of public and private research and development investment to reach 2.4% of GDP by 2027.

Liothyronine

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in reducing the price charged for Liothyronine (T3). [[HL13177](#)]

Lord Bethell: Liothyronine is an unbranded generic medicine. The Department relies on competition between suppliers of unbranded generic medicines to keep prices down. Concerns about potential drug pricing abuses are a matter for the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). With regards to liothyronine, in 2016 the CMA opened its investigation into allegations that the National Health Service was charged excessive and unfair prices for liothyronine by Advanz. In July 2020 it issued a supplementary statement of objections stating that the CMA continues provisionally to find that Advanz breached United Kingdom and European Union competition law from at least 1 January 2009 to at least 31 July 2017 by charging excessive and unfair prices for liothyronine in the UK.

Liothyronine was previously a single source generic product. However, several marketing authorisations have been granted for liothyronine since 2016 and the

reimbursement price has slowly been reducing as a direct response to more competition in the market.

Local Government: Elections

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by the Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Evans of Bowes Park) on 28 January (HL Deb col 1804), whether the Minister for the Constitution and Devolution received evidence from (1) NHS England, (2) the Department for Health and Social Care, and (3) the Chief Scientific and Medical Officers, prior to issuing the letter on campaign leaflets to political parties on 22 January. [[HL12831](#)]

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by the Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Evans of Bowes Park) on 28 January (HL Deb col 1804), what was the basis for the advice on local election campaign leaflets in relation (1) to leaflets delivered by volunteers, (2) to leaflets delivered by Royal Mail and other commercial organisations, and (3) to volunteers delivering COVID-19 safety information. [[HL12832](#)]

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by the Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Evans of Bowes Park) on 28 January (HL Deb col 1804), what representations they received from members of political parties prior to issuing the letter on campaign leaflets on 22 January. [[HL12833](#)]

Lord True: Democracy should not be cancelled because of covid. As outlined in my Written Ministerial Statement of 8 February 2021 (HLWS766), the Government has confirmed that the set of council, mayor and Police and Crime Commissioner elections scheduled for May will go ahead, and made a firm commitment that the Government will support the sector to deliver them.

The Government has published a clear Delivery Plan for the May elections, setting out how the Government will support local elections teams to deliver effective polls that are covid-secure for voters and staff.

Current National Lockdown restrictions in England do not support door-to-door campaigning or leafleting by individual political party activists. However, campaigning is an essential part of democracy. Voters deserve to be well informed before going to the polls and there must be a level playing field for candidates. Further information on campaigning guidance and the interaction with prevailing covid restrictions will be issued in due course and well in advance of the polls.

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the proposal by Lord Young of Cookham on 14 January (HL Deb col 889), what assessment they have made of the suggestion that local authorities should include

information about registering to vote and voting by post with council tax bills; and whether this information can be delivered safely. [[HL12834](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Electoral Registration Officers have the statutory responsibility for maintaining complete and accurate registers for their areas; decisions on what to include with local authority mailings is a matter for individual councils. The Electoral Commission (EC) also provides guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and will have a role in raising awareness of how people can vote by post or proxy. As part of their guidance to EROs on planning for the delivery of electoral registration, the EC advises that the online registration application form could be signposted on web pages that residents would most commonly use to carry out a transaction with the local authority, such as the page on which to register and pay for Council Tax.

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to introduce early voting for local elections in England, or (2) to allow polling to take place over the weekend. [[HL12835](#)]

Lord True: Primary legislation states that the polls are to be held on 6 May. We do not consider there is a need for early voting. Advanced voting is already available to those who need or want it through postal voting on demand. Early voting in person would create unhelpful and unnecessary operational difficulties, by requiring additional polling venues and staffing requirements, in what is already a challenging environment for Returning Officers. We are instead supporting Returning Officers in delivering the elections on Thursday 6 May.

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make arrangements for the local government election counts due to take place on 6 May in England to be conducted on a day soon after polling day to ensure that the counts can be COVID-19 secure. [[HL12836](#)]

Lord True: The conduct of the count will be a matter for Returning Officers - the Government is working with the Electoral Commission to ensure guidance is available to support Returning Officers to effectively deliver the polls, as laid out in my Written Ministerial Statement of 8 February 2021 ([HLWS766](#)) and the Government's Election Delivery Plan. In this process, we understand the importance of securing a safe environment for counts.

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make provision for (1) the suspension, or (2) the cancellation, of polls on 6 May in the event of a local emergency, including a local surge in COVID-19 cases resulting from an outbreak of a new variant which spreads rapidly, in a particular (a) polling district, (b) electoral division, (c) local authority, and (d) mayoral

or police commissioner election; and who will have the authority to make such decisions under any such plans. [[HL12954](#)]

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what arrangements they plan to put in place to ensure that applications for a proxy vote for the elections on 6 May (1) are made by the person to whom the vote belongs, (2) are accompanied by clear and full information on why a proxy vote is being requested, (3) are not systematically collected by political parties or candidates at those elections or persons acting on their behalf, (4) include contact information for the applicant, and (5) ensure that late applications can be efficiently and properly processed. [[HL12956](#)]

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what instructions will be given (1) to returning officers for, and (2) to persons acting on their behalf at, the elections on 6 May on how to proceed if two or more applications to appoint a proxy are made in respect of the same elector and they purport to appoint different persons as the proxy for that elector; and whether any such instructions include guidance on what to do should multiple such applications be handed in at the same time at the last possible time for such applications. [[HL12957](#)]

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether a local authority employee can decline to carry out duties in relation to (1) the operation of polling stations on 6 May, (2) the counting of votes in relation to elections on that day, and (3) other activities involving direct contact with members of the public. [[HL12958](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Democracy should not be cancelled because of covid. The Government has confirmed that the set of local and Police and Crime Commissioner elections scheduled for May will go ahead, and made a firm commitment that the Government will support the sector to deliver them.

The Government has published a clear Delivery Plan for the May elections, setting out how the Government will support local elections teams to deliver effective polls that are covid-secure for voters and staff.

Proxy voting rules will be changed, enabling those who need to self-isolate to request an emergency proxy vote at short notice - right up to 5pm on polling day itself. This will mean that voters who have tested positive for COVID-19, or are self isolating, can still have their say in these elections without having to leave their residence.

It is an offence to provide false information on any voter registration form or any form requesting an absent vote. Information will have to be taken at face value as not all electors will be able to produce evidence. For example, some electors will be self-isolating due to contact with others. Others may show symptoms too late

to be tested or otherwise have symptoms and are unable to produce a positive test.

Further guidance for all those involved in the elections will be available in due course and well in advance of the polls.

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the letter dated 22 January from the Minister for the Constitution and Devolution to members of the Parliamentary Parties Panel and the May 2021 polls delivery plan, published on 5 February, what evidence they have which supports the cessation of (1) doorstep campaigning, and (2) the delivery of leaflets, by individual political party activists. [[HL13268](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the letter dated 22 January from the Minister for the Constitution and Devolution to members of the Parliamentary Parties Panel and the May 2021 polls delivery plan, published on 5 February, what evidence they have to suggest that the delivery of leaflets by individual political party activists carries a greater risk than paid deliveries by (1) the Royal Mail, or (2) other delivery services. [[HL13269](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the letter dated 22 January from the Minister for the Constitution and Devolution to members of the Parliamentary Parties Panel and the May 2021 polls delivery plan, published on 5 February, what steps they have taken to ensure that (1) independent, and (2) smaller political party, candidates are not disproportionately affected by the restrictions on (a) doorstep campaigning, and (b) the delivery of leaflets by individual political party activists. [[HL13270](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consultation, if any, they undertook with (1) independent candidates, (2) smaller political parties, and (3) the Independent Group of the Local Government Association, in the development of the letter dated 22 January from the Minister for the Constitution and Devolution to members of the Parliamentary Parties Panel and the May 2021 polls delivery plan, published on 5 February. [[HL13271](#)]

Lord True: Democracy should not be cancelled because of covid. As outlined in my Written Ministerial Statement of 8 February 2021 (HLWS766), the Government has confirmed that the set of council, mayor and Police and Crime Commissioner elections scheduled for May will go ahead, and made a firm commitment that the Government will support the sector to deliver them.

The Government has published a Delivery Plan for the May elections, setting out how the Government will support local elections teams to deliver effective polls that

are covid-secure for voters and staff. The Government has committed to further engage with political parties through the Parliamentary Parties Panel.

In relation to the current national lockdown restrictions and the delivery of leaflets by volunteers, I refer the Noble Lord to the Dear Colleague letter from the Minister for Constitution and Devolution, which I have placed in the Library. The letter reflects the broader guidance and law on the national lockdown, based on advice from the Chief Scientific and Medical Officers.

*Asked by **Lord Tyler***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to offer (1) assistance, or (2) exemption from the restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic, to deaf candidates in the May 2021 elections who are not able to contact electors by phone. [[HL13290](#)]

Lord True: Campaigning is an essential part of democracy. Voters deserve to be well informed before going to the polls and there must be a level playing field for candidates.

Many forms of campaigning can be carried out without increased face-to-face contact, including online campaigning, and delivery of leaflets by post or other commercial delivery services. The Government has already uprated election expenses for council candidates, which will provide greater opportunity for such candidates to campaign in this way.

Local Government: Meetings

*Asked by **Baroness Pinnoch***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to retain a hybrid system of virtual and physical attendance at local council meetings, including meetings of council committees and full council meetings, after the COVID-19 national restrictions are lifted. [[HL13012](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government keeps all policy under review. To extend the facility for councils to continue to meet remotely, or in hybrid form after 7 May 2021 would require primary legislation. We have received representations from local authorities and sector representative organisations making the case for the continuation of remote meetings beyond 7 May 2021 and are carefully considering next steps in this area.

Mauritius: Sovereignty

*Asked by **Baroness Whitaker***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the judgment by the Special Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea on 28 January concerning the delimitation of maritime boundary between Mauritius and Maldives, which found that the Advisory Opinion was determinative of Mauritian sovereignty, what steps they are taking to comply with

(1) the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, published on 25 February 2019 and (2) the UN General Assembly Resolution 73/295 from 22 May 2019. [HL12876]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The United Kingdom is aware of the judgment delivered on 28 January by the Special Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) formed to deal with the dispute concerning delimitation of a maritime boundary claimed by Mauritius to exist between Mauritius and Maldives in the Indian Ocean (Mauritius/Maldives). The UK is not a party to these proceedings, which can have no effect for the UK or for maritime delimitation between the UK (in respect of the British Indian Ocean Territory) and the Republic of the Maldives.

The UK Government respects the International Court of Justice and has considered the content of the Advisory Opinion carefully, but does not share the Court's approach. An Advisory Opinion is not a legally binding judgment, it is advice provided to the UN General Assembly at its request. The UN General Assembly resolution is also non-binding.

Mental Illness: Children

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there has been an increase in the number of children arriving in accident and emergency departments with mental health issues since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in England; what evidence they have collected that severe mental health conditions, including self-harm, eating disorders and overdoses, are now affecting children more severely and at younger ages; and what will be the priorities for Dr Alex George, the Youth Mental Health Ambassador, appointed by the Prime Minister on 3 February. [HL13005]

Lord Bethell: Provisional data for 2020/21 show that the number of children and young people attending accident and emergency departments in England with a diagnosis category of 'psychiatric conditions' fell substantially from 2,094 in March 2020 to 930 in April 2020. The latest information shows that they have since risen to 2,899 in November 2020 and that the levels of attendances between June and November 2020 remain broadly equivalent to the same period in the year before.

We continue to work closely with the Department for Education, the National Health Service, Public Health England and a wide range of stakeholders to monitor the situation and support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. Dr Alex George will be joining the Department for Education's mental health action group, which will look specifically at how young people's mental health and wellbeing can be supported as they return to schools, colleges and universities.

Middle East: Peace Negotiations

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are currently providing to advance the peace process in the Middle East; and what discussions they have had with the Secretary-General of the Arab League about this process since 31 December 2020. [HL13007]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to making progress towards a two-state solution. We believe that negotiations will only succeed when they are conducted between Israelis and Palestinians, supported by the international community. The UK is supportive of a regional approach to peace and we have actively encouraged the parties back to dialogue. The UK joined a UN Security Council session, attended by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States on the 26 January. The Arab League and Arab states have a key role in the peace process and we are in close contact on this issue.

Migrant Workers: EU Nationals

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the current costs of obtaining (1) short-term work visas, and (2) certificates of sponsorship, for EU citizens seeking to work in the UK; why there are different charges for citizens of different EU member states; and whether this policy reflects the UK's commitment in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement to treat the EU as a bloc for short-term visit visas. [HL13049]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Details of all Immigration and Nationality Fees are published on gov.uk at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visa-regulations-revised-table/home-office-immigration-and-nationality-fees-31-january-2021>.

The UK has long standing arrangements in its legislation for the nationals of countries which have ratified the 1961 Council of Europe's Social Charter (CESC) to qualify for a fee reduction for visa applications to come to work in the UK.

Nationals of the 26 countries which have signed and ratified the CESC are eligible for a reduction of £55 to their application fee if they are applying for a visa under a work route. Where the applicant is required to have a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) from their employer, the CoS can be issued free of charge.

Details of the routes which qualify for a reduced fee are published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fee-arrangements-for-cesc-nationals/fee-arrangements-for-cesc-nationals>.

The fee reduction of £55 only applies to the main applicant, it does not apply to dependants.

There is no visa requirement for EU, EEA and Swiss citizens visiting the UK for up to 180 days. The UK-EU TCA obliges the UK to treat all EU citizens as a bloc for the purposes of imposing any short term visit visa requirement.

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the current costs of obtaining short-term work visas for UK nationals seeking to work in each of the EU member states. [HL13050]

Lord Callanan: As part of their domestic immigration rules, each EU Member State has the power to set the cost of visas and/or work permits. This has resulted in a wide range of costs that Member States can continue to change, and at a time of their choosing. Each Member State is responsible for communicating and updating such costs, and each remains the most accurate and applicable source of this information; the UK Government does not hold this information. We urge all UK nationals to check the rules in the country they are travelling to ahead of time. These rules will differ depending on length of stay and activities undertaken abroad.

The Government is committed to supporting individuals and businesses. We will continue to engage regularly with our embassies to better understand the requirements in Member States. We will also continue to enhance guidance for businesses to best support travel for work purposes under our new trading relationship with the European Union.

Money Laundering

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the use of Delaware-based shell companies for (1) international money laundering, and (2) financing international terrorism; and what plans they have, if any, to raise this at the next G7 summit. [HL12692]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: In December 2020, the Government published the UK's third National Risk Assessment of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, which presents a comprehensive understanding of the risk of money laundering and the financing of terrorism through the UK. The assessment also covers the risks posed to the UK by activities in overseas jurisdictions. The UK has not conducted any assessment into Delaware specifically.

During its Presidency of the G7 this year, the UK will seek to promote action on corporate transparency, asset recovery, and the implementation of international anti-corruption standards, to build collective security, prosperity and trust in our institutions.

Musical Instruments: Customs

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to charge musicians applying for a CITES Musical Instrument Certificate for musical instruments containing Ivory, Rosewood, Abalone, and other endangered species when transported between (1) the UK and the EU, and (2) Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and if so, how much this will cost musicians. [HL12768]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: No decision has yet been made on the application of fees for Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Musical Instrument Certificates for musical instruments containing Ivory, Rosewood, Abalone, and other endangered species. Any changes to the fee structure are likely to come into force in 2022, and there will be an opportunity for stakeholders to engage in a consultation before the changes take place.

The fees for processing applications for all types of CITES permits and certificates are kept under regular review. The current review will consider the possible inclusion of a fee for Musical Instrument Certificates, to bring them in line with other CITES permits.

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether an ATA Carnet is required for the shipment of musical instruments and equipment by truck or cargo between the UK and the EU. [HL12769]

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether an ATA Carnet is required for the portable transportation of musical instruments and equipment for (1) UK musicians working in the EU, and (2) EU musicians working in the UK. [HL12770]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: ATA carnets are available for commercial goods, professional equipment or goods going to trade fairs or exhibitions in participating countries, which are moved on a temporary basis to a new customs territory (i.e. they will not be sold and will return to the country of origin). This includes musical instruments. Carnets allow a single document to be used for clearing goods through customs in the countries that are part of the ATA carnet system.

There are two other options available when moving musical instruments temporarily between the EU and the UK (used together for export and reimport procedures); Temporary Admission and Returned Goods Relief.

Temporary Admission is a customs procedure that allows a person to import non-UK goods temporarily into the UK. Using Temporary Admission means any import duty or import VAT is suspended as long as the goods are

removed from the UK at a later date. Temporary Admission is useful if a person needs to import goods such as samples, professional equipment or items for auction, exhibition or demonstration temporarily into the UK.

Returned Goods Relief (RGR) allows eligible items to be reimported free from customs duty and import VAT. The relief can apply to exported items returning to the UK if certain conditions can be met. For RGR to apply, goods must normally be returned within three years of the date of export unless exceptional circumstances exist. For RGR on import VAT to apply the exporter and importer must be the same person and any VAT due must have been previously paid in the UK or EU.

Temporary Admission and Returned Goods Relief may be available in the EU. Further information on EU customs procedures can be found online.

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether (1) customs declarations are, or (2) an ATA Carnet is, required for the movement of musical instruments and equipment between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. [HL12931]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: No export or exit declarations are required for goods leaving Great Britain (GB) for Northern Ireland (NI).

On entry into NI from GB, if musical instruments and equipment are to be used for commercial purposes, some additional process is required, as with other goods. If they are accompanied (for example, if contained in a passenger's baggage) then the person carrying them will be deemed to have made a declaration by conduct. If the instruments and equipment are not accompanied (for example, they are carried as freight) then a declaration will be required.

Most goods in free circulation in Northern Ireland – including musical instruments and equipment – currently benefit from unfettered access to GB, such that no customs declarations are required either on exit from NI or entry to GB.

ATA Carnets are an option for temporarily moving goods between the UK, EU and NI. Use of an ATA Carnet is generally a commercial decision based on cost effectiveness and an individual's/business's circumstances.

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to enable UK orchestras to continue to use (a) specialist UK-based hauliers, or (b) their own trucks, to transport musical instruments across multiple EU countries, and (2) to negotiate with the EU an exemption to barriers of the movement of goods for cultural purposes. [HL13034]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Trade and Co-operation Agreement (TCA) between the UK and the EU

allows UK hauliers to undertake up to 2 additional laden journeys, cross-trade or cabotage, within the EU after a laden international journey from the UK, with a maximum of 1 cabotage movement outside Ireland. These rules will also apply to specialist hauliers, such as hauliers who carry equipment for musicians and other performers, even when using their own truck.

Our assessment is that the TCA will allow the vast majority of haulage operations that were being undertaken by UK hauliers before the end of the transition period. However, UK operators will not be allowed to undertake more than 2 movements within the EU before returning to the UK. This issue was discussed in detail as part of negotiations, but the EU was unwilling to agree more flexible arrangements.

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Admission Temporaire Carnets will be required for portable musical instruments carried by musicians for professional purposes when travelling (1) between the UK and the EU, and (2) between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. [HL13035]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: ATA carnets are an option for moving goods temporarily between the UK and the EU; Temporary Admission is another. Whether to use an ATA carnet is generally a commercial decision based on cost effectiveness and the individual's or business's circumstances. A carnet is generally not necessary for musicians travelling between GB and NI or between GB and the EU with accompanied instruments (carried or taken with the individual in personal baggage or a vehicle). In this case a person can make a "declaration by conduct" which is simply the act of moving through a 'Green Channel' at a port or airport.

Musicians: EU Nationals

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether self-employed musicians from the EU coming to the UK on a regular basis can do so under Permitted Paid Engagement; and if not, what plans they have to make arrangements to facilitate such visits. [HL13036]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Permitted Paid Engagement visitor route allows professionals in several sectors, including musicians, to enter the UK for up to one month to undertake permitted paid engagements, where they have been invited by a UK-based organisation and without the need to apply through the sponsored work routes.

Whilst there is no formal limit on how many times a visitor can enter the UK under this route, decision makers will consider whether any repeat use is for temporary work; the applicant's main place of employment is overseas and they do not intend to live in the UK through frequent or successive visits.

Musicians: Visas

*Asked by **The Earl of Clancarty***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to discuss concerns over reciprocal arrangements for touring musicians at the next meeting of the EU–UK Joint Committee. [[HL13057](#)]

Lord True: The arrangements for touring musicians between the UK and the EU relate to the Trade and Cooperation Agreement, and so would not be raised at the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee.

The date of the first meetings of the committees set up under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement will be announced in due course, when we have agreed with the EU.

Musicians: Visas and Work Permits

*Asked by **Lord Clement-Jones***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had since 1 January with (1) the EU, and (2) individual EU Member States about introducing work permits and visas to enable UK musicians and their crew to be paid for performances in the EU. [[HL13303](#)]

*Asked by **Lord Clement-Jones***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect that additional visa and work permit restrictions will have on the number and proportion of UK musicians who perform in Europe. [[HL13305](#)]

*Asked by **Lord Clement-Jones***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the importance of touring in the EU for the career development of UK musicians. [[HL13306](#)]

Baroness Barran: Touring is a vital part of the careers of musicians, performers and their support staff, providing not only an important income stream, but also enriching opportunities for cultural exchange across the world. Being outside the European Union does not change this. It does, however, mean practical changes on both sides of the Channel that will require understanding and adaptation.

We are now working urgently across government and in collaboration with the music and wider creative industries, including through a new working group, to help understand and address these issues so that touring in Europe can resume with ease as soon as it is safe to do so.

As part of this work DCMS is working with the Foreign Office and others across government to consider how best to take forward engagement with EU Member States on these issues. It is within Member States' gift to improve their arrangements and we will engage with bilateral partners to find ways to make life easier for those working in the creative industries in countries across the EU.

Myanmar: Military Coups

*Asked by **The Marquess of Lothian***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of China about the political situation in Myanmar since the UN Security Council statement condemning the military coup in Myanmar was not adopted. [[HL13003](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK was pleased to secure a strong statement from the UN Security Council on the situation in Myanmar. This was the first such statement since 2008. China has an important role to play as a key regional partner for Myanmar. We welcome its agreement to such a strong statement, and have made it clear that there must be a coordinated response to ensure that the security situation does not further deteriorate. We will continue to work to ensure a strong response from the Council and urge China to live up to its international responsibilities.

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

*Asked by **Baroness Deech***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Armenians will be included in the genocides to be commemorated in the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; and, if so, what consultation they have carried out with Armenian representatives. [[HL12782](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The UK Holocaust Memorial will honour the six million Jewish men, women and children who were murdered in the Holocaust, and all other victims of Nazi persecution. The remit of the co-located learning centre will also focus on subsequent genocides.

The scope and content of the exhibition within the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre will be developed over the coming years by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation, drawing on a wide range of external advice and expertise.

*Asked by **Baroness Deech***

To ask Her Majesty's Government which (1) nations, and (2) minority groups, will be included in the genocides to be commemorated in the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; and what consultation they have undertaken with the representatives of any such nations or groups. [[HL12783](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The scope and content of the exhibition within the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre will be developed over the coming years by the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation, drawing on a wide range of external advice and expertise.

*Asked by **Baroness Deech***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the educational impact of the

proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; and whether they have consulted the British Association of Holocaust Scholars on the content of the memorial and learning centre. [[HL12784](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation will work with other institutions both in the UK and across the World supporting Holocaust commemoration and education, seeking to promote a deeper understanding of the Holocaust among as wide an audience as possible.

An Academic Advisory Board has been appointed, which includes members of the British Association of Holocaust Scholars and the head of the UCL's Centre for Holocaust.

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is a plan for the management of the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; and if so, where that plan is available. [[HL12785](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: We are considering a range of operating models and will put in place a sustainable long-term plan.

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the annual running costs of the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; and how such costs will be met. [[HL12786](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The annual running costs are estimated at up to £6 million. My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced on 28 January that the Government will provide free entry in perpetuity to everyone visiting the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what organisations will (1) own, and (2) manage, the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre if planning permission is obtained; and what progress has been made towards setting up any such organisations. [[HL12939](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The site will continue to be owned by Government. We are considering a range of operating models for managing the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for the (1) ownership, and (2) management, of the parts of Victoria Tower Gardens not required for the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. [[HL12940](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The site will continue to be owned by Government. We are in discussion with the

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and The Royal Parks about the future management arrangements for Victoria Tower Gardens.

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of Victoria Tower Gardens would be closed to the public during the construction of the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; and what estimate has been made of the duration of the building works. [[HL12941](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: Construction is expected to last no longer than 3 years. Provision will be made to ensure part of Victoria Tower Gardens remains open for users during construction works.

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their report Britain's Promise to Remember: The Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission Report, published in January 2015, what progress they have made on implementing the recommendation that a physical campus with a lecture theatre, classrooms and offices should be developed as part of the "world-class learning centre" co-located with the National Holocaust Memorial. [[HL13246](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: Proposals for a national Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre at Victoria Tower Gardens, including space for lectures and seminars, are the subject of a planning application which is currently under consideration.12775

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Expenditure

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much funding they have spent to date on activities relating to the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. [[HL12937](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: From 2015/16 to 31 January 2021, the Government has spent £12.9 million (including VAT) on the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre programme.

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Finance

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much private funding is required for the creation of the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre; and how much private funding has been raised to date. [[HL12938](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The aim is to raise at least £25 million from charitable donations. A fund-raising campaign is being led by a newly established independent

charity, led by Foundation member Gerald Ronson CBE, who has committed to securing pledges of at least £25 million.

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Location

*Asked by **Baroness Deech***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what (1) consultation, and (2) site comparison, they undertook in relation to the proposed National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre between 13 January 2016 when the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation recommended a location for that centre and the Prime Minister's announcement on 27 January 2016 that the chosen location was Victoria Tower Gardens. [[HL13245](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation conducted a very extensive comparison of possible sites before recommending Victoria Tower Gardens. The Government agreed with the Foundation that Victoria Tower Gardens is the most fitting site. Public consultations were held once designs for the proposed Memorial were available: initially on ten shortlisted designs, and then on the detailed proposals which were put forward for planning consent.

National Institute for Health Protection

*Asked by **Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they made towards the development of the National Institute for Health Protection. [[HL13297](#)]

Lord Bethell: Plans are on track to establish the National Institute for Health Protection (NIHP) in spring 2021 with staff and systems moving into the new organisation over the following months. The recruitment process for the NIHP Chief Executive is ongoing and the outcome will be announced in due course.

National Parks: Finance

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Whitchurch***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to announce the 2021 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs budget allocations for national parks. [[HL12819](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Government announced some £75m of funding to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty as part of the 2020 Spending Review. Defra is currently finalising its business planning for 2021/22 and will inform national parks of their individual budget allocations shortly.

National Security and Investment Bill

*Asked by **Baroness Harris of Richmond***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is a planned timetable for the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's decisions on notifications being submitted in the correct form under the mandatory notification procedure proposed in the National Security and Investment Bill; and if so, what that timetable is. [[HL13082](#)]

Lord Callanan: My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State must decide to accept or reject a mandatory notification as soon as is reasonably practicable. If a notification is accepted, the Secretary of State will be required to issue any call-in notice within 30 working days. If the statutory test is met and the Secretary of State decides to call in an acquisition, they have a further 30 working days to decide whether to impose any final remedies. This is extendable by a further 45 working days, and subsequent to this a mutually agreed voluntary period or periods, if the relevant legal test is met.

A draft notification form was published alongside the introduction of the Bill on 11 November 2020, to help interested parties understand what information is likely to be required for a valid notification.

*Asked by **Baroness Harris of Richmond***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have defined what asset transactions should be referred to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy under the proposed rules in the National Security and Investment Bill; whether they intend to exclude any such transactions from those rules; and if so, which transactions they intend to exclude. [[HL13083](#)]

Lord Callanan: As part of the proposed National Security and Investment regime, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State will be able to call-in acquisitions of control over qualifying assets to scrutinise them for potential national security concerns. Before any acquisitions can be called-in, the Secretary of State must publish a Statement setting out how they expect to use this call-in power. The Government expects parties will use this Statement to help decide whether to voluntarily notify both entity and asset acquisitions to the Secretary of State.

A draft of the Statement was published alongside the introduction of the Bill on 11 November 2020. It explains that certain areas of the economy are expected to be the areas most likely to give rise to national security risks. That includes acquisitions of control over assets that are integral to the relevant activities of the entities within those sectors.

This will ensure that parties are unable to simply circumvent the regime by acquiring sensitive assets rather

than the entities that own these assets. The Secretary of State does, however, expect to intervene in such acquisitions exceedingly rarely.

Clause 11 of the Bill provides the Secretary of State with the power to amend the types of asset acquisitions of control that fall within scope of this regime through secondary legislation. The Secretary of State will keep the functioning of this regime under review and will consider over time whether any further exemptions are appropriate. Any use of this power would be guided by the operation of the regime in practice and any patterns of activity that are observed.

NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme 2020

*Asked by **Baroness Sherlock***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 24 November 2020 (HL9950), how many claims the NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme has received; how many payments have been made by that Scheme; and what was the total value of those payments. [[HL12675](#)]

Lord Bethell: As of 27 January, the NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme (England) has received 307 claims, of which 268 have been accepted. Payment has been made for 175 of these claims, with a further 92 accepted for payment pending proof of probate from the claimant and one case in the course of payment. Two cases have not been accepted and the remainder are going through the stages of being processed and assessed. The total value of accepted claims is £16,080,000.

NHS Test and Trace: Civil Servants

*Asked by **Lord Scriven***

Her Majesty's Government how many people employed by NHS Test and Trace have left their roles; and how many such people were subject to the Business Appointment Rules for Civil Servants. [[HL11619](#)]

Lord Bethell: The NHS Test and Trace workforce consists of a combination of; civil servants employed by the programme and also on loan from across Government, secondees from the public and private sector, contractors and consultants. Since May 2020 our data shows that a total of 630 people have left their role on NHS Test and Trace. 220 of these were civil servants, of which 19 have left the Civil Service completely and are therefore subject to the Business Appointment Rules.

NHS Test and Trace: Police

*Asked by **Lord Scriven***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to publish the memorandum of understanding between the Department of Health and Social Care and the

National Police Chiefs Council, which allows police to access NHS Test and Trace data; and if so, when. [[HL13205](#)]

Lord Bethell: The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Department and the police is currently being updated to reflect amendments to the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Self-Isolation) (England) Regulations 2020 on 29 January and feedback from the Information Commissioners Office. These updates are currently being agreed by all parties and the MoU will be published as soon as practically possible.

NHS: Staff

*Asked by **Baroness Finlay of Llandaff***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the next iteration of the NHS People Plan will be published; and what assessment they have made of the recommendations by the Royal College of Emergency Medicine RCEM Cares Retention of A&E staff: policy brief, published in February, (1) to recruit an additional 2500 Emergency Medicine Consultants, and (2) to increase the numbers entering Emergency Medicine training by 120 per year, to ensure services are sustainable long term; and what steps they intend to take in response. [[HL12888](#)]

Lord Bethell: The NHS People Plan is a shared programme of work to increase the workforce, support new ways of working and develop a compassionate and inclusive workplace culture in order to deliver the NHS Long Term Plan. We are working with NHS England and NHS Improvement, Health Education England (HEE) and with systems and employers to determine our workforce and people priorities beyond April 2021 to support the recovery of National Health Service staff and services.

HEE has also worked proactively with system partners to address service pressures in emergency department teams. We have almost doubled the number of core trainees and consultants in emergency medicine since 2010. HEE will continue to work with service providers, the Royal College of Emergency Medicine and NHS England to understand and discuss the recommendations in this latest Royal College of Emergency Medicine briefing.

Nurses: Pay

*Asked by **Lord Wigley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the average rate of pay of a qualified nurse with ten years experience in (1) 2010, and (2) 2020; and if adjusted for the purchasing value of the pound, what would be the percentage change in remuneration since 2010. [[HL9260](#)]

Lord Bethell: In June 2010, basic pay, not including any additional earnings, for a newly qualified nurse at the

bottom of Band 5, on a full-time equivalent basis (FTE), was £21,176.

We can estimate that, for nurses still working in the Hospital and Community Health Sector (HCHS) in June 2020, average basic pay per FTE was £34,216. This is a nominal increase of 61.6% and reflects pay awards; progression up pay scales within pay bands, promotion to more senior roles in higher pay bands and the effects of the Agenda for Change multi-year pay and contract reform deal (2018/19-2020/21). After accounting for consumer price index inflation this is a real terms increase of 33.2%.

Nurses can also earn premium rates of pay for working during unsocial hours or through agreed overtime. The NHS reward package also includes a generous annual leave allowance and access to a much-valued pension scheme.

These estimates are derived from unvalidated data from the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) Data Warehouse. This is a monthly snapshot of the live ESR system, which is the HR and payroll system for the HCHS sector in England. It does not cover those working in general practice, social care or the independent sector and one NHS foundation trust that has chosen to not use the system.

Occupational Pensions

*Asked by **Baroness Altmann***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what reporting they require from (1) pension providers, (2) employers, and (3) payroll operators, to verify the accuracy of auto-enrolment pension contributions; and what steps they (a) have taken, or (b) plan to take, to ensure that pension contribution records are routinely (i) checked, and (ii) reconciled, for auto-enrolment data errors each year. [[HL13219](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Automatic enrolment has been a great success, with over 10 million employees enrolled and more than 1.7 million employers having met their duties to date. Government has put in place a robust, proportionate compliance framework. This is administered by The Pensions Regulator (TPR), and includes detailed regulatory guidance about how to comply with the law. An employer is required to select a qualifying pension scheme; enrol qualifying staff into that scheme, and deduct any contributions payable under automatic enrolment.

Employers as well as the trustees or managers of pension schemes must keep certain records including details of the pension contributions payable in each relevant pay reference period by an employer to the scheme. This includes the contributions due on the employer's behalf and deductions made from an individual's earnings. As part of the Regulator's guidance, employers and pension scheme trustees or managers must hold information about payment schedules

and contributions for six years, except for opt-outs which must be kept for a minimum of four years.

TPR has published codes of practice on its website setting out how trustees of defined contribution pension schemes and managers of personal pension schemes should monitor the payment of contributions, provide information to help members check their contributions and report material payment failures to TPR. As part of TPR's codes of practice and guidance, there is a requirement for scheme providers to have sufficient monitoring processes in place. This includes having a risk based approach to monitor employers who should have in place appropriate internal controls to ensure correct and timely payment of contributions due to meet their employer duties. If the trustee or manager becomes aware that this is not the case, or that the employer does not appear to be taking adequate steps to remedy the situation, for example where there are repetitive and regular payment failures, then it must be reported to TPR. The responsibility lies with the employer to ensure their payroll processes are correct whether in house or outsourced. TPR's compliance checks include checks of employer payroll processes and detailed reviews of payroll software. TPR does hold payment failure reports from pension providers but these do not necessarily represent data errors.

In addition, TPR publishes regular assessments of its automatic enrolment compliance and enforcement activities as well as an annual commentary and analysis report, both of which are available on its website.

Osteoporosis: Preventive Medicine

*Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what treatments are available on the NHS in England which help to prevent those with osteopenia contracting osteoporosis; and whether those with osteopenia are kept under regular review to assess the risk of developing osteoporosis. [[HL13194](#)]

Lord Bethell: People with osteopenia will not necessarily go on to develop osteoporosis. In those found to have a bone density within an osteopenic range, preventative lifestyle measures, such as healthy eating, exercise and taking vitamin D supplements, are recommended to protect against developing osteoporosis.

Clinicians may wish to monitor patients found to have a bone density within an osteopenic range, depending on what risk factors they have for osteoporosis or fragility fracture.

Out-of-school Education: Coronavirus

*Asked by **Lord Storey***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of unregistered schools that have continued to operate during the COVID-19

national lockdown which began on 5 January. [HL12856]

Baroness Berridge: Any education setting which provides full-time provision to 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age (or one or more pupils of compulsory school age who is looked after or has an education, health, and care plan) is required to register with the Department for Education as a school. It is a criminal offence to conduct an independent school that is not registered. For this reason the Department for Education has not made an estimate of unregistered schools operating through the current lockdown.

The Department for Education and Ofsted are continuing to investigate any settings where intelligence or evidence suggest the operation of an unregistered school.

All settings, whether registered or unregistered, must also comply with relevant regulations relating to COVID-19. Failure to do so will be a breach of legislation and poses a risk to public health.

Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the ability of unregistered out-of-school settings providing religious tuition to children to adhere to restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL13027]

Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they have put in place to ensure that any unregistered religious schools which do not allow pupils to use technology cannot use exceptions pertaining to vulnerable children in the regulations in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic to continue to teach full-to-capacity classes whilst also claiming pupils are home-educated. [HL13028]

Baroness Berridge: Supplementary schools for children, including those offering religious instruction, for example, are typically considered to be out-of-school settings. The department defines out-of-school settings as organisations or individuals that provide tuition, training, instruction or activities to children in England without their parents' or carers' supervision, but are not:

- schools
- colleges
- 16 to 19 academies
- providers caring for children that are registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency

Unregistered schools are those that are operating as an independent school without having registered with the department. It is a criminal offence (under section 96 of the Education and Skills 2008 Act) for any person to conduct an unregistered independent school, and where we find evidence that a school is operating unlawfully, the department will seek to take action by working with

police, Ofsted and the Crown Prosecution Service as necessary.

The department does not hold a central register of all out-of-school settings and so is not able to give an assessment of the ability of providers in the sector to adhere to restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 outbreak. However, since the beginning of the outbreak we have been in close communication with out-of-school settings stakeholders, including various representatives from the faith sector, to outline how the protective measures in the sector guidance work to minimise the risk of transmission and infection of the virus, and how they can be practically implemented across a range of settings.

Under the current national restrictions, announced on 5 January 2021, wraparound childcare providers, holiday clubs, and out-of-school settings should only continue to offer face-to-face provision for:

- children of critical workers, where it is reasonably necessary to support their parents or carers to work, seek work, attend a medical appointment, or undertake education or training; and
- vulnerable children and young people

During the current national restrictions, children who are home educated should not attend out-of-school settings for face-to-face provision unless they are considered to be vulnerable, or if they are children of critical workers.

Children may face a range of vulnerabilities, some of which are not easily defined. Our guidance outlines that local stakeholders (such as education providers and local authorities) are best placed to identify who may fall into this category. The guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>. Some pupils who have difficulty engaging in remote education may be considered to be vulnerable children and therefore eligible to attend provision. However, settings may provide their own laptops, or should consider different forms of remote education, where this is not possible, such as printed resources or textbooks, supplemented with other forms of communication to keep pupils and students on track or answer questions about work.

Further information on the criteria for vulnerable children and children of critical workers can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>. Providers should be moving to remote education as far as possible for those not eligible to attend for onsite provision.

The department expects providers that continue to offer face-to-face provision for eligible children, to follow our updated guidance on protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings, in

order to safely adhere to the government's restrictions. The guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-measures-for-holiday-or-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-for-children-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/protective-measures-for-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>.

We have also published updated guidance for parents and carers to follow if their children are eligible to attend for face-to-face provision and they choose to send them to these settings. This guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>.

Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of unregistered schools continuing to operate whilst restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic are ongoing; and what plans they have to prevent the operation of such schools in future. [HL13029]

Baroness Berridge: The department has not made any estimate of the number of unregistered schools operating through the current lockdown.

Any education setting which provides full-time provision to 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age (or one or more pupils of compulsory school age who is looked after or has an education, health and care plan) is required to register with the department as a school. It is a criminal offence to conduct an independent school that is not registered.

The department and Ofsted are continuing to investigate any settings where intelligence or evidence suggest the operation of an unregistered school.

All settings, whether registered or unregistered, must also comply with relevant regulations relating to the COVID-19 outbreak. Failure to do so will be a breach of legislation and poses a risk to public health.

Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received from Ofsted about changing legislation to ensure that out-of-school settings providing a religious or narrow curriculum can only operate legally if they are registered with the Department for Education; and what steps they intend to take in response to any such representations. [HL13030]

Baroness Berridge: Any education setting which provides full-time provision to 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age (or one or more pupils of compulsory school age who is looked after or has an

education, health, and care plan) is required to register with the Department for Education as a school. It is a criminal offence to conduct an independent school that is not registered.

The current definition of full-time education does not capture settings which offer only a narrow curriculum, even if this teaching takes place throughout all, or most, of the school day. The department consulted on proposals last year to change the definition of independent schools in primary legislation to incorporate such settings. We are currently considering responses to this consultation and will confirm further steps in due course.

The department is considering changes to the registration requirement for schools. The consultation on Regulating Independent Educational Institutions was launched on 14 February 2020 and withdrawn on 7 May due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The consultation was relaunched on 13 October 2020 and closed on 27 November. Following analysis, we will set out the government response in due course.

Palestinians: Health Services

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement by the Palestinian Authority's Minister of Health on 26 January requesting the intervention of international human rights organisations to stop the demolition of a health clinic in Zanutta. [HL12870]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK regularly raises demolitions with the Government of Israel. The Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa raised his concerns about demolitions of Palestinian and humanitarian structures, including healthcare centres, with the Israeli Ambassador on 29 October 2020. UK officials from the British Consulate in Jerusalem have made regular visits to areas at risk of demolition and eviction to reiterate UK support for those communities. The UK also urged the Government of Israel to end demolitions of property in the West Bank at the UN Security Council on 26 January 2021. The UK is clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions are contrary to International Humanitarian Law. The practice causes unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians and is harmful to the peace process.

Palestinians: Housing

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they plan to the government of Israel about reports that a Civil Administration official threatened Palestinians with expulsion from their homes if they invited (1) journalists, or (2) activists, to witness attacks on them by Israeli settlers. [HL12867]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We regularly make clear our concerns about the evictions of Palestinians from their

homes in the West Bank to the Israeli authorities, both bilaterally and in co-operation with like-minded diplomatic partners. We regularly visit communities facing eviction from their homes. The Fourth Geneva Convention, which applies to all occupied territories, prohibits demolitions or forced evictions absent military necessity. We also continue to reiterate the importance of freedom of speech to the Israeli Government.

Palestinians: UNRWA

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much funding they have provided to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in each of the last three financial years. [[HL13141](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK's funding contribution to UNRWA included £51.1 million in 2017, £65.4 million in 2018 and £65.6 million in 2019, as shown in the table below. Funding data is published each calendar year in the Statistics on International Development (SID) publication.

£ (millions)	2017	2018	2019
Total UK ODA to UNRWA per calendar year	51.1	65.4	65.6

Source: based on Statistics for International Development but adjusted as SID is reported in line with OECD reporting directives, which classifies some UNRWA emergency and project funding separately and reports when funding was disbursed and not which year it contributed to the UNRWA programme. The figures above reflect actual total UK funding to each annual UNRWA programme, including emergency appeals.

Palliative Care

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure patients continue to receive palliative care in the event that the hospice in which the patient is receiving treatment is forced to close due to its financial situation. [[HL10170](#)]

Lord Bethell: For this winter, recognising the exceptional challenges across health and social care and the specific challenges faced by hospices, significant additional funding is being made available. The COVID-19 Winter Plan set out additional funding of £125 million for hospices. This funding will be used to allow hospices to provide more beds for step down and community care through to March 2021.

If despite this, a hospice should become financially unviable, the relevant clinical commissioning group (CCG) would be responsible, if closure resulted, for ensuring that alternative palliative care was in place for those populations it is responsible for. Most National Health Service funded hospice care is commissioned

through CCGs. They are best placed to understand the needs of local populations and allocate funding for services to meet those needs from the overall resource allocations they receive.

Peat Bogs: Statutory Instruments

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the statutory instrument to protect peatlands will be laid before Parliament; and whether it will be subject to the affirmative procedure. [[HL12817](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We intend to lay the relevant statutory instrument as soon as parliamentary time allows. It will be subject to the negative procedure.

Pension Funds: Human Rights

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they take to ensure that pension funds and other institutional investors comply with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights [[HL13038](#)]

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they take to ensure that the investment strategies of pension funds and other institutional investors take into account (1) crimes against humanity, and (2) genocide, as social risk factors. [[HL13039](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Government has taken action to ensure that environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors are taken into account by institutional investors.

2018 changes to the Occupational Pension Schemes (Investment) Regulations require occupational pension schemes to have policies on financially material ESG factors and on stewardship of their investments. Trustees are also required to report annually on how these policies have been implemented. These policies may include considerations such as those set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and in relation to issues such as crimes against humanity and genocide.

There are also similar expectations on providers of contract-based pensions in respect of their pension investments. The Independent Governance Committees (IGCs) of these firms are expected to consider and report on their firm's policies on ESG issues and stewardship for the products that the IGCs oversee.

The importance and growth of investing in line with ESG considerations is a focus area of the Asset Management Taskforce – a regular forum chaired by the Economic Secretary to the Treasury bringing together Government, industry, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and other stakeholders. On 24 November 2020, the Asset Management Taskforce published “Investing With Purpose: placing stewardship at the heart of sustainable growth”. This report's clear recommendations, which

apply across the investment chain, will further enhance the UK's stewardship regime aim to ensure that asset managers are focused on delivering long-term, sustainable benefits for investors, the economy, the environment and society.

The UK Stewardship Code, which was strengthened in 2020, also sets out at Principle 7 the expectation that its investor signatories systematically integrate material social issues into stewardship and investment. Stewardship by asset owners and asset managers involves making informed decisions about where to invest, and proactive oversight of assets once invested. The FCA's disclosure of commitment rule to the Stewardship Code, as well as rules promoting disclosure of asset managers' engagement and investment strategies under Revised Shareholder Rights Directive (SRD II), holds asset managers accountable and promotes the importance of stewardship. Consistent with the FCA's objective to make relevant markets function well, stewardship activities improve market quality and integrity, and help create sustainable, long-term value for clients and beneficiaries, while having wider economic, environmental and societal benefits.

The Government would also expect institutional investors to be monitoring risks to their investments posed by breaches of international human rights law.

We recognise that some investors have not focused on social factors as much as environmental factors such as climate change. The Department for Work and Pensions has therefore written to 40 large schemes to understand their current practices. It also intends to seek views on whether occupational pension schemes' policies and practices on social risk factors are sufficiently robust and what the Government could do to ensure that trustees are able to meet their legal obligations in this respect.

Performing Arts: Equality

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality within the performing arts sector. [HL13138]

Baroness Barran: Her Majesty's Government has not made a specific assessment of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender equality within the performing arts sector. However, the Department for Culture, Digital, Media and Sport is committed to working closely with the Government's Equalities Office to improve equality across our sectors, promoting gender equality in the performing arts sector.

All guidance related to the performing arts sector during the COVID-19 pandemic undergoes a PSED (Public Sector Equality Duty) review each time it is updated. We are also duty bound to ensure that we consider impacts of new legislation on people of protected characteristics.

Additionally, we have been working to ensure that diversity is embedded in the Culture Recovery Fund. In the first round of funding, the ALBs making funding decisions looked for a track record of delivering social benefit and welcoming diverse audiences. For the second round of funding, we asked applicants to inform us of their plans to open up access and participation in culture. Organisations in receipt of funding are expected to demonstrate progress in diversity and outreach over the coming years in return for this investment into their futures.

We know that reports, such as that published by Women in Theatre, which brings together some of the major recent research on women in theatre, is looking into gender inequality in the theatre sector. The report can be found here: <https://sphinxtheatre.co.uk/new-women-in-theatre-forum-report/>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Women in Theatre Forum Report [Women-in-Theatre-Forum-Report-2020.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-08/HL13138>

Poland: Property

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with representatives of the government of Poland about the restitution of property seized from Polish Jewish citizens during the period of Nazi occupation; and what was the outcome of any such discussions. [HL12787]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK continues to meet its commitments under the Terezin declaration.

HMG have been in regular discussions with the Polish Government about the restitution of property seized during the Nazi occupation. As the Minister for the European Neighbourhood and Americas noted in the House in July 2020, the British Ambassador to Poland has raised our concerns with the Polish Foreign Minister and the Speaker of the Polish Parliament. Lord Pickles, the UK's Special Envoy for post-Holocaust Issues, and the Minister for the European Neighbourhood and Americas have also engaged the Polish Government on this sensitive issue since it was last discussed in the House.

We regret that, despite this, the Polish Senate passed legislation in September 2020 which may make property restitution more difficult for some claimants in Warsaw. The UK will continue to take a strong stand on the issue of property restitution, in line with our unwavering commitment to supporting Holocaust survivors. Working with like-minded partners and the World Jewish Restitution Organisation (WJRO), the FCDO will continue to urge Poland to introduce comprehensive national legislation to deal with Holocaust-era property restitution.

Portsmouth International Port: Finance

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what reasons were given to Portsmouth Port for the decision to grant £17.1 million for the development of the border infrastructure required as a result of the UK–EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement; what additional sources of funding (1) Portsmouth Port, and (2) other ports in a similar situation, are being directed to; why ports are not being granted the full amount estimated to be required for such infrastructure; whether they plan to fund the specialist facilities hosted at Portsmouth Port for trade in animals for breeding purposes; and if so, how. [HL11948]

Lord True: The Port Infrastructure Fund received 53 applications from a range of sea ports, rail facilities and airports. Of the 53 ports that applied to the Fund, 41 were successful in their application and a total of £200M has been provisionally allocated. 12 ports were not considered eligible or were unsuccessful at assessment phase.

It is a commercial decision for ports as to whether to provide these facilities. In normal circumstances, ports would be expected to fund such facilities themselves. However - in recognition of the unique circumstances of EU Exit, and the tight timescales for putting infrastructure in place - Government made £470m of funding available for new border infrastructure, with up to £200m available to ports through the Port Infrastructure Fund.

Ports will need to consider the scope of their infrastructure projects now that their funding allocations have been made - they may choose to scale back on the facilities they are building, or they may choose to provide additional funding themselves. This is a commercial decision for ports.

Any decisions on future funding for specialist facilities would be announced in the usual way.

Ports: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Rogan

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much Government funding has been spent in the current financial year on physical infrastructure at sea ports in Northern Ireland. [HL12848]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: A total of £16m is on track to be spent by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs of Northern Ireland on infrastructure, IT systems and personnel to the end of the current financial year for the work necessary to carry out the required sanitary and phytosanitary checks at Northern Ireland's Points of Entry.

Post Offices: ICT

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support sub-postmasters affected by failings in the Horizon IT system. [HL13123]

Lord Callanan: Post Office Ltd has admitted it got things wrong in relation to the Horizon IT system and has apologised. The Government understands the serious impact that issues arising from faults with the Horizon IT system, and the Post Offices management of these issues, have had on affected postmasters' lives and livelihoods. In order to ensure that there is a public summary of failings and that this situation will never be repeated, the Government launched the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry on 29 September 2020.

Pre-school Education: Finance

Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking in relation to the underspending by local education authorities of funding earmarked for children's early education and care which has been instead channelled into other areas of education spending. [HL12923]

Baroness Berridge: The setting of local provider funding rates is a decision for local authorities in consultation with their Schools Forum. The free childcare offers for two-, three- and four-year-olds are demand-led and local authorities will see an underspend in their funding if take-up of any of the entitlements has not been as high as the local authority had forecast at the start of the year. Any underspend from a local authority's early years budget is carried forward to the next financial year, and must remain within the education budget, as is set out here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-2021-to-2022/dsg-conditions-of-grant-2021-to-2022>. Local authorities must also consult with their Schools Forum on the use of their underspend, as is set out here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945784/Schools_Operational_guide_2021_to_2022_V4_.pdf.

My right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced on 25 November 2020 a £44 million investment in the 2021-22 financial year, for local authorities to increase hourly rates paid to childcare providers for the government's free childcare entitlement offers. In the 2021-22 financial year we will increase the hourly funding rates for all local authorities by 8p an hour for the two-year-old entitlement and, for the vast majority of areas, by 6p an hour for the three- and four-year-old entitlement.

Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the National Day Nurseries Association Early Years Funding 2019/20: Underspend and contingency budgets one year on, published in February; and in particular, its finding that over the last two years there has been a £1.5 billion underspend by local education authorities across early entitlement funding and Tax Free Childcare. [HL12982]

Baroness Berridge: The setting of local provider funding rates is a decision for local authorities in consultation with their schools forum. The free childcare offers for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds are demand-led and local authorities will see an underspend in their funding if take-up of any of the entitlements has not been as high as the authority had forecast at the start of the year. Any underspend from a local authority's early years budget is carried forward to the next financial year, and must remain within the education budget, as set out in guidance which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-2021-to-2022/dsg-conditions-of-grant-2021-to-2022>. Local authorities must also consult with their schools forum on the use of their underspend, as is set out in guidance which can be found here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945784/Schools_Operational_guide_2021_to_2022_V4_.pdf.

The government recognises that take up of Tax-Free Childcare (TFC) has been below expectations, particularly for school-aged children. For this reason, at the March 2020 Budget we announced a measure that will make TFC payments compatible with school payment agents, allowing up to 500,000 eligible children to access TFC for the first time.

The department is in regular contact with the early years sector and we have discussed this report and the findings with the National Day Nurseries Association.

Prisoners' Release: Females*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to record, and (2) to report, on the (a) housing outcomes, and (b) homelessness figures, of female prison leavers as part of the resettlement and reoffending metrics for measuring the success of the Concordat on women in or at risk of contact with the Criminal Justice System. [HL12949]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: Relevant data on housing outcomes and homelessness figures for female prison leavers are published annually at the below link, and can be found attached.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904935/accommodation-201920.ods.

We will refer to these published figures when measuring and reporting on the success of the Concordat on women in or at risk of contact with the Criminal Justice System. The Concordat contains a commitment to describe progress in a "One Year On" report.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [Table HL12949.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-03/HL12949>

Prisoners Release: Temporary Accommodation*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the recent announcement to provide temporary basic accommodation to support prison leavers at risk of homelessness in five National Probation Service regions will include (1) women-only accommodation, and (2) provisions for specific support for vulnerable women with complex needs. [HL12948]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: To reduce reoffending and provide health and wellbeing support, we are launching a new accommodation service, providing up to 12 weeks of basic temporary accommodation for prison leavers who would otherwise be homeless. This will complement the service being delivered through the new unified probation model.

Women-only accommodation provision will be made available, as required. More generally, the service will take account of the needs of women, including those with complex needs.

This Government is clear that getting prison leavers into stable accommodation provides the platform they need to find work and access treatment for addictions and mental health problems, which reduce the risk of reoffending. Tackling all three issues together in this way – accommodation, work and treatment – could prevent thousands of people becoming victims each year and save some of the £18 billion annual cost of repeat crimes.

Prisoners: Self-harm*Asked by Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales: Deaths in Prison Custody to December 2020 Assaults and Self-harm to September 2020, published on 28 January, what steps they are taking to address the reported increase in self-harm in the female prison estate in England and Wales. [HL12808]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: We recognise that the level of self-harm in the women's estate is too high and are determined to reduce this. A Women's Self-Harm Task Force was set up in April 2020 in response to our increasing concerns about the level of self-harm in the

Women's estate. We know that many of the drivers (risks and triggers) and protective factors linked to women's risk of self-harm in prisons have been adversely affected by Covid-19 and the restricted regimes that have been put in place to control the spread of infection.

The Task Force has led work to introduce a number of specific interventions to counteract the impact of Covid-19 on self-harm in the Women's estate. This work has seen the introduction of bespoke well-being checks, increased credit to enable phone calls and increased access to Purple Visits (video calls with family and friends).

We have prioritised the roll out of the revised version of the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) multi-disciplinary case management system used in prisons to support people at risk of suicide and self-harm. We will also be implementing the Offender Management in Custody model in the female estate in April 2021. This will provide each woman in the female estate with a dedicated key worker who will be able to better support them and identify concerns at an early stage so that women can receive the right support at the right time.

We have also produced a range of products to support Governors in devising and implementing local safety and welfare plans designed to mitigate risks and promote wellbeing. We have developed new guidance for staff on understanding and supporting someone who is self-harming. We continue to make the Samaritans phone service available and are working with the Samaritans to ensure that the Listener peer support scheme continues to function effectively wherever possible.

We have also invested £5m in alternatives to prison, including new women's centres which help people address issues such as alcohol or drug addiction which leads them to crime.

Protective Clothing: Contracts

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government which contracts they awarded to Ayanda Capital for the provision of personal protection equipment; what was the total value of such contracts; and what value of equipment supplied under such contracts were designated as (1) unfit for use in the NHS, (2) fit for clinical use only, (3) suitable for supply or sale to departments other than the Department of Health and Social Care, (4) suitable for sale or supply to third countries, and (5) required to be destroyed. [\[HL10941\]](#)

Lord Bethell: One contract has been awarded to Ayanda Capital by the Department with a value of £252 million. The Contract Award Notice and the contract has been published online at the Government's Contracts Finder service which contains details of the value of each contract and the types of personal protective equipment (PPE) which have been ordered against each contract.

Delivery is progressing for all the PPE items. All items of PPE undergo a rigorous technical assurance process

before they can be released for use at which point decisions will be made about which healthcare setting they are suitable for or whether alternative settings need to be considered. Details of such decisions on individual contracts is regarded as commercially sensitive information as the Department may have to negotiate contract variations, which could include a refund or other form or redress against the supplier.

Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total value of applications to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme received before that scheme was closed to new applications on 11 January. [\[HL12924\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The total value of applications received to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme was £2.4 billion.

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications were received from schools for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme; and what was the value of any such applications. [\[HL12925\]](#)

Lord Callanan: 711 applications were received in total from schools and academies for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. These have a combined value of £429 million.

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide funding to organisations which were unsuccessful in their application to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. [\[HL12926\]](#)

Lord Callanan: My Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister's ten point plan for a green industrial revolution, announced in November 2020, includes a commitment for further funding for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme in the 2021/22 financial year. Further information will be announced in due course.

Racial Harassment: Internet

Asked by Lord Austin of Dudley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the adequacy of the (1) investigation, and (2) prosecution, of online racist abuse by the (a) police, and (b) Crown Prosecution Service. [\[HL13044\]](#)

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We have robust legislation in place to deal with internet trolls, cyber-stalking and harassment, and perpetrators of grossly offensive, obscene, or menacing behaviour.

We have published the Full Government Response to the Online Harms White Paper, which includes specific measures to work with private companies and ensure that

they are held to account for tackling illegal activity and content, such as hate crime, harassment, and cyber-stalking, as well as activity and content which may not be illegal but is nonetheless highly damaging to individuals (legal but harmful). The Full Government Response will be followed by legislation, which we are working on at pace, and will be ready this year.

The Home Office also funds a Police Online Hate Crime Hub to improve the police response to victims of online hate crime.

Railways

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish up-to-date forecasts of future demand for travel by rail; whether any such forecasts (1) will provide separate data for (a) commuting, and (b) long distance travel, and (2) will include reductions in peak and other passenger rail services; and what plans they have to ensure that any freed-up rail capacity will be made available to improve rail freight services. [\[HL13051\]](#)

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department has not historically published forecasts of future rail demand.

The Department continues to actively work to understand the impact of coronavirus on rail demand, including close working with industry. As part of this we are ensuring that we use a range of rail demand scenarios based on a series of factors that could drive rail demand over the short and long term to influence decisions, and which does consider the impact on commuting and long-distance travel. These scenarios do not consider reductions in peak and other passenger services.

Given the considerable uncertainty that the pandemic has caused, these scenarios cannot be used as forecasts. However, they do reflect some of the possible impacts of the pandemic on future rail demand.

Network Rail (NR) has enabled Freight Operating Companies (FOCs) to run longer and heavier trains on the network in light of the reduced passenger timetable during the COVID-19 pandemic, delivering environmental and efficiency benefits. The Department continues to work closely with NR and FOC's to explore further opportunities.

Railways: Bridges

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 8 February (HL12929), what assessment the Highways Agency has made of imposing weight restrictions on historic railway estate structures as an alternative to demolition; and what plans they have to consult local authorities before deciding on demolition. [\[HL13156\]](#)

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Pursuant to the answer to HL12929, Highways England's existing procedures on Historical Railways Estate (HRE) structures are designed to keep the public safe and are underpinned by what is the safest and most appropriate option for a given structure. Local highway authorities have responsibility for applying weight restrictions, closing the roads, or restricting traffic. Approximately 200 of the public road bridges on the HRE managed by Highways England have failed their most recent structural assessment but Local Authorities have not had any restrictions implemented. Therefore, in these cases, Highways England's planned infilling is the safest and most appropriate option and will maintain access across the structures. Although there are currently no plans to review existing procedures, this will be kept under review.

Highways England enjoys a strong working relationship with local councils, allowing for an open dialogue about local authority responsibilities and the potential future use or transfer of ownership of bridges, and has contacted all local authorities affected to advise them of its plans to see if they have any use for the structures. In addition, it has arranged for seven structures to be transferred to local authorities which aspire to use them for cycle routes.

Redundancy: Wales

Asked by Lord German

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many jobs have been lost in each parliamentary constituency in Wales so far in the 2020/21 financial year. [\[HL13074\]](#)

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

Professor Sir Ian Diamond | National Statistician

The Lord German OBE

House of Lords

London

SW1A 0PW

15 February 2021

Dear Lord German,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question asking how many jobs have been lost in each parliamentary constituency in Wales so far in the 2020/21 financial year (HL13074).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces labour market statistics for small areas from the Annual Population Survey (APS), which is a survey of people resident in households in the UK.

The APS cannot be used to measure the number of people who have lost their jobs, but instead can provide estimates of how the size of the workforce has changed over time. The survey provides level estimates for 12-month periods, based on interviews taking place throughout that time. Comparisons should only be made between non-overlapping survey periods.

Table 1 shows the employment levels for the 12-month period ending September 2020, the latest available period, and the previous non-overlapping period for the 12-months ending September 2019, along with the net change between the two periods, for each parliamentary constituency in Wales.

Estimates from the APS are from a sample survey and as such are subject to a certain level of uncertainty. As the information provided is quite extensive, a copy has been placed in the House of Lords library.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Parliamentary Constituency	Geocode	Thousands			Net change
		Oct 2018-Sep 2019	Oct 2019-Sep 2020		
Aberavon	W07000049	30	28	-2	
Aberconwy	W07000058	25	26	1	
Alyn and Deeside	W07000043	45	45	0	
Arfon	W07000057	30	22	-8	
Blaenau Gwent	W07000072	31	32	1	
Brecon and Radnorshire	W07000068	32	29	-3	
Bridgend	W07000073	42	42	-1	
Caerphilly	W07000076	37	40	3	
Cardiff Central	W07000050	37	41	4	
Cardiff North	W07000051	58	58	0	
Cardiff South and Penarth	W07000080	63	64	1	
Cardiff West	W07000079	54	47	-7	
Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	W07000067	31	30	-2	
Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire	W07000066	33	35	2	
Ceredigion	W07000064	34	35	2	
Clwyd South	W07000062	39	35	-4	
Clwyd West	W07000059	34	30	-4	
Cynon Valley	W07000070	32	27	-5	
Delyn	W07000042	34	34	0	
Dwyfor Meirionnydd	W07000061	30	34	5	
Gower	W07000046	43	41	-2	
Islwyn	W07000077	38	39	1	
Llanelli	W07000045	36	35	-1	
Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney	W07000071	33	31	-2	
Monmouth	W07000054	43	43	0	
Montgomeryshire	W07000063	30	32	2	

Parliamentary Constituency	Geocode	Oct 2018-Sep 2019	Oct 2019-Sep 2020	Net change
Neath	W07000069	37	35	-1
Newport East	W07000055	36	38	2
Newport West	W07000056	44	45	1
Ogmore	W07000074	31	33	2
Pontypridd	W07000075	36	41	5
Preseli Pembrokeshire	W07000065	38	37	-2
Rhondda	W07000052	30	26	-4
Swansea East	W07000048	31	33	2
Swansea West	W07000047	39	37	-2
Torfaen	W07000053	34	35	1
Vale of Clwyd	W07000060	29	31	2
Vale of Glamorgan	W07000078	46	44	-2
Wrexham	W07000044	33	34	1
Ynys Mon	W07000041	33	31	-2
Wales		1468	1452	-16

1] Quality indicator

Shaded estimates are based on a small sample size. This may result in less precise estimates, which should be used with caution.

Unshaded estimates are based on a larger sample size. This is likely to result in estimates of higher precision, although they will still be subject to some sampling variability.

Refugees: Families

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 2 February (HL12281), whether they publicise the availability of Family Reunion Visas in (1) Europe, (2) the Middle East, and (3) North Africa; and if so, whether they advertise such availability (a) at embassies, (b) through the UNHCR, or (c) through other organisations. [[HL12961](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: UKVI do not publicise visa services outside of GOV.UK, although it may raise awareness of specific routes via stakeholders and partners. Those who are granted asylum and humanitarian protection are informed of the Family Reunion visa.

All information on visa routes to the UK, including Family Reunion, are available on GOV.UK. Customers are able to check what visa type they may be eligible for and access guidance on applying.

Refugees: Penally Camp

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the living conditions for refugees being housed at the former army barracks at Penally. [HL12845]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the asylum system has faced significant pressures and it has become necessary to use additional temporary accommodation to ensure the Home Office can continue to meet all of its statutory obligations.

Penally Training Camp is temporary, contingency accommodation whilst we continue to address the issues putting pressure on the asylum system. The site was previously used by our armed forces and provides safe, suitable and warm accommodation in line with existing contractual requirements for asylum accommodation.

Most recently we asked an independent health and safety consultancy, Human Applications to carry out a rapid review of a number of asylum accommodation sites including Penally. The Home Office is reviewing the recommendations of the review and will seek to publish a summary of the recommendations. We will also hold round tables with stakeholders to discuss the recommendations, actions taken and proposed next steps.

We continue to work closely with our provider and partners to identify opportunities for enhancement, as we do across our entire accommodation estate.

Regional Planning and Development

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the devolved administrations about their levelling up agenda. [HL12777]

Lord Greenhalgh: We are committed to levelling up opportunities across the UK to spread opportunity and investment so that people feel that they can succeed in their local area. UK Government officials have met with their counterparts in the devolved administrations on multiple occasions to discuss the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and the future of local growth funding. This includes regular meetings to discuss any updates, concerns or queries. The UK Government has also held 16 engagement events across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, to discuss the UKSPF and local priorities. These were attended by representatives from a breadth of sectors, including officials from the devolved administrations.

Regional Planning and Development: Local Government

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with local authorities about their levelling up agenda. [HL12776]

Lord Greenhalgh: Levelling up all areas of the country remains at the centre of the Government's agenda, empowering our regions by devolving money, resources and control away from Westminster. Government has worked with local leaders throughout the pandemic to ensure every region, city and town will recover from Covid-19 and ultimately level up. Government will continue to engage with mayors to discuss the economic opportunities across our major cities whilst also engaging with local partners who represent the different types of places across the country.

The Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper will cover how the UK Government will partner with places across the UK to build a sustainable economic recovery and set out our plans for future devolution arrangements. Ministers and officials have regular conversations with partners in local government, working together to progress and shape the levelling up agenda.

Regional Planning and Development: Public Bodies

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with public authorities about their levelling up agenda. [HL12778]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Government Ministers and officials regularly meet with a wide range of local government stakeholders, including through MHCLG's M9 Mayoral Group roundtables, and regional stocktakes. In addition to these and other engagement forums, the government draws regularly on views from across stakeholders, such as through the formal representation process around fiscal events, such as the recent Spending Review and upcoming Spring Budget.

Regional Planning and Development: West Cumbria

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what priority they will give to specific economic green development in West Cumbria in their post-COVID-19 reconstruction plans. [HL13103]

Lord Callanan: We are seizing the initiative to build back better, greener, and faster from COVID-19. My Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution is part of the government's mission to level up across the country, mobilising £12 billion of government investment to create and support up to 250,000 highly-skilled green jobs in the UK including in West Cumbria, helping recovery from the pandemic and spurring over three times as much private sector investment by 2030.

We have previously funded the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to produce the Cumbria Local Energy Plan helping businesses develop low carbon

and renewable energy projects which will contribute to sustainable economic growth. As part of a restructuring of the North West Energy Hub, the Cumbria LEP will gain a dedicated Energy Officer to assist in the delivery of the Cumbria Local Energy Plan.

Over the coming months, we will bring forward further bold proposals to deliver on our ambitious climate commitments and further cement a green recovery from Covid-19, including a Net Zero Strategy, to cut emissions and create new jobs and industries across the whole country.

Rehabilitation

Asked by Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made towards producing a cross-addiction strategy which includes consideration of alcohol addiction. [HL13296]

Lord Bethell: Work on the cross-Government addiction strategy was paused during the COVID-19 pandemic and will resume this year. We will consider the evidence around alcohol dependence and harms and what further action is needed as this work progresses.

Remittances: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Anelay of St Johns

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made in increasing the number of countries giving their support to the Call to Action 'Remittances in Crisis: How to Keep them Flowing', co-launched with Switzerland in May 2020; which countries now support the Call; and what progress has been made to counteract the decrease in remittances due to the impact of COVID-19. [HL12985]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have worked together with other Call to Action partners (Switzerland, World Bank etc) to reach out to countries and institutions to join. To date, an additional 28 countries, eight International Organisations, four industry bodies, and five donors / charities have joined. Some other countries have been unable to join but have taken actions to reduce the barriers limiting the flow of remittances on the back of the Call to Action.

The 28 countries that have joined the Call to Action are: Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Yemen, Jordan, Georgia, New Zealand, Niger, Panama, Rwanda, Vanuatu, Cote d'Ivoire, Fiji, Turkey, Honduras, Australia, Guatemala, Eritrea, Tonga, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia and Cambodia.

Positive steps have been taken by over 44 countries to counteract the decrease in remittances due to the impact of COVID - for example, actions targeted at improving access to remittances and financial services, expanding Healthcare and Social Safety Nets, and supporting food

security. We also saw several companies respond by waiving their transfer fees.

In the UK, we amended the Health Protection Regulations to include money transfer organisations as essential service providers, ensuring that they were able to continue operating during the COVID-19 lockdown period.

Remote Education: Broadband and Computers

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have conducted a survey to ascertain how many school pupils do not have access to (1) a computer, laptop or tablet, and (2) home broadband; and if not, what plans they have to conduct such a survey. [HL12915]

Baroness Berridge: The Government is investing over £400 million to support access to remote education and online social care services, including securing 1.3 million laptops and tablets for disadvantaged children and young people.

As of 15 February 2021, over one million laptops and tablets have been delivered to schools, trusts, local authorities and further education providers.

Laptops and tablets are owned by schools, trusts, local authorities, or further education providers who can lend these to children and young people who need them most during the current COVID-19 restrictions.

The Government is providing this significant injection of laptops and tablets on top of an estimated 2.9 million already owned by schools before the start of the COVID-19 outbreak. The extra provision of laptops and devices is in line with Ofcom's estimates for the number of pupils who do not have access to a device.

Ofcom has estimated that between 1.1 and 1.8 million children do not have access to a device across the whole of the UK. Education is devolved so our programme is just for England.

The Department estimated the number of disadvantaged pupils without access to an internet connection using data on pupils eligible for free school meals in each school, taking into consideration that some pupils would already have access to a private internet connection and estimations by Ofcom. Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak, we have delivered over 60,000 routers to schools, local authorities, and trusts.

We have conducted surveys with schools, pupils and parents throughout the COVID-19 outbreak and have collected data on access to technology, which will be published in due course.

To support disadvantaged households who rely on a mobile internet connection, the Government has partnered with some of the UK's leading mobile network operators, to help ensure that families have the data they need to access online educational resources while COVID-19 requires children to learn from home.

In partnership with mobile network operators, the Department is providing a service for schools if they have identified families who do not have a broadband connection and need free mobile data uplifts to engage in remote education.

Following a successful pilot, the offer is now available for schools across England to request free mobile data uplifts for disadvantaged children via the Get Help with Technology service.

Remote Education: Trade Promotion

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to promote opportunities for UK companies to offer online tuition in (1) the UK, and (2) overseas. [HL12775]

Baroness Berridge: The Department's £350 million National Tutoring Programme (NTP) will engage around 15,000 tutors to support 250,000 pupils across England, with the majority of our tuition partners providing online support. Through our EdTech grant funding partnership, Nesta are supporting some tuition partners to strengthen their digital and online offering and capabilities. For example, adapting online content to better meet the needs of students with special educational needs, developing lower-bandwidth platforms, and embedding impact measurement into online provision. The NTP for 5 to 16 year olds has been extended for another year and more information will be available in due course.

More broadly, businesses in England can access free support and guidance on finding the right finance to grow or scale up from the network of local growth hubs and the freephone Business Support Helpline. Information and advice on scaling and growing a business can also be found on gov.uk. Firms based in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales can access business support through their Governments.

The Government's International Education Strategy commits to promoting overseas opportunities for UK companies. We proactively identify opportunities in global markets and to support the sector in maximising its supply capabilities to meet this demand. We promote opportunities via the Exporting Is GREAT website and work closely with British Educational Suppliers Association, the trade association for UK EdTech, and the sector to maximise exposure to opportunities for online education providers.

Renewable Energy

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to develop the renewable energy sector in the UK. [HL13119]

Lord Callanan: As stated in the answer I gave the noble Baroness on 23 November 2020 to Question HL10093, the next Contracts for Difference allocation

round will take place later this year, in which we are aiming to deliver up to double the renewable capacity achieved in the last round. The Government has committed £160 million to support new port and manufacturing infrastructure, which is needed to achieve our 40GW offshore wind ambition and secure local jobs and benefits. We are also considering the responses received through our recent consultation on changes to supply chain plans for future allocation rounds and will respond shortly.

Renewable Energy: Apprentices

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase apprenticeship opportunities in the clean energy industry. [HL12978]

Baroness Berridge: Apprenticeships will be more important than ever in helping businesses in all sectors to recruit the right people and develop the skills they need to recover and grow.

To help employers offer new apprenticeships, as part of government's Plan for Jobs, they are now able to claim £2,000 for every new apprentice they hire under the age of 25, and £1,500 for new apprentices aged 25 and over. As set out by my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the Spending Review, we have extended the eligibility period for these incentives until 31 March 2021, continuing our support for employers during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Apprenticeship standards developed by the energy industry include Community Energy Specialist, Power Engineer, Junior Energy Manager and Dual Fuel Smart Meter Installer. A full list of standards can be found here: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/>. The number of starts on these standards can also be found here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/9a3c580e-cb78-4331-a055-5d147b4e1ff0>.

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (the Institute) has convened a Green Apprenticeships Advisory Panel to guide the Institute in encouraging trailblazers to align apprenticeships to net zero and wider sustainability objectives. The group comprises of employers with a strong footprint in the clean energy industry and introduces them to other crucial stakeholders to help identify which apprenticeships currently directly support the green agenda and which apprenticeships may need refocusing.

The Department for Education and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy launched the Green Jobs Taskforce on 12 November 2020 to help the UK build back greener and deliver the skilled workforce needed to reach net zero emissions by 2050. Working with employers and relevant stakeholders, the taskforce will develop an action plan to support 2 million good quality, green jobs and the skills needed by 2030, and so support the UK to transition to a net zero economy and

deliver a green recovery. Details of the taskforce can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-government-launches-taskforce-to-support-drive-for-2-million-green-jobs-by-2030>.

Research: Foreign Investment in UK

Asked by Baroness Harris of Richmond

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce rules to govern screening decisions in relation to foreign investment in research and development based in the UK to ensure that such investment can take place without disruption. [HL13085]

Lord Callanan: The Government published advice called Trusted Research in September 2019. This aims to support the integrity of the system of international research collaboration. It outlines potential risks to UK research and innovation. It helps researchers have confidence in international collaboration and make informed decisions around potential risks. It also explains how to protect research and staff from potential theft, misuse of exploitation. The sector is adopting the advice and institutions are changing the ways they make decisions on such investments.

Retail Trade: Non-Domestic Rates

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on shop closures of ending the business rates holiday. [HL12917]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The unprecedented full business rates holiday for eligible retail, hospitality and leisure properties for the financial year is worth about £10 billion to businesses in 2020-21. The Government will continue to look at how to adjust its support in a way that ensures people can get back to work, protecting both the UK economy and the livelihoods of people across the country. The Government is considering options for reliefs for 2021-22 and will outline the next round of COVID-19 support measures at Budget.

Retail Trade: Urban Areas

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to launch a campaign to encourage consumers to support local businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL12916]

Lord Callanan: BEIS and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government are working closely with businesses and Local Authorities for a safe and successful reopening when the health data allows.

We will keep all options under review, exploring all avenues to support local businesses as they recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

Revenue and Customs: Small Businesses

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the change in HMRC's status as a preferential creditor on the borrowing capacity of small businesses. [HL13136]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The recent change to HMRC's creditor status for certain debts ensures that when a business enters insolvency, more of the taxes paid in good faith by its employees and customers, but held temporarily by the business, go to fund public services as intended, rather than be distributed to other creditors. This change is not expected to have a significant impact on financial institutions, the lending market or wider economy.

The Government has engaged extensively with stakeholders in the finance industry and held a formal consultation on the policy design. Having considered all views carefully, the Government believes these reforms take a fair and proportionate approach, balancing the interests of taxpayers, the Exchequer and other creditors.

This measure is forecast to raise up to £255 million a year. To put this into perspective, bank lending to small and medium-sized businesses alone in 2019 was £57 billion, and the majority of business lending is by fixed charges and is unaffected by this measure.

The OBR did not make any adjustments to their economic forecast in response to this measure.

Revenue and Customs: Staff

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many transfer pricing specialists are employed by HMRC for dealing with the tax practices of multinational corporations. [HL12910]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: In 2019 to 2020 there were 456 (441 in 2018 to 2019) full-time equivalent staff working on international issues involving Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) including transfer pricing, diverted profits tax, Controlled Foreign Companies (CFCs) and cross border debt.

This figure includes time spent on international issues by dedicated international specialists, Corporation Tax specialists and policy and technical advisers.

These staff work with other expert industry and tax specialists to tackle issues that represent a substantial risk of tax loss to the Exchequer in line with HMRC's "resource to risk" compliance policy.

HMRC have invested significant time in training staff to deal with international issues, including transfer pricing.

RT: Licensing

Asked by Lord Austin of Dudley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the extent to which RT complies with the requirements of holding a broadcasting licence in the UK. [HL13045]

Asked by Lord Austin of Dudley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Ofcom about RT's compliance with the requirements of holding a broadcasting licence in the UK. [HL13046]

Baroness Barran: Broadcasting regulation compliance is a matter for Ofcom, all regulatory decisions made by Ofcom are fully independent of the Government. Ofcom has an ongoing duty to ensure that all UK licenced broadcasters adhere to requirements under broadcast licence rules.

Rural Areas: Broadband and Mobile Phones

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the lack of rural broadband and mobile phone connectivity; and how they plan to address the issue. [HL13191]

Baroness Barran: Over 96% of all premises in the UK can access superfast broadband thanks to the success of our Superfast Broadband Programme, meaning the UK has one of the highest levels of rural superfast connectivity in Europe. The Government is committed to further improve the UK's broadband infrastructure and deliver nationwide gigabit connectivity as soon as possible. As part of this, we are investing an unprecedented £5 billion of subsidy to support the deployment of gigabit broadband in the hardest-to-reach, predominantly rural, areas of the country through our new UK Gigabit Programme.

We have already made significant progress in connecting rural premises to gigabit speeds and, since 2018, have delivered gigabit-capable connectivity to over half a million homes and businesses in some of the hardest to reach places in the country, through our existing Superfast Broadband and £200 million Rural Gigabit Connectivity programmes.

The Government is also committed to extending geographic mobile coverage to 95% of the UK. On 9 March 2020, we announced the £1 billion Shared Rural Network deal with the Mobile Network Operators. This landmark deal will see operators collectively increase mobile phone coverage throughout the UK to 95% by the end of programme, underpinned by legally binding coverage commitments.

On 27 January 2021, the operators Three, O2 and Vodafone announced a joint venture to build and share 222 new masts to boost coverage across the UK to deliver

the first stage of the SRN. This will result in increased coverage in each of the UK nations.

Schools: Carbon Emissions

Asked by Lord Knight of Weymouth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what incentives are in place for schools in England (1) to measure, and (2) to reduce, carbon emissions. [HL12823]

Baroness Berridge: Reduction in energy use in new and existing buildings to meet the net zero carbon emissions by 2050 target is a priority for the UK government.

The department published the Good Estate Management for Schools guidance in April 2018. The guidance includes a section on 'Energy and water management', and tips on reducing energy and water use in schools, including measuring energy and water consumption. It also signposts schools to other organisations that provide training, information, and support in relation to sustainability and energy efficiency in schools.

In 2020, the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy setup the £1 billion Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme which provided grants for public sector bodies including schools to fund energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation measures. This scheme has now ended, however, schools can apply for funding through Salix for projects to reduce carbon emissions as well as accessing funding through the department's own Condition Improvement Fund for improvements to buildings and services within schools which contribute to reducing emissions.

Self-employed: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support the self-employed during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL12841]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) has supported the livelihoods of millions of self-employed people during the COVID-19 pandemic. Together, the three grants already provided through the scheme have provided up to £21,570 of support for each claimant, placing the SEISS among the most generous schemes for the self-employed in the world. There will also be a fourth grant covering February to April 2021. Further details on the SEISS, including the fourth grant, will be announced on 3 March.

The SEISS continues to be just one element of a substantial package of support for the self-employed. People who are ineligible for the SEISS 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.

Sexual Offences

Asked by Lord Lucas

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 3 February (HL12365), whether they will now answer the question put, namely, what assessment they have made of the change in rates of sexual abuse by women reported to police; and what assessment they have made of the impact of police recording suspects' self-identified gender on the number of cases of sexual abuse being recorded as committed by women. [HL13112]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: As set out in my response, information on sexual abuse committed by transgender women is not held centrally. Information on trends in sexual offences recorded by the police is routinely published by the Office for National Statistics. The most recent publication, is available here; <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingseptember2020>.

The Office for National Statistics had made it clear that sexual offences recorded by the police do not provide a reliable measure of trends in these types of crime. Sexual offences, including examples of sexual abuse, are underreported and therefore cannot be used to accurately assess changes in perpetrator demographics.

The Government takes all forms of sexual abuse extremely seriously, regardless of between who it takes place or the profile of the perpetrator. Whether it is committed by a woman or a man, sexual abuse in any situation, is unacceptable.

We are taking action to improve outcomes for rape cases through our end-to-end review of the criminal justice response to rape, which commenced in Spring 2019. The review covers from the point of police report through to final outcome in court.

We are committed to ensuring victims receive the support they deserve - the Ministry of Justice has awarded £12 million to 91 rape support centres across England and Wales in 2020/21 to provide independent, specialist support to female and male victims of sexual violence. This represents a total investment of £32m over the last three years.

Sizewell C Power Station

Asked by Lord Marlesford

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the response by Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist on

3 February (HL Deb, col 2168), whether they have made a decision to proceed with the construction by EDF of the new nuclear power station Sizewell C; and, if so, when this decision was made. [HL13008]

Lord Callanan: I assume my noble Friend is referring to our announcement to the House that we are entering negotiations with EDF, in relation to Sizewell C. Our aim is to bring at least one large-scale nuclear project to the point of Final Investment Decision by the end of this Parliament. No decision has yet been taken to proceed with Sizewell C, and the successful conclusion of these negotiations will be subject to full Government, regulatory and other approvals, including value for money.

Skilled Workers

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide local authorities with increased control over Local Skills Improvement Plans. [HL12976]

Baroness Berridge: The purpose of Local Skills Improvement Plans is to put employers firmly at the centre of local skills systems, working in partnership with colleges and other providers and informed by key stakeholders such as local authorities, to shape technical skills provision so that it better supports the local economy and boosts this country's productivity. Mayoral Combined Authorities play a vital role across their local skills system and will be consulted in the development of Local Skills Improvement Plans.

Slavery

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they published their most recent strategy on the prevention of modern slavery. [HL13067]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK is regarded as a world-leader for its response to modern slavery. The UK response is underpinned by the Modern Slavery Strategy 2014 and the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the first legislation of its kind. The Modern Slavery Strategy 2014 is structured around a 'four Ps' framework including a strategic pillar on prevent.

The Home Office continues to work with a range of partners to identify and deliver effective prevention activity. This included successful awareness raising initiatives such as the Government's 'Hidden in Plain Sight' campaign, as well as training for frontline responders to better prevent and spot the signs of modern slavery. We also have a dedicated [GOV.UK \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-training-resource-page/modern-slavery-training-resource-page\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-training-resource-page/modern-slavery-training-resource-page) resources page that provides up-to-date information on how to spot the signs of modern slavery and report concerns.

In addition, HMG is investing £10m to fund Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre to bring together and commission innovative research to enhance the evidence base on modern slavery, including on strengthening prevention initiatives.

*Asked by **Baroness Doocey***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to prevent re-trafficking of (1) known, or (2) suspected, victims of trafficking and modern slavery. [\[HL13068\]](#)

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK government is committed to tackling the heinous crime of modern slavery and is working in a number of ways, both in the UK and upstream, to prevent re-trafficking.

Support provided through the National Referral Mechanism for potential and confirmed victims of modern slavery identified in the UK aims to protect individuals from further harm and prevent possible re-trafficking.

In addition, the UK has strong relationships with a number of countries from where many victims originate and is working with them to provide a range of support for victims, including reintegration, as well as awareness raising and operational capacity building activity to prevent trafficking from occurring. For example, our ODA-funded Modern Slavery Fund provides a range of essential support including direct assistance via shelters and medical aid, to economic skills training and raised awareness of risks.

Small Businesses: Coronavirus

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the survey by Simply Business, published on 27 January, which found that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on the mental health and wellbeing of 82 per cent of small business owners; and what steps they are taking in response. [\[HL12919\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The Government recognises the significant impact that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had on both employers and employees, and their mental wellbeing.

In order to highlight available support around mental health, the Government is signposting to resources for businesses and employers, including Mind's website and the Mental Health at Work toolkit, through GOV.UK. We also continue to work with the Thriving at Work Leadership Council to encourage employers to sign up to the Mental Health at Work (MHAW) commitments and to engage leading Mental Health charities and organisations to better understand issues around SME mental health, financial insecurity for small business owners and the self-employed, and continue to explore what further support may be offered.

We also know how worried people are and we are taking many steps to protect both jobs and the long-term financial future of businesses during the current economic emergency. Throughout this crisis, our priority has been clear: to protect lives and livelihoods. We have introduced an unprecedented and comprehensive package of business support measures to help as many individuals and businesses as possible, which has mitigated some of the worst immediate impacts of COVID-19 on risk factors for poor mental health. This includes measures such as the small business grants, the Coronavirus loan guarantee schemes, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), the deferral of VAT and income tax payments, and more. Businesses can also access tailored advice through our Freephone Business Support Helpline, online via the Business Support website or through their local Growth Hubs in England. The Business Support Helpline continues to support business owners with tailored advice and information, and also signposts individuals to mental health support services where appropriate.

Further measures were also announced by my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer that build on the significant support already available as well as set out how current support will evolve and adapt. This includes the extension of the CJRS until the end of April 2021, the extension of the Coronavirus loan guarantee schemes until 31 March 2021, and the introduction of Pay As You Grow measures, meaning businesses now have the option to repay their Bounce Back Loans over a period of up to ten years. Businesses who also deferred VAT due from 20 March to 30 June 2020 will now have the option to opt-in to a scheme to allow them to pay in smaller instalments up to the end of March 2022, interest free. Businesses and individuals can use our checker tool on GOV.UK to quickly and easily determine whether they are eligible for any further financial support at this time. We will continue to work with colleagues across Government, businesses and other organisations, to ensure the right support is available for employers and employees.

Small Businesses: Coronavirus and UK Trade with EU

*Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with small businesses on the effect of the (1) COVID-19 pandemic, and (2) the UK's trading relationship with the EU, on such businesses. [\[HL12839\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The Government maintains an ongoing programme of engagement with Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and their Business Representative Organisations (BROs) in order to better understand the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and to support them in adapting to the UK's new trading relationship with the EU.

In recent weeks, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State has hosted roundtables with SMEs and BROs to

discuss a range of topical issues facing SMEs, including Covid-19 and EU trade.

My Hon. Friend the Minister for Small Business regularly meets with SMEs and BROs from a range of sectors across the UK and holds weekly calls with representatives from the hospitality and consumer goods sectors.

On the Covid-19 pandemic, in addition to regular meetings with SMEs, BEIS Ministers conducted 25 regional business engagement roundtables, including nine roundtables with businesses in the Devolved Nations. Attendance at these events was made up of mainly SMEs, reaching over 1,000 attendees.

BEIS continues to deliver a rolling plan of engagement with UK SMEs, including through webinars and other events across the spectrum of our sectors to discuss the ongoing impact of Covid-19, the continued support Government is providing businesses and how we can Build Back Better as our economy reopens.

On the UK's relationship with the EU, we communicate with a wide range of sectors and businesses about actions they can take to be ready for new opportunities now the transition period has ended. This includes a regular bulletin to BROs, with over 12,500 subscribers, and a weekly email from the Secretary of State to over half a million subscribers, including small businesses.

In the run up to the end of the Transition Period, the Government corresponded with over 4.7 million businesses, circulated frequent bulletins, and provided support to Trade Associations to communicate to their members.

There have been over 9.5 million views of information about UK transition and over 55,000 businesses have directly engaged with webinars, forums or through sector engagement since October 2020. Webinars have received over 16,000 views, and digital adverts have achieved over 47 million impressions.

As the backbone of our economy, we will continue to ensure that SMEs are engaged on Covid-19 and EU Trade, in addition to the wider issues that impact them.

Small Businesses: Remote Working

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to support small businesses in equipping remote workers with digital technology. [[HL12864](#)]

Lord Callanan: The Government's commitment to promoting digital adoption and facilitating digital upskilling includes several initiatives, including:

- Local Digital Skills Partnerships, which currently operate in seven regions across England, working to advance digital inclusion, support small businesses and build regional digital skills capability.

- the Digital Boost platform, which is building a community of digital experts providing one-to-one support to small businesses and charities free of charge to

help them improve their digital capability and build an online presence.

Social Media: Racial Harassment

Asked by Lord Austin of Dudley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the way in which social media companies deal with racist abuse directed at footballers. [[HL13042](#)]

Baroness Barran: The Culture Secretary and Sports Minister recently led a roundtable discussion with current and former players from the Premier League, English Football League (EFL), Women's Super League (WSL) and Women's Championship, which discussed online racist abuse and players' perspectives on tackling discrimination in the game.

We are clear that the online racist abuse of football players is unacceptable. We must do all we can to tackle it. We are taking steps through the online harms regulatory framework to ensure that online abuse, whether anonymous or not, is addressed. Under a new legal duty of care, companies will need to remove and limit the spread of illegal content, including illegal online abuse. All companies will need to take swift and effective action against such content.

The police have a range of legal powers to identify individuals who attempt to use anonymity to escape sanctions for online abuse, where the activity is illegal. The government is working with law enforcement to review whether the current powers are sufficient to tackle illegal anonymous abuse online. The outcome of that work will inform the government's future position in relation to illegal anonymous online abuse.

Companies providing high-risk, high-reach services will also need to undertake regular risk assessments to identify legal but harmful material on their services. These companies will need to set clear terms and conditions which explicitly state what categories of legal but harmful material they accept (and do not accept) on their service. Companies will need to enforce these terms and conditions consistently and transparently and could face enforcement action if they do not. The Online Safety Bill, which will give effect to the regulatory framework, will be ready this year.

Asked by Lord Austin of Dudley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the cooperation of social media companies with the police on incidents of online racist abuse. [[HL13043](#)]

Baroness Barran: The Culture Secretary and Sports Minister recently led a roundtable discussion with current and former players from the Premier League, English Football League (EFL), Women's Super League (WSL) and Women's Championship, which discussed online racist abuse and players' perspectives on tackling discrimination in the game.

We are clear that the online racist abuse of football players is unacceptable. We must do all we can to tackle it. We are taking steps through the online harms regulatory framework to ensure that online abuse, whether anonymous or not, is addressed. Under a new legal duty of care, companies will need to remove and limit the spread of illegal content, including illegal online abuse. All companies will need to take swift and effective action against such content.

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*Asked by **Baroness Brady***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that social media companies address the racist abuse of footballers. [[HL13054](#)]

Baroness Barran: The Culture Secretary and Sports Minister recently led a roundtable discussion with current and former players from the Premier League, English Football League (EFL), Women's Super League (WSL) and Women's Championship, which discussed online racist abuse and players' perspectives on tackling discrimination in the game.

We are clear that the online racist abuse of football players is unacceptable. We must do all we can to tackle it. We are taking steps through the online harms regulatory framework to ensure that online abuse, whether anonymous or not, is addressed. Under a new legal duty of care, companies will need to remove and limit the spread of illegal content, including illegal online abuse. All companies will need to take swift and effective action against such content.

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Bill, which will give effect to the regulatory framework, will be ready this year.

Social Security Benefits: EU Nationals

*Asked by **Lord Black of Brentwood***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to put in place a rebate system for employers resident in the UK and workers from EU countries that chose not to join the EU-UK Social Security Coordination Agreement before 31 January. [[HL12932](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Trade and Cooperation Agreement reached with the EU includes social security provisions that have practical benefits for UK and EU citizens travelling between the UK and EU.

These provisions support business and trade by ensuring that cross-border workers and their employers are only liable to pay social security contributions in one state at a time.

All Member States have expressed their wish to opt-in to apply the detached worker provision. This means that workers moving temporarily between the UK and the EU will continue to pay social security contributions in their home state.

Somalia: Politics and Government

*Asked by **Baroness Kennedy of Cradley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the situation in Somalia. [[HL13104](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK engages in Somalia to support progress across a broad range of security, political, development and humanitarian issues. In terms of recent political developments, Somalia is at a critical stage. It is vital that talks resume and leaders come to an agreement on the implementation of an inclusive electoral process, to be held as soon as possible. The UK, with its international partners, continues to call on Somalia's leaders to reach this consensus, in the interests of the people of Somalia.

Speech and Language Therapy: Expenditure

*Asked by **Baroness Whitaker***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the recommendation in the report by Children's Commissioner for England Still not safe: The public health response to youth violence, published on 6 February, for the levelling up of spending on speech and language therapy services around the country. [[HL13336](#)]

Lord Bethell: We recognise that early language development is a significant health inequalities issue. Improving the number of children having good speech, language and communication skills by five years old is a national priority. Public Health England, with the Department for Education, is working to ensure that

speech, language and communication needs are identified early on. We are monitoring the effectiveness of local joint arrangements through inspections by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. This will inform what further action is needed.

Spondyloarthritis: Health Services

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to implement the guideline by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence Spondyloarthritis in over 16s: diagnosis and management, published on 28 February 2017. [[HL13055](#)]

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the guidance included in the guideline by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence Spondyloarthritis in over 16s: diagnosis and management, published on 28 February 2017. [[HL13056](#)]

Lord Bethell: No specific assessment has been made.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guidelines describe best practice but are not mandatory, although health and care commissioners are expected to take them fully into account.

Sri Lanka: Diplomatic Service

Asked by Lord Naseby

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have supplied to the UN Human Rights Council any (1) redacted, and (2) unredacted, copies of despatches written by Lieutenant Colonel Gash, the former defence attaché of the British High Commission in Sri Lanka about events in that country between 1 January and 18 May 2009 relating to the civil war. [[HL13011](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government has not received any request from the UN Human Rights Council for copies of despatches written by the former defence attaché at the British High Commission in Sri Lanka, Lieutenant Colonel Gash, about events in Sri Lanka related to the civil war, and has not provided any.

St Helena: EU External Trade

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to support the government of Saint Helena in any future negotiations to secure market access for the export of (1) fish, and (2) coffee products to the EU. [[HL12902](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government is fully committed to supporting the Overseas Territories and we will continue to do all we can to protect their interests.

The impact of the UK's departure from the EU is different for each territory, including the introduction of tariff on exports from the Overseas Territories. Tristan da Cunha's primary export of rock lobster to the EU is currently not subject to tariffs. Fish and coffee exports from St Helena are not significantly impacted. The Government will continue to work with the territories to mitigate against the impact of tariffs, as well as taking up the benefits of the UK's independent trade policy.

State Retirement Pensions: Females

Asked by Baroness Altmann

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the number of women who did not receive an automatic uplift to their State Pension under the 2009 pension rule changes, and (2) the number of women who did not claim pension uplifts that they were due prior to 2009. [[HL13221](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: There has been no assessment of the numbers requested since there was no such State Pension rule change in 2009.

Stock Market: Regulation

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review regulations relating to short selling to ensure that any such regulations are fit for purpose. [[HL12825](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The government works closely with the regulators and market participants to monitor the effectiveness of the regulatory regime, in line with the government's objectives of supporting economic growth and financial stability.

The UK's Short Selling Regime, introduced in 2012, regulates short selling practices while safeguarding companies and the financial system.

Among other things, it requires persons to report their short positions in companies whose shares are admitted to trading on UK trading venues, and provides the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) with powers to request information from persons on their short selling activities, to apply penalties to persons who do not meet their regulatory obligations under the short selling regime, and to restrict the short selling of certain instruments in certain circumstances.

In particular, the FCA can temporarily restrict short selling when the price of an instrument has fallen significantly during a single trading day in relation to the closing price of that instrument on the previous trading day, and can restrict short selling for a period of up to three months when there are adverse events or developments which are a serious threat to financial stability or to market confidence in the UK.

It is the Government's position that this regime is working as intended, providing the necessary safeguards to allow the operation of a fair and effective market.

Therefore, we see no need to conduct a full review of this legislation at this time.

Sub-Saharan Africa: Bank Services

Asked by Baroness Anelay of St Johns

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the end of the transition period for the UK's departure from the EU, what steps have they taken to review the terms and conditions of the EU Payment Services Directive; and what assessment they have made of how they can support greater competition and transparency in the market for money transfer companies in Sub-Saharan Africa. [HL12984]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: HM Treasury is leading a Payments Landscape Review. The review aims to ensure the UK maintains its status as a country at the cutting edge of payments technology. The review is looking at what can be done across government, regulators and industry to ensure that the UK's regulatory framework and infrastructure for payments remains world leading.

HM Treasury issued the Payments Landscape Review Call for Evidence in July 2020 and it closed in October 2020. The Call for Evidence sought views on a range of opportunities and risks in UK payments, including for cross-border payments. The government is considering the responses and will set out next steps in due course.

Increasing competition and transparency is important to driving remittances innovation leading to consumers having better services and reduced costs. FCDO through the Harnessing Innovation for Financial Inclusion programme is focused on enhancing competition, transparency, and efficiency of the remittances market working across 18 African countries and is conducting research on key UK remittance corridors in Africa to understand what actions could lower the cost of remittances from the UK.

Suicide

Asked by Baroness Royall of Blaisdon

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the proportion of deaths per year recorded as suicide where the person had been diagnosed with a terminal illness. [HL13017]

Asked by Baroness Royall of Blaisdon

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to collecting data on deaths recorded as suicides where a terminally ill person has taken their own life. [HL13018]

Asked by Baroness Royall of Blaisdon

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of people per year who die as a result of suicide and, prior to their deaths, (1) had been diagnosed with, and (2) had been treated for (a) cancer, (b) neurological disease, (c) respiratory disease,

or (d) heart or circulatory disease, in the previous 12 months. [HL13019]

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

Professor Sir Ian Diamond | National Statistician

The Baroness Royall of Blaisdon

House of Lords London SW1A 0PW

10 February 2021

Dear Baroness Royall,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Questions asking what estimate has been made of proportion of deaths per year recorded as suicide where the person had been diagnosed with a terminal illness (HL13017); what consideration has been given to collecting data on deaths recorded as suicides where a terminally ill person has taken their own life (HL13018); and the number of people per year who die as a result of suicide and, prior to their deaths, (1) had been diagnosed with, and (2) had been treated for (a) cancer, (b) neurological disease, (c) respiratory disease, or (d) heart or circulatory disease, in the previous 12 months (HL13019).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes annual suicide death registration statistics for England and Wales as part of our annual statistical release for the UK^[1] ^[2]. The latest available figures were published by the ONS in September 2020 and covered calendar years up to 2019.

The information we hold on deaths is limited to what is recorded at death registration, which is based primarily on the death certificate by a doctor, or information about the cause and circumstances of the death provided by a coroner. We are unable at present to collect data or provide figures specifically on suicide where the person had been diagnosed with a terminal illness, since information on the deceased's circumstances prior to death, such as diagnosis or treatment, is not among the particulars generally recorded on the death certificate.

Table 1 below shows the number of deaths where the underlying cause was suicide, and where the conditions requested were mentioned as contributory causes for the latest available year. It is important to note that death certificates do not record all health conditions the deceased might have had if they did not contribute directly or indirectly to the cause of death.

The ONS has acquired a range of other datasets, including Hospital Episode Statistics and General Practitioner records, which will be linked to mortality records. It is possible that we will be able to use such data linkages in the future to understand how many people who die by suicide had a terminal illness.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Table 1: Number of deaths where the underlying cause was suicide and where cancer, neurological, respiratory or heart disease was mentioned as a contributory cause; England and Wales, registered in 2019 [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] 1,2,3,4,5

Cause of death	Deaths
All Suicide	5,691
...of which mentioned cancer	56
...of which mentioned neurological disease	264
...of which mentioned respiratory disease	168
...of which mentioned heart disease	321

Source: ONS

[1]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/suicidesintheunitedkingdom/latest>

[2] Due to operational difficulties, suicides registered in 2019 in Northern Ireland and Scotland were unavailable at the time of analysis, and so last year's annual release is for England and Wales only. The ONS will update the UK figures at a later stage.

[3] The National Statistics definition of suicide is given in Box 1 below for deaths registered since 2001.

[4] The definitions used to define the selected contributory causes are given in Box 2 below.

[5] Figures for England and Wales (area code K04000001) include deaths of non-residents, based on postcode boundaries as of November 2020.

[6] Figures are for deaths registered, rather than deaths occurring in each calendar year. Due to the length of time it takes to complete a coroner's inquest, it can take months or even years for a suicide to be registered. More details can be found in the 'Suicide Registrations In The UK' statistical bulletin.

[7] A single death certificate may contain a number of contributory causes. For this reason, the categories above are not mutually exclusive.

Box 1: International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes used to define suicide

ICD-10 codes	Description	Notes
X60-X84	Intentional self-harm	Persons aged 10 years and above
Y10-Y34	Injury/poisoning of undetermined intent	Persons aged 15 years and above; excludes Y33.9 where coroner's verdict was pending for the years 2001 - 2006

Box 2: International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes used to define the selected contributory causes

ICD-10 Codes	Description
C00-D48	Cancer
G00-G99	Neurological Disease
J00-J99	Respiratory Disease
I00-I99	Heart Disease

Suicide: Terminal Illnesses

Asked by Baroness Hayman

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with coroners about the number of people with terminal illnesses who die as a result of suicide per year. [HL13087]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The Ministry of Justice oversees the legal framework that governs the coronial system but does not have operational responsibility for coroner services. Ministers and officials meet with the Chief Coroner, individual coroners and local authorities from time to time to discuss a range of issues including suicide. We have not had recent discussions on the issue or the number of people with terminal illnesses who take their own lives.

Summertime

Asked by Lord Vinson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend British Summer Time; and what assessment they have made of the impact of any such extension on (1) energy consumption, and (2) business productivity. [HL12981]

Lord Callanan: The Government believes that the current daylight-saving arrangements represent the optimal use of the available daylight across the UK. We do not believe there is sufficient evidence to support changing the current system of clock changes, including for energy usage. An exceptionally wide-ranging cost benefit analysis would need to be performed to inform a decision on changing the current system, especially given the uncertainty that many businesses are already facing as a result of COVID-19.

Syria: Armed Conflict

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that the government of Syria is mounting an offensive in Idlib; and what steps they are taking in response to the remarks made by (1) the UN Special Envoy for Syria, and (2) the Under-Secretary-General Humanitarian Affairs and

Emergency Relief Coordinator, at the meeting of the UN Security Council on 20 January. [[HL13111](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: UN Envoy Geir Pedersen has described a 'fragile calm' in Syria that could break down at any moment. The UK welcomes Turkey's efforts to uphold the ceasefire in Idlib and prevent a further regime offensive. We urge all parties to adhere to agreed ceasefires and their obligations under international law. We also fully support Geir Pedersen's efforts towards a political solution to the conflict in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2254. Tackling the humanitarian impact of the Syria crisis remains a priority for the UK as the Assad regime's policies devastate the Syrian economy and deny aid to the most vulnerable. We continue to use our position at the UN Security Council to push for greater aid access into Syria and we remain committed to supporting aid delivery, through all mechanisms, to those in need.

Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust: Gender Recognition

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Gender identity services: inspection report, published on 20 January, and the statement that "separate from our inspection the High Court made a ruling on the 1 December 2020 around capacity and consent of children receiving hormone intervention for gender dysphoria", what discussions they have had with the CQC about undertaking a further review of the Gender Identity Services at Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust. [[HL13090](#)]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Gender identity services: inspection report, published on 20 January, what assessment they have made of the statement in that report that the High Court ruling on 1 December 2020 about the capacity and consent of children receiving hormone interventions for gender dysphoria has not impacted its findings. [[HL13091](#)]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the report by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Gender identity services: inspection report, published on 20 January, and (2) of whether the report adequately considered the potential (a) risk to, and (b) long-term consequences for, children and young people of using medication intended to suppress puberty. [[HL13092](#)]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the press release by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Care Quality Commission demands improved waiting times at Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, published on 21 January, following its report Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Gender identity services: inspection report, published on 20 January, and (2) the extent to which that press release reflects the findings of that report. [[HL13267](#)]

Lord Bethell: The High Court ruling of 1 December 2020 is subject to ongoing legal proceedings and as such we are unable to comment.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) shared the report on Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Gender Identity Services (GIDS) with the Department prior to publication. The Department welcomes the report and is aware that the CQC will follow its normal process of monitoring and further inspection activity to further review the GIDS.

The CQC continues engagement with NHS England and NHS Improvement on their independent review of gender services for children and young people, led by Dr Hillary Cass on how care can be enhanced. The review will report later in the year. This report will cover issues such as how and when young people are referred to specialist services, clinical decisions around how doctors and healthcare professionals support and care for patients with gender dysphoria.

Tax Avoidance: Contracts

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the ethical implications of awarding public contracts to firms which (1) directly, or (2) indirectly, help to promote tax avoidance. [[HL13279](#)]

Lord True: Aggressive tax avoidance is unacceptable.

The grounds for exclusion of bidders from public procurement procedures relating to tax are set out in The Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Tax Evasion: Prosecutions

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) bodies, and (2) individuals, have been prosecuted each year under the Criminal Finances Act 2017 for failure to prevent tax evasion; and what outcome was secured in each such case. [[HL12911](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: HMRC currently have thirteen live Corporate Criminal Offence (CCO) investigations with a further seventeen possible investigations under review. HMRC update these figures bi-annually on GOV.UK.

No corporate bodies have yet been prosecuted under the CCO for the failure to prevent the facilitation of UK tax evasion. This is because these investigations are extremely complex and take considerable time before they are ready to be passed to a prosecutor.

The CCO was implemented on 30 September 2017, which means HMRC are only able to consider potential investigations from that date. The offence applies solely to corporate bodies.

Individuals are prosecuted under pre-existing legislation that deals with tax evasion and the facilitation of tax evasion. Since April 2017, HMRC have prosecuted 60 facilitators of tax evasion. These cover a range of professional services and apply to different taxes and duties.

The CCO legislation was not brought in to simply increase the number of corporate prosecutions but to change long standing industry practices and reduce the opportunity for the facilitation of tax evasion to occur. There are positive signs of this happening with many organisations putting in place reasonable preventative procedures.

Teachers and Universities

Asked by Baroness Donaghy

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to maintain the link between (1) teachers' professional preparation, (2) the autonomy of universities as independent institutions, and (3) the academic freedom of universities' academic staff. [HL12947]

Baroness Berridge: The department has committed to strengthening academic freedom and ensuring our universities are places where free speech can thrive.

Academic freedom is a fundamental principle in the English higher education sector, as recognised in the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 and other legislation, allowing academic staff to question and test received wisdom and put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges. Universities are independent and autonomous institutions, but they are also required by law to uphold freedom of speech and academic freedom.

In November 2019, we published the new initial teacher training (ITT) Core Content Framework (CCF). The CCF sets a mandatory training entitlement that all ITT must deliver, embedded in the best available and independently verified evidence about effective teaching. This includes content on curriculum planning and sequencing, behaviour management and setting high expectations for all pupils. From September 2020, all ITT courses must encompass the full entitlement described in the CCF into their ITT curricula for all subjects and phases.

Teachers: Training

Asked by Baroness Donaghy

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure the adequate representation of higher education institutions providing initial teacher training in the Department for Education's Initial Teacher Training Market Review. [HL12943]

Asked by Baroness Donaghy

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what date they plan to publish the recommendations of the Initial Teacher Training Market Review; and what plans they have to implement a centrally prescribed system for (1) content, and (2) modes of delivery. [HL12946]

Baroness Berridge: The department is aware that teaching quality is the most important in-school factor in improving outcomes for all children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. The government is committed to giving every child high quality teaching to help them to achieve their full potential.

In November 2019, the department published the initial teacher training (ITT) Core Content Framework (CCF), which sets out a mandatory core minimum entitlement for all trainees of what they should expect from their training courses. The CCF sets a mandatory training entitlement that all ITT must deliver, embedded in the best, independently verified, evidence regarding quality teaching and what works. This includes content on curriculum planning and sequencing, behaviour management and setting high expectations for all pupils. This framework, along with the Early Career Framework, makes up a minimum entitlement of a three year package of development for trainees and newly qualified teachers, and will play a crucial role improving the quality of ITT.

On 2 January 2021, the department announced that we would be resuming our review of the ITT market. The review is focused on ensuring consistently high quality ITT based on the CCF, so that all trainees gain the expertise they need to become effective teachers. Any reforms must maintain sufficient capacity to deliver enough qualified teachers, whilst being accessible to candidates and of benefit to all schools.

The Chair and a small expert group, with the support of the department, are conducting early work to better understand these issues and the direction of the work. The department are confident that the expert group covers a range of expertise and perspectives which will be essential in ensuring the review maintains market capacity and reflects an understanding of high quality ITT. Additionally, they are holding discussions with sector representatives including the Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers and the National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers, with broader engagement planned from late spring. The department expects the review to conclude in the summer. The government will consider the Chair's recommendations and advise the sector accordingly at that stage.

*Asked by **Baroness Donaghy***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to have the Initial Teacher Training Core Content Framework (1) fully implemented, and (2) tested; and whether that Framework will be independently assessed. [HL12944]

Baroness Berridge: The initial teacher training (ITT) Core Content Framework (CCF) published in November 2019 sets out a mandatory training entitlement, embedded in the best, independently verified evidence about quality teaching, which all ITT must deliver. This includes content on curriculum planning and sequencing, behaviour management and setting high expectations for all pupils. The CCF can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-itt-core-content-framework>.

The department expects the CCF to be fully implemented and we will continue to monitor and assess the effect of the CCF in ensuring high quality ITT, including through the reporting of independent inspections of ITT partnerships conducted by Ofsted. ITT inspections will commence under the revised handbook (published by Ofsted in June 2020) when regular inspections resume. As part of inspections, Ofsted will check each partnership's adherence to the ITT criteria, which requires the full implementation of the CCF for primary and secondary phases. The ITT criteria can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-criteria>. The Ofsted framework and handbook for the inspection of ITT partnerships can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-education-ite-inspection-framework-and-handbook>.

*Asked by **Baroness Donaghy***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to maintain the stability of the teacher supply in the Initial Teacher Training system, and (2) to uphold the quality of teacher education. [HL12945]

Baroness Berridge: The department has been working hard to increase the number of teachers entering the profession. Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, teachers have been celebrated for their role in continuing to support children. Measures have been taken to maintain the stability of teacher supply throughout the COVID-19 outbreak by working closely with the sector to support teacher training providers to place trainee teachers in schools as part of their training. The department has relaxed some of the criteria relating to the provision of initial teacher training (ITT) in the 2020/21 academic year, confirmed that trainee teachers are critical workers, and strongly encouraged schools to continue hosting trainees on placement during periods of national or local COVID-19 restrictions.

The department has seen a surge in the number of new trainee teachers this year – over 7,000 more than in 2019 – which shows that teaching continues to be an attractive career option.

The department is aware that certain subjects continue to be a challenge, so has put in place a range of measures, which include bursaries worth up to £24,000 and scholarships worth up to £26,000, to attract talented trainees to some subjects like chemistry, computing, mathematics, and physics.

The department offers subject knowledge enhancement courses to applicants who have the potential to become outstanding teachers but who need to increase their subject knowledge before the Teachers' Standards can be met. The department also continues to run a range of marketing events to attract new trainees; these have all been adapted to run online in response to the outbreak and continue to see high attendance figures.

The department is committed to ensuring trainees and early career teachers receive the best training possible. From September 2020, all ITT will incorporate the ITT Core Content Framework (CCF) into well sequenced curricula. The CCF sets out a minimum entitlement of experiences and opportunities that trainees need, so they can enter the profession in the best position possible to teach and support children. This will be followed by a new two year induction from September 2021, supported by the Early Career Framework.

On 2 January 2021, the department announced that we are resuming a review of the ITT market, with a focus on how the ITT sector can provide consistently high quality training, in line with the CCF, in a more efficient and effective market.

This review will aim to make well informed, evidence based recommendations on how to ensure all trainees are receiving consistent, high quality training, in a way that will maintain capacity to deliver enough trainees, be accessible to candidates, and benefit all schools.

Technology

*Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to develop the technology sector. [HL13198]

Baroness Barran: The digital sector contributed £151bn to the UK economy in 2019 and accounts for 7.6% of UK GVA. It supports 1.6 million jobs and around 232,000 businesses of which almost all are SMEs. The Government is taking great strides to support this growth, championing the digital sector across Whitehall and supporting it through EU Exit and the pandemic.

As many companies struggled due to the pandemic, HMG introduced unprecedented support for the sector, including the Future Fund, Bounce Back Loans and Coronavirus Business Loans. The Future Fund alone has disbursed £1,066m in convertible loans to 1,055

innovative companies facing difficulties, including digital businesses.

Throughout the EU Exit process, HMG engaged regularly with the sector to understand their concerns, providing bespoke guidance for the sector throughout the Transition Period.

Last year DCMS introduced the UK Gigabit Programme and the Shared Rural Network programme to develop the country's broadband infrastructure; introduced a Digital Markets Taskforce, an Online Harms White Paper response and a Digital Identity Call for Evidence to ensure people remain safe online. We ran an entirely digital London Tech Week to show our support for the sector. This event was a resounding success, with initial figures suggesting 2,500 unique viewers attended each day, with 24,000 registering for the entire event. DCMS also delivers support through Tech Nation and our Digital Trade Network.

Telecommunications Systems

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Ofcom about the Public Switch Telephone Network switch off; and what plans they have, aside from the Broadband Stakeholder Group website, to ensure that (1) consumers, and (2) businesses, are informed of that switch off. [\[HL13058\]](#)

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of vulnerable people who will be impacted by the Public Switch Telephone Network switch off. [\[HL13060\]](#)

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the Public Switch Telephone Network switch off on businesses across the UK. [\[HL13061\]](#)

Baroness Barran: The retirement of the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), and its replacement with Internet Protocol technology, is being led by Openreach and Virgin Media, as the relevant infrastructure owners. Openreach and Virgin Media have publicly set out their plans to withdraw these services by the end of 2025. The migration is likely to affect all fixed exchange lines, of which there are 31.3 million in the UK.

Ofcom estimates that 81% of UK households have a landline service, with 4% of UK adults living in a home with a landline and no mobile phone and 3% of UK households having only a landline without any broadband. The Government, Ofcom, and industry are working to ensure that the needs of vulnerable consumers are considered and Ofcom regularly monitors how communication providers are taking steps to ensure they identify and protect vulnerable customers.

In June 2020, the Broadband Stakeholder Group, a government advisory forum on telecoms policy, launched the 'Future of Voice' website. This consumer-facing website is designed to inform the public and businesses of the PSTN switchover process. The website has been developed with the support of telecoms companies, Ofcom and DCMS.

The Government will also continue to work closely with various stakeholders, including the telecoms industry, Ofcom, and other Government departments to ensure the country is prepared for the withdrawal of the PSTN, and will continue to consider the best course of action to prepare for the migration.

Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much match funding they have given the Northern Ireland Executive to address paramilitary activity up to the end of the current financial year; and how much they will provide (1) in the 2021/22 financial year, and (2) beyond. [\[HL13253\]](#)

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The UK Government is committed to working with the Northern Ireland Executive in their work to tackle paramilitarism. Through the Fresh Start Agreement we have, to date, provided £25 million of match funding to the Executive's Tackling Paramilitarism, Criminality and Organised Crime Programme. This funding ends in this financial year and further funding will be confirmed shortly.

In addition to this, the New Decade, New Approach Agreement 2020 also included a further UK Government commitment to provide additional funding for tackling paramilitarism. An announcement on this will also be made shortly.

Test and Trace Support Payment

Asked by Lord Porter of Spalding

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether councils will be given discretion over the payment of the £500 self-isolation Test and Trace support grant so that councils can pay those claimants who do not submit their claim within two weeks, providing a legitimate reason is given for the delay in the application. [\[HL10982\]](#)

Lord Bethell: Individuals can apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment up to 28 days after their first day of self-isolation. This cut-off period is the same across all local authorities. In the event a local authority believes there is a legitimate reason an applicant has not been able to apply within the 28-day application period – for example, because they were ill in hospital and could not reasonably have been expected to make an application – they should use their discretion on a case-by-case basis in deciding whether to accept an application.

Tigray: Cultural Heritage

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations, if any, they have made to UNESCO about the establishment of a task force to assess, document and protect cultural sites in Tigray. [HL12853]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are concerned by reports from Tigray of attacks on places of worship as well as damage to cultural monuments and artefacts. Our Embassy in Addis is in contact with UNESCO in Addis and monitoring matters carefully. Our top priorities remain the provision of unfettered humanitarian access to the region and a complete cessation of hostilities.

Trade Agreements

Asked by Lord Grocott

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the UK's departure from the EU, which countries they have signed continuity trade agreements with. [HL13173]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: We have secured trade agreements with 64 non-EU countries. Total trade with these countries was worth £216 billion in 2019. This accounts for 97% of the value of trade with non-EU countries that we set out to secure agreements with at the start of the trade continuity programme.

After the transition period began, we expanded the ambition of our programme above and beyond this original scope, securing agreements with Japan, Turkey, Vietnam and Singapore, which together accounted for £71 billion of trade in 2019.

All countries with which the United Kingdom has a trade deal are set out on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Trade Agreements: Africa

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the African Continental Free Trade Area. [HL13193]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: Trading under Phase I of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which began on 1st January 2021, marks a key turning point in African economic integration. It will reduce barriers to intra-African trade and diminish the complexity and costs of operating across African countries for British businesses. It should lift millions out of poverty too, and drive industrialisation on the continent.

To fully realise its benefits, the ongoing Phase II negotiations must be successfully concluded, and the agreement fully implemented. The United Kingdom has supported AfCFTA negotiations with targeted technical assistance and my Hon. Friend, the Minister for Africa

(James Duddridge), recently expressed our support for AfCFTA to its Secretary-General.

Trade Agreements: Canada and Australasia

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made towards negotiating trade agreements with the governments of (1) Canada, (2) Australia, and (3) New Zealand. [HL13237]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: Strengthening and enhancing our bilateral trading relationships with Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are key priorities for the Government's trade negotiations programme.

(1) The UK-Canada Trade Continuity Agreement (TCA) was signed on 9th December and it will come fully into force once it has completed ratification in Canada. The TCA locked in our existing trading relationship with Canada as we left the transition period and sets out a clear path to begin negotiating a new trade deal during 2021.

(2) Good progress has been made in the UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The third round of negotiations was held between 23rd November and 4th December, completing around 50 discussions. Discussions reached an early milestone of exchanging initial tariffs offers. The fourth round of negotiations will begin on 22nd February.

(3) We are also making good progress on a UK-New Zealand FTA; the third round of negotiations with New Zealand took place between 25th January and 9th February, making progress in many chapters, and we will be publishing an Outcome Statement shortly.

Trade Promotion

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria they use to determine which (1) countries, (2) regions, and (3) markets, have a Prime Ministerial Trade Envoy appointed to them. [HL13033]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: The Prime Minister's Trade Envoy Programme supports British businesses overseas and attracts investment into the UK. The programme works in collaboration with other trade promotion activities, and it focuses on emerging and high growth markets where additional senior interactions can be valuable, or larger economies where multiple interactions at different levels are effective. Trade Envoys are appointed to markets where there are opportunities to increase bilateral trade.

We are constantly reviewing suitable countries, regions, and markets to identify where the appointment of a Trade Envoy can be of greatest benefit to the trade and investment aims of the UK with the Prime Minister ultimately making that decision.

Travel Restrictions: Coronavirus

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the permissible reasons for UK citizens to travel internationally while the restrictions to address the COVID-19 pandemic are in place. [HL13143]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: As the Prime Minister said in his statement on 27 January, under the stay at home regulations it is illegal to leave home to travel abroad for leisure purposes.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (England) Regulations 2020 set out the legally permitted reasons to leave home, and therefore travel internationally. These reasons include compassionate visits, where one is visiting someone who is dying, or for essential work purposes.

Travellers: Caravan Sites

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups Moving for Change: local authority approaches to roadside camps in a time of COVID-19, published on 4 February, in particular its finding that there was a 333 per cent increase in evictions from roadside camps in the 45 days following the Government guidance issued on 10 May 2020 to "stay alert"; what steps they are taking to ensure that local authorities are protecting Gypsies, Travellers, Roma and others at risk of roadside eviction during the COVID-19 pandemic; and what discussions they intend to have with local authorities about the use of negotiated settlements in place of evictions of such groups. [HL13037]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government is supporting people across the country respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, including those in the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

I have met with the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups to discuss the impact of the pandemic and the Government has provided guidance to all local authority Chief Executives about the support some Gypsy and Traveller families may need during the national restrictions to find a safe place to stop and access basic amenities, including water, sanitation and waste disposal facilities.

Whilst it is for local authorities to determine how best to support vulnerable groups, in line with their public health responsibilities, the Government will continue to work closely with them to ensure that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities' needs are met.

Trikafta

Asked by Lord Wei

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Kaftrio is available to cystic fibrosis patients in England; if not, why not; if it is available to such patients, whether there are any restrictions on that drug's availability; and if so, why. [HL13214]

Lord Bethell: Kaftrio is available to National Health Service patients in England in line with its license through an interim access deal negotiated between NHS England and NHS Improvement and Vertex, the drug manufacturer. This deal will last for four years and means that eligible NHS patients are among the first in Europe to benefit from access to Kaftrio.

As part of this deal, NHS England and NHS Improvement committed to expanding patient access to Kaftrio to cover any future license extensions by the European Medicines Agency.

TRIPS Agreement: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to put forward amendments to the World Trade Organization's proposed 'Waiver from certain provisions of the TRIPS Agreement for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19' (IP/C/W/669). [HL13240]

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish (1) the questions put, and (2) the statements made, by the UK representative at the World Trade Organization Council for TRIPS meeting on 4 February regarding the proposed 'Waiver from certain provisions of the TRIPS Agreement for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19' (IP/C/W/669). [HL13241]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: The UK Government has put forward no amendments to the proposal contained in WTO document IP/C/W/669 'Waiver from certain provisions of the TRIPS Agreement for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19'.

The UK has engaged in debates at the WTO TRIPS Council to promote affordable and equitable global access to COVID-19 vaccines. We respect that proceedings from informal WTO sessions are not published. However, at the 4 February session the UK sought further clarification on the parameters of the proposed waiver from waiver proponents. This remains consistent with the Government's approach to encourage evidence-based discussions on the waiver proposal.

Tristan Da Cunha: EU External Trade

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to support the government of Tristan da Cunha in any future negotiations for a trade agreement with the EU. [[HL12903](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government is fully committed to supporting the Overseas Territories and we will continue to do all we can to protect their interests. The impact of the UK's departure from the EU is different for each territory, including the introduction of tariff on exports from the Overseas Territories. Tristan da Cunha's primary export of rock lobster to the EU is currently not subject to tariffs. Fish and coffee exports from St Helena are not significantly impacted. The Government will continue to work with the territories to mitigate against the impact of tariffs, as well as taking up the benefits of the UK's independent trade policy.

Uganda: Overseas Aid

Asked by Lord Boateng

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the decision by the government of Uganda to suspend the Democratic Governance Facility, and (2) the implications of that suspension for the continuation of other development programmes in that country that are supported by UK Official Development Assistance. [[HL13052](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK withdrew its membership and funding for of the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) in 2017. We are also aware of reports that the Government of Uganda suspended the DGF in February 2021. Given this, Any suspension of the DGF will not have an impact on our Overseas Development Assistance in Uganda. Whilst not members of the DGF, we maintain a close relationship with it. Achieving long-term success for Uganda requires strong, independent and effective institutions that uphold the rule of law and democratic principles.

Asked by Lord Boateng

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken in response to reports that, since November 2020, Ugandan supporters of the National Unity Platform have been abducted by the government of Uganda's security services; and what proportion of UK Official Development Assistance is focused on security sector reform in that country. [[HL13053](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The treatment of opposition candidates and their supporters, including reports of abductions and arbitrary detentions, in the run-up to and since the Ugandan elections is concerning and does not provide for an open political landscape for democracy to flourish. We have raised our concerns on this at the highest level with the Government of Uganda. Following the disproportionate response by the Ugandan

security services to the protests at the end of November 2020, we took the decision to cut pause funding of three projects, totalling £40,909, which were working directly with the Ugandan security services. There is currently no UK Overseas Development Assistance spend to support security sector reform. In addition to the wider UK ODA review, we are currently reviewing UKAid spend in Uganda, including the permanent status of the above projects. Following the Presidential election results on 16 January 2021, the Minister for Africa set out, in a statement, our significant concerns about the overall political climate surrounding the elections and have urged the Government of Uganda to meet its international human rights commitments. The British High Commission in Kampala has regular meetings with international partners, NGOs, the Government of Uganda, and others, in order to gain an accurate picture of the human rights situation in Uganda. We regularly urge the Government of Uganda to uphold its international human rights commitments and have spoken out both publicly and privately against human rights violations and will continue to do so.

UK Internal Trade: Northern Ireland

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the existing flexibilities and procedures for problem solving contained within the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, in relation to trading matters between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. [[HL13014](#)]

Lord True: As set out in our Command Papers, the UK Government has, at all times, taken forward a pragmatic and proportionate approach, drawing upon all available flexibilities to implement the Protocol without causing undue disruption to lives and livelihoods.

The EU's actions on 29 January, however, profoundly undermined the operation of the Protocol and cross-community confidence in it. That is why it is now urgent for work to be taken forward to address all outstanding issues, to reassure all parties in Northern Ireland. The letter sent to Vice-President Sefcovic by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, on 2 February, sets out the baseline set of issues that the UK Government consider must be addressed in this regard. The Joint Committee co-chairs met again on 11 February as part of this work.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish the prospectus for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. [[HL12953](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) will help to level up and create opportunity across the UK for places most in need, such as ex-industrial areas, deprived towns and rural and coastal

communities, and for people who face labour market barriers.

In addition, to help local areas prepare over 2021/22 for the introduction of the UKSPF, we will provide additional UK funding to support our communities to pilot programmes and new approaches.

The November 2020 Spending Review set out the main strategic elements of the UKSPF in the Heads of Terms. The Government will publish a UK-wide investment framework in Spring 2021 and confirm multi-year funding profiles at the next Spending Review. Further details on the operation of the additional funding in 2021/22 will be published soon.

UK Trade with EU

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord True on 2 February (HL12298), whether they will now (1) answer the question put, namely whether they have made any assessment of the possible competitive disadvantages to (a) England, (b) Wales, and (c) Scotland, of not being in the EU Single Market; and if so, what was the result of any such assessment, and (2) over whom Northern Ireland has a "competitive advantage" by being in the EU Single Market for goods. [HL12965]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The UK has left the EU Single Market and Customs Union with a deal that means the UK can now regulate in a way that suits the UK economy and UK businesses – doing things in a more innovative and effective way, without being bound by EU rules.

The Northern Ireland Protocol protects the territorial integrity of the UK by safeguarding Northern Ireland's place in the UK's customs territory and internal market, ensuring unfettered access to Great Britain for Northern Ireland businesses, while also facilitating the free flow of goods between Northern Ireland and the EU.

The questions of the advantages of relationships with the EU single market and customs union have been extensively debated over the last four years. I note that the Liberal Democrats campaigned to reverse Brexit in the last General Election, but the people of the United Kingdom voted to Get Brexit Done, endorsing the Conservative commitment to leave the Single Market and Customs Union.

UK Trade with EU: Non-tariff Barriers

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of non-tariff barriers to trade on small and medium-sized enterprises in the cultural sector which have exported to EU customers since 1 January 2021. [HL13307]

Baroness Barran: The Government recognises the importance of the creative and cultural sectors, and is

fully committed to assist them to navigate the new rules under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

The Agreement ensures there will be zero tariffs or quotas on trade between the UK and the EU, where goods meet the relevant rules of origin, and includes provisions to facilitate trade and address non-tariff barriers for UK exports to the EU and vice versa.

The Government appreciates that leaving the European Union and the Customs Union will mean changes and new processes, and companies having to adapt to new rules of origin procedures.

We will continue engagement to understand the circumstances of companies in the cultural and creative sector, and to support them to adapt to new trading arrangements with the EU.

UN Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they are meeting the UK's responsibilities under the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and how they are ensuring that women can participate in non-governmental and civil society organisations. [HL12813]

Baroness Berridge: The CEDAW Committee published their concluding observations in March 2019, following submission of the UK's eighth periodic report and examination. We are grateful to the Committee for their consideration. We take our CEDAW responsibilities seriously and will be reporting our progress to the Committee in due course.

Non-governmental and civil society organisations play an important role in the reporting and examination process, and representatives from the Government Equalities Office meet with them regularly.

The Government has invested over £750 million in the charity sector so that they can continue their vital work through the COVID-19 outbreak. This includes £10 million funding for charities providing safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse and £15 million for 2020/21 from the Tampon Tax Fund.

Unemployment: Debts

Asked by Lord German

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the increase in personal debt by individuals who have lost their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL13076]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government works closely with the Money and Pensions Service to monitor financial difficulty through an annual survey and notes the Financial Conduct Authority's biennial Financial Lives Survey.

The Government recognises that some people are struggling with their finances at this challenging time. To help people in problem debt get their finances back on track, an extra £37.8 million support package has been made available to debt advice providers this financial year, bringing this year's budget for free debt advice in England to over £100 million.

In May 2020, the Government announced the immediate release of £65 million of dormant assets funding to Fair4All Finance, an independent organisation that has been founded to support the financial wellbeing of people in vulnerable circumstances. The funding is used to increase access to fair, affordable and appropriate financial products and services for those in financial difficulties.

From May 2021, the Breathing Space scheme will offer people in problem debt a pause of up to 60 days on most enforcement action, interest, fees and charges, and will encourage them to seek professional debt advice.

The Government has delivered unprecedented support for living standards during this challenging time, protecting livelihoods with the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), and temporary welfare measures.

The Government has extended the CJRS until 31 March 2021. Eligible employees will continue to receive 80% of their usual salary for hours not worked, up to a maximum of £2,500 per month.

The Government has increased the overall level of the third grant under the SEISS to 80% of average trading profits, meaning that the maximum grant available has now increased to £7,500.

The Government has provided local authorities with £500 million to support people who may struggle to meet their council tax payments this year. The Government expects that this will provide all recipients of working age local council tax support with a further reduction in their annual council tax bill of £150 this financial year.

These measures are in addition to the changes this Government has made to make the welfare system more generous, worth over £7 billion according to recent estimates by the Office for Budget Responsibility.

The Government has worked with mortgage lenders, credit providers and the Financial Conduct Authority to ensure the financial sector provides support for people across the UK to manage their finances by providing payment holidays on mortgages and consumer credit products.

The Government has also delivered protections for renters, including an extension to the ban on bailiff evictions for all but the most egregious cases until at least 21 February 2021, with measures kept under review.

Unfair Dismissal: Ethnic Groups

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk of increased vulnerability of

BAME individuals to unfair employment dismissals; and what plans they have to strengthen unfair dismissal legislation. [HL12977]

Lord Callanan: There are laws in place to ensure fair procedure in redundancy and dismissal matters and to protect against discrimination. Employees who consider that their dismissal was unfair can complain to an employment tribunal, generally subject to a qualifying period of two years of continuous service. If an employee has been unlawfully discriminated against, there is no such qualifying period.

The Government collects data on claims to employment tribunals, but this is not disaggregated by the specific characteristics of the claimant.

United Nations

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the UN's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and (2) the decision by the UN to designate 2021 as the International year of Fruits and Vegetables. [HL12759]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UN has responded to the COVID-19 crisis across three pillars: responding to the health crisis, safeguarding lives and livelihoods, and building back better. The UN has adapted and enhanced their programmes across each of these pillars, including their 'Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan' and 'Global Humanitarian Response Plan', which promote a coordinated UN response. UK investment and relationships with the UN - with an additional £145 million to UN appeals including £75 million to the WHO - have galvanised a stronger global response. The UN will continue to be a key ally in our efforts to build back better.

The 194 members of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation agreed to propose 2021 as the International Year of Fruit and Vegetables in July 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic. Our assessment is that it will help to raise the importance of fruit and vegetables for a healthy diet.

Universities: Regulation

Asked by Baroness Harris of Richmond

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the regulatory burden on universities when making screening decisions for research funding; and what plans they have to reduce any such burden [HL13084]

Lord Callanan: The Government is taking a number of steps to reduce the overall bureaucratic burden on universities in receipt of research funding. The Government will shortly announce an independent review of research bureaucracy. This will build on the initiatives already underway in major public funding organisations.

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is the largest public funder of research and innovation in the UK. UKRI requires institutions, including universities, applying to its research opportunities to demonstrate compliance against several requirements depending on the type of opportunity and nature of the proposed research. These are:

- i) Research Ethics, Misconduct and Conflicts of Interest
- ii) Use of Animals in Research
- iii) Health & Safety
- iv) Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- v) Safeguarding
- vi) Bullying and Harassment
- vii) Whistleblowing

In addition, UKRI may also request information concerning the support available for career development and training of staff involved in the proposed research.

UKRI regularly review and improve their processes following ongoing consultation and discussion with applicants to their opportunities and institutions, including universities.

UKRI has recently launched a new programme, Simpler and Better Funding, to review and improve its systems and processes for applicants, institutions and wider stakeholders.

With regard to health and care research funded by the Department of Health and Social Care, the National Institute of Health Research is working to reduce administrative burdens across the health and care research sector in a number of areas - one of these being the funding application process.

USA: State Visits

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to invite President Biden to extend his visit to the UK following the G7 conference in June. [HL13125]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Details relating to the proposed visit of President Biden to the G7 conference in June will be set out in due course.

USA: Visas

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of the United States about parity of treatment between British National (Overseas) passport holders and full British citizens for visa purposes; and what plans they have to seek such parity with other governments. [HL12877]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain in regular contact with our close partners, including the US, on Hong Kong and are pleased to see the steps they have taken to put in place measures in support of people of Hong Kong.

VAT: UK Trade with EU

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they plan to give to small businesses about any new VAT arrangements which have been put in place since the UK's departure from the EU. [HL12865]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government has provided extensive guidance for the VAT treatment of cross-border goods following the end of the transition period and is committed to supporting businesses to enable them to continue to trade.

Vocational Education

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to introduce regional bodies for the delivery of vocational education to local communities. [HL13137]

Baroness Berridge: The government does not plan to introduce new regional bodies for the delivery of vocational education to local communities.

As we set out in our recent 'Skills for Jobs' white paper, we will introduce new Local Skills Improvement Plans, led by business representative organisations, starting with a small number of areas in 2021. Mayoral combined authorities will be consulted in the development of Local Skills Improvement Plans and will continue to operate within the devolved skills powers given to them.

Vocational Education: Assessments

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that there is equitable access to BTEC qualifications. [HL13135]

Baroness Berridge: The department is reviewing post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below, to ensure that every qualification approved for public funding has a distinct purpose, is high quality and supports progression to positive outcomes. BTECs are in the scope of this review.

We have recently consulted on the groups of qualifications we propose should be approved for funding at level 3 alongside A levels and T Levels. This includes qualifications that can be taken alongside or as alternative to A levels, where A levels alone do not cover all the skills, knowledge and understanding needed for every student to thrive at higher education, and technical qualifications where they provide competence in occupations not covered by T Levels. The consultation closed on 31 January 2021 and we are carefully considering all the responses. We will publish a response in due course. This consultation can be found here: <https://consult.education.gov.uk/post-16-qualifications-review-team/review-of-post-16-qualifications-at-level-3/>.

No decisions have been made about the future of particular qualifications. We have published an Equality Impact Assessment alongside our review that is available here:

https://consult.education.gov.uk/post-16-qualifications-review-team/review-of-post-16-qualifications-at-level-3/supporting_documents/Impact%20Assessment%20%20Review%20of%20post16%20qualifications%20at%20level%203_.pdf).

We also want to improve study at level 2 and below, to ensure that students have clear pathways to good outcomes. We published a call for evidence seeking views on post-16 study and qualifications at level 2 and below, which closed on 14 February 2021, and we will set out further proposals in 2021. More information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/post-16-study-at-level-2-and-below-call-for-evidence>.

Water Abstraction

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to encourage the abstraction of high flow water to reduce the amount of surplus rainwater being wasted. [HL12975]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Environment Agency has worked with abstractors and the National Farmers Union (NFU) to temporarily abstract flood water to fill large reservoirs, subject to it not causing derogation to existing licensed abstractors or creating any environmental risk or damage. Where abstractors applied to take more water than their current licensed quantities, the Environment Agency assessed these as one off requests and asked abstractors to apply to vary their licences to properly reflect their needs and provide access to this water in the future.

The temporary period of high flow abstraction ended on the 7 February. The Environment Agency has so far only received 5 applications, of which 3 were approved. This reflects the fact that most farm reservoirs are already full due to the wet winter and saturated soil conditions. The NFU does not anticipate any further requests from their members to extend the period of high flow abstraction beyond this date.

This initiative follows on from the so called 'flexible abstraction' approach that the Environment Agency implemented over the last few years to help farmers with water availability during prolonged dry weather, including refilling reservoirs outside of licensed abstraction periods when river flows were sufficiently high to protect other abstractors and the environment.

We highlighted the potential of high flow abstraction to help abstractors improve access to water in our Water Abstraction Plan, published in 2017. Since then the Environment Agency has undertaken trials to investigate its feasibility. It has published results in the relevant Abstraction Licensing Strategies, for the Lincolnshire

Witham and the East Midlands Idle and Torne. In the Witham Catchment, it concluded that high flow abstraction could be used to fill reservoirs throughout the year. However, in the Idle and Torne catchment, it concluded that high flows are important for controlling sedimentation and that more evidence would be needed before any high flow abstraction licences could be granted.

The Environment Agency will continue to consider applications for new and varied abstraction licences on a case-by-case basis to ensure maximum access to water is possible whilst protecting the rights of other abstractors and the environment.

West Bank: Olives

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 1 February (HL12260), whether they have had any discussions about compensation for farmers who have had olive trees destroyed in the West Bank; and if so, (1) who those discussions were with, and (2) what was the outcome. [HL13140]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of the particular significance of olive trees given their status as a national symbol and the sole source of income for many Palestinian farmers. We have not discussed the issue of compensation with the Israeli Authorities. We have repeatedly raised the issue of incidents of settler violence, including the destruction of olive trees, with the Israeli authorities. We continue to stress the importance of bringing those responsible to justice and of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population.

World War II: Genocide

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by University College London What do Students Know and Understand about the Holocaust, published on 19 April 2018, what plans they have for the reform of holocaust education in schools. [HL12942]

Baroness Berridge: The Government has supported Holocaust education for many years and is fully committed to continuing this support.

In recognition of its importance, the Holocaust is the only historic event which is compulsory within the national curriculum for history at key stage 3. This ensures that young people from every background can continue to learn about the Holocaust and its relevance today. Effective teaching about the Holocaust can support pupils to learn about the possible consequences of antisemitism and extremism and to understand how society can prevent the repeat of such a catastrophe.

The Department for Education further supports school pupils' and teachers' understanding of the Holocaust by

providing funding for the University College London's Centre for Holocaust Education, £500,000 in the 2020-21 financial year match-funded by the Pears Foundation, and the Holocaust Educational Trust's Lessons from Auschwitz project, £2.193 million for the 2020-21 financial year. These programmes help reach all types of schools and help to develop high-quality teaching across the school sector.

The University College London Centre for Holocaust Education's report and wider research informs the continuing professional development work for teachers that the Department for Education funds by identifying key gaps in knowledge and underpins the educational resources that the centre makes available to teachers across the country.

*Asked by **Baroness Deech***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their report Britain's Promise to Remember: The Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission Report, published in January 2015, what progress they have made on implementing the recommendation of that report (1) to set up an endowment fund to secure the long term future of Holocaust education, and (2) create a professorial chair on Holocaust education. [[HL13247](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government has committed up to £75 million towards the establishment of the national Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, including £25 million which is to be matched by donations from the Holocaust Memorial Charitable Trust. The UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation will continue to consider all the recommendations made in the Commission's report and the best way to deliver them.

Yemen: Humanitarian Aid

*Asked by **Baroness Goudie***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that (1) food, and (2) medical, importers can continue to bring supplies into Yemen following the government of the United States' designation of the Houthi movement as a foreign terrorist organisation. [[HL12799](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Goudie***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that UK non-governmental organisations can continue to operate in Yemen following the government of the United States' designation of the Houthi movement as a foreign terrorist organisation. [[HL12800](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Goudie***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that UK businesses can trade with Yemen following the government of the United States' designation of the Houthi movement as a foreign terrorist organisation. [[HL12801](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We share the concerns raised by the UN and NGOs about the impact of designation on what is already the world's worst humanitarian crisis. We are analysing the US humanitarian and commercial exemptions and are concerned that they are insufficient to avoid a serious deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Yemen.

We are engaging with the US to ensure that the vital humanitarian response, including food supplies, is not disrupted. Ministers and officials will also continue to engage closely with the UN and other donors including the US, to ensure life-saving humanitarian aid reaches the millions of Yemenis in need. Our priority is to support the UN's peace process and ensure life-saving humanitarian aid can reach the millions of Yemenis in need.

Yemen: Oxfam

*Asked by **Baroness Goudie***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that those responsible for attacks on Oxfam infrastructure in Yemen are held to account; and what plans they have to publish any information they have gathered about such attacks. [[HL12802](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is acutely aware of the risks of delivering lifesaving assistance in the midst of Yemen's conflict. We closely monitor incidents of attacks on humanitarian operations, and we urge all parties to take steps to ensure humanitarian aid and those delivering it are protected.

Zoonoses

*Asked by **Lord Jones of Cheltenham***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of any correlation between the conditions in which livestock used for meat are kept and the emergence of novel zoonotic diseases. [[HL12962](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Government's assessment is that different types of farming systems can be managed in a professional way as long as they have good biosecurity plans and housing systems to reduce disease transmission.

*Asked by **Lord Jones of Cheltenham***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of any trend in the number of novel zoonotic diseases that have occurred over the past 30 years; and what steps, if any, they intend to take in response to any such assessment. [[HL12964](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: There are a number of published studies on the emergence of zoonotic diseases (such as Jones et al. (2008) Nature 451: 990-993), and Defra has contributed to the peer review of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report, an

expert opinion of the role of biodiversity and pandemic emergence.

Defra works within a 'One Health' approach. This means working across a range of disciplines, recognising that people, animals and plants share one environment and are all interconnected.

Defra's Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) routinely carries out surveillance on farms for zoonotic pathogens. It has significant surveillance programmes for

tuberculosis, avian influenza, salmonella, brucellosis and anti-microbial resistance.

We respond promptly to outbreaks to minimise the impacts of zoonotic disease associated with farming and farmed products.

The Human Animal Infections & Risk Surveillance group is a cross-government technical group who analyse and assess the risks for new and emerging zoonotic diseases.

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