

**Session 2019-21  
No. 196**



**Monday  
8 March 2021**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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

**Written Answers.....5**

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

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

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

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

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

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Lords 2021

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

# Written Statements

Monday, 8 March 2021

## Commercial Spaceflight

[HLWS819]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** My Honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Transport (Rachel Maclean) has made the following Ministerial Statement:

On Friday 5 March 2021, I published the Government's response to the consultations which were held in the Summer and Autumn of 2020 on the secondary legislation which will implement the Space Industry Act 2018. We sought views on the operability and effectiveness of the draft Space Industry Regulations and associated guidance and supporting documents (July); as well as the Government's approach to liabilities, insurance and charging (October). We also asked respondents to provide evidence and test the assumptions in the consultation-stage impact assessment.

This Government is committed to growing the space industry in the UK and cementing our leading role in this sector by unlocking a new era in commercial spaceflight across the UK. The draft Space Industry Regulations, together with draft instruments covering accident investigation and appeals, will pave the way for a new commercial licensing regime for spaceflight activities from UK. It will support safe and sustainable activities that will drive research, innovation and entrepreneurship, exploiting the unique environment of space. This will feed into our emerging National Space Strategy as we develop our priorities for levelling-up the UK and promote the growth of this thriving sector in the long term.

We also recognise the importance of ensuring that the environment is protected from the adverse effects of spaceflight activities. This is why the Space Industry Act 2018 requires applicants for a launch or spaceport licence to submit an assessment of environmental effects as part of their application. We also published a consultation on 10 February, setting specific environmental objectives for the spaceflight regulator to take account of when considering these assessments, reinforcing Government's wider policies towards the environment and sustainability.

Our spaceflight legislation has been designed from the outset to support commercial operations. This, together with the Technology Safeguards Agreement signed with the US in June 2020, means that the UK is well-placed to attract new commercial opportunities in this rapidly growing sector. Together with industry we set a target to grow the UK's share of the global space market to 10 per cent by 2030. Today we are a step closer to reaching this goal.

The Government welcomes the thoughtful and detailed responses received from across the four nations of the UK. Invaluable insights were provided by those who responded to the consultation and included enthusiastic

responses from schoolchildren. We are pleased to report that our modern regulatory framework was supported by the vast majority of respondents with many applauding the flexibility of our proposed approach, which fosters adaptability through an outcomes-based focus.

The response I am sharing today sets out the ways we have adjusted the draft Space Industry Regulations and associated guidance material to reflect, and where possible accommodate, the suggestions and recommendations made through the consultation process. We believe that this collaborative approach will not only strengthen the licensing regime we are implementing, but also demonstrates the Government's on-going commitment to growing this exciting sector.

My Department has worked closely with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the UK Space Agency and Civil Aviation Authority to legislate for a wide range of new commercial spaceflight technologies, including traditional vertically launched vehicles, air-launched vehicles and sub-orbital spaceplanes and balloons. It is our intention to bring this legislation before the House later this year.

### *Next steps*

Following the publication of the Government's response I will update the House once we are ready to submit the secondary legislation for Parliamentary scrutiny.

## Covid-19 Road Map: Planning and Hospitality

[HLWS822]

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

As set out in the Government's roadmap for easing the lockdown restrictions, in step 2, which will be no earlier than 12 April, hospitality venues will be allowed to serve people outdoors. I have written to Local Authority Leaders to make clear the Government's expectation that local authorities support hospitality businesses to safely reopen, once they are permitted to do so.

Last summer the Government introduced a series of measures to support hospitality businesses to open safely when lockdown restrictions were eased. These measures were a lifeline to many businesses, enabling them to continue to serve their local communities under the challenging circumstances.

I have confirmed to local authorities that these measures will remain in place to support businesses as they reopen this year. I am also pleased to confirm that we intend to extend pavement licences for a further 12 months, making it easier and cheaper for pubs, restaurants and cafes to continue to make al fresco dining a reality with outside seating, tables and street stalls to serve food and drinks.

Providing these flexibilities will support hospitality businesses to trade in these challenging times, helping to protect jobs and livelihoods. The measures that we introduced and will remain in place are:

#### *Al fresco dining*

As part of the Business and Planning Act 2020 the Government introduced a simplified process for businesses to obtain a licence to serve food and drinks from seating, tables and street stalls outside their premises. The process was previously long, costly and inconsistent across areas. We addressed this through a capped application fee of £100 and quicker consultation and determination periods (10 days with automatic deemed consent if the authority does not make a decision on the application before the end of the determination period). This enabled business to serve more customers safely outdoors last year and support them to do so again when they are permitted to reopen.

The Government has made clear in the pavement licence guidance that we expect local authorities to grant licences for 12 months or more unless there are good reasons for granting a licence for a shorter period, such as plans for future changes in use of road space. Therefore, unless there are very good reasons, the Government expects that licences granted under these provisions continue to apply into this summer so that businesses do not have to reapply for another licence or be charged a further application fee when they are able to re-open to serve customers outdoors. These temporary legislative provisions are currently due to expire on the 30th September 2021, but to give further certainty to businesses I will introduce secondary legislation to extend these provisions for a further 12 months, subject to Parliamentary approval.

#### *Freedom to use land for community events and outdoor hospitality*

Last year the Government provided greater flexibility for individuals and businesses to use their land for temporary events, such as markets and motorsports. We increased the number of days allowed for such events from 28 to 56 without needing to apply for planning permission. In November we extended this provision until 31 December 2021 so individuals and businesses, such as pubs, can set up moveable structures like marquees and hold outdoor events without making an application for planning permission. This will help businesses take forward outdoor activities such as markets, car-boot sales, summer fairs and sporting events. We expect local authorities to support businesses using these additional freedoms as they re-open.

#### *Outdoor markets*

We have also introduced a new temporary right, extended to March 2022, that allows local authorities, either by themselves or by others on their behalf, to use land to hold a market and erect moveable structures on it.

#### *Takeaways*

Finally, we also introduced measures to support restaurants, pubs and cafes to serve takeaway food when

they were otherwise closed due to coronavirus restrictions. These measures will continue to apply until March 2022.

We introduced these changes to support hard hit hospitality businesses to reopen last year. I have encouraged all local authorities to use these measures pragmatically to help support the high street, businesses and jobs, once restrictions allow them to do so.

## **Judicial Mandatory Retirement Age**

[HLWS821]

**Lord Wolfson of Tredegar:** My right honourable friend the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Robert Buckland) has made the following Written Statement:

"Following my recent announcement of the government responses on reforms to the judicial pension scheme and on proposals to address the unlawful age discrimination identified in the *McCloud* litigation, I am today publishing the government response to the Judicial Mandatory Retirement Age consultation.

Running from 16 July to 16 October 2020, the consultation sought views on proposals to increase the mandatory retirement age for judicial office holders to 72 or 75, alongside a proposal to allow public interest-based extension of magistrates' appointments beyond their existing mandatory retirement age of 70, as is currently available to other parts of the judiciary. The consultation attracted considerable interest with over one thousand responses received from across of the magistracy, the judiciary, the legal profession, and other key stakeholder groups.

It has been over 25 years since the mandatory retirement age for most judges was set at 70. A mandatory retirement age remains an important requirement of judicial office which protects judicial independence, preserves public confidence in the judiciary, and promotes opportunities within the judiciary for those who wish to apply and to progress. I believe, however, along with the majority of respondents, that it is now time the MRA is amended to reflect improvements in life expectancy and the changing demands on our courts and tribunals.

Following careful consideration, I have therefore decided to raise the mandatory retirement age to 75 to enable us to retain for longer the valuable expertise of experienced judicial office holders and to attract a wider range of applicants. I believe the new retirement age could also have a positive impact on diversity by attracting and promoting opportunities for individuals considering a judicial career later in life, such as those who may have had non-linear careers or taken career breaks to balance professional and family responsibilities. I will legislate for this change as soon as parliamentary time allows.

Magistrates currently are unable to sit beyond the existing mandatory retirement age unlike many judges who can apply to have their appointments extended or to sit in retirement on an ad hoc basis. To further boost

capacity in the magistrates' courts, I will include a transitional provision as part of the legislative change to allow recently retired magistrates who are below the age of 75 when the new MRA comes into force to be able to apply to return to the bench, where there is a business need.

As Lord Chancellor, it is my duty to ensure the courts and tribunals have the required resources to continue dispensing justice. I am grateful for the commitment and resilience of judges, magistrates and coroners across the country who have worked tirelessly throughout this challenging period. I know the changes I am announcing today will not immediately alleviate pressure on our justice system. However, this once in a generation change to the mandatory retirement age, alongside the important reforms we are making to the judicial pension scheme, will help to support and promote judicial recruitment and retention, ensuring we are able to continue resourcing our world-class judiciary for the future."

## Unauthorised Encampments: Police Powers

[HLWS820]

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

Today, I am announcing the government's response to the November 2019 consultation entitled, 'Strengthening Police Powers to Tackle Unauthorised Encampments.' The consultation sought views on how to address and prevent the harm and distress caused by some unauthorised encampments and followed a public consultation in 2018 which demonstrated support for more police action.

The vast majority of travellers are law-abiding citizens. As of January 2020, the number of lawful traveller sites increased by 41% from January 2010. However, there continues to be unauthorised encampments that can create significant challenges for local authorities and cause distress and misery to many. Harmful or disruptive encampments can also perpetuate a negative image of travelling communities.

I will therefore introduce legislation to increase the powers available to the police in England and Wales. As we pledged in our Manifesto, we will create a new criminal offence to tackle unauthorised encampments. In addition, we will give the police the power to seize vehicles, and we will strengthen existing powers.

The measures complement the ongoing work by MHCLG to strengthen councils' powers to tackle unauthorised developments (building on land that an occupier owns without planning permission).

*Introduce a criminal offence of residing on land with a vehicle, causing damage, disruption or distress*

A person will commit an offence if they

- Are aged 18 or over and reside or intend to reside on land without the consent of the occupier of the land;

- Have or intend to have at least one vehicle with them on the land;

- Have caused or are likely to cause significant damage, disruption or distress; and

- They

fail, without a reasonable excuse, to leave the land with their vehicle and/or property once asked to do so by the occupier, representatives of the occupier or a constable; or

They, without reasonable excuse, enter, or re-enter the land with an intention of residing there without the consent of the occupier, and they have or intend to have a vehicle with them, within 12 months of a request to leave and remove their property from an occupier, their representative or a constable.

*Give police the power to seize any property including vehicles from those committing the new offence*

The police will be empowered to seize any property including vehicles owned or in the possession of the individual on the land if they reasonably suspect that the person has committed the above offence.

*Strengthen existing powers*

Section 61(1)(a) of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 ("CJPOA") sets out the power of the police to direct trespassers away from land. We will amend this section to enable the police to direct trespassers away in a broader range of circumstances, including if there is damage to the environment, such as excessive noise, litter or deposits of waste, and if there is disruption to supplies of water, energy or fuel.

We also intend to increase the period in which persons directed away from the land under section 61 and 62A of the CJPOA must not return (without reasonable excuse) without committing an offence or being subject to powers of seizure from three months to twelve by amending sections 61(4)(b) 62B(2) and s.62C(2) of the CJPOA.

We will in addition strengthen measures to tackle unauthorised encampments on roads by amending section 61(9)(b) to allow police to direct trespassers to leave land that forms part of a highway.

I am grateful to everyone who took the time to respond to the two consultations carried out by the government on this issue. The views expressed in response have all been considered and have informed the decisions we have made.

The measures I intend to introduce are a proportionate increase in powers for the police. I hope they will deter unauthorised encampments from being set up in the first instance but, where that is not the case, they will allow the police to take more effective action in response to an encampment causing damage, disruption or distress, in support of those communities living with or near them.

I am confident that we have taken steps to ensure those wishing to exercise their rights to enjoy the countryside are not inadvertently impacted by these measures.

The response to the consultation will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and will also be available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-police-powers-to-tackle-unauthorised-encampments>.

# Written Answers

Monday, 8 March 2021

## African Union

Asked by **Baroness Kennedy of Cradley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the African Union's Agenda 2063 programme. [HL13707]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK's strategic approach to Africa is closely aligned with the African Union's (AU) 'Agenda 2063' that sets out the framework and objectives for the AU's work. We work closely with the AU on peace and security issues, trade, health, and climate issues. The AU leads on the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), mediation efforts in Sudan and supports security in the Sahel. The AU is a champion of continental trade, as shown by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) under which trading began on 1 January 2021. We are investing up to £20 million in the AU's COVID-19 Response Fund and worked closely with the AU on the development of their Green Recovery Action Plan to ensure Africa builds back sustainably from the pandemic.

The Minister for Africa underlined the importance of the UK-AU partnership when he met Chairperson Faki at the Ghanaian Presidential inauguration in January 2021. HM Ambassador Dr Alastair McPhail CMG OBE is the UK's Permanent Representative to the African Union and the Deputy Permanent Representative holds Ambassadorial rank. They are supported by an extensive team working across the Africa Strategy objectives to further the UK-AU Strategic Partnership.

## African Union: Diplomatic Relations

Asked by **Baroness Kennedy of Cradley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what diplomatic engagement they have with the African Union. [HL13709]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK's strategic approach to Africa is closely aligned with the African Union's (AU) 'Agenda 2063' that sets out the framework and objectives for the AU's work. We work closely with the AU on peace and security issues, trade, health, and climate issues. The AU leads on the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), mediation efforts in Sudan and supports security in the Sahel. The AU is a champion of continental trade, as shown by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) under which trading began on 1 January 2021. We are investing up to £20 million in the AU's COVID-19 Response Fund and worked closely with the AU on the development of their Green Recovery Action Plan to ensure Africa builds back sustainably from the pandemic.

The Minister for Africa underlined the importance of the UK-AU partnership when he met Chairperson Faki at the Ghanaian Presidential inauguration in January 2021. HM Ambassador Dr Alastair McPhail CMG OBE is the UK's Permanent Representative to the African Union and the Deputy Permanent Representative holds Ambassadorial rank. They are supported by an extensive team working across the Africa Strategy objectives to further the UK-AU Strategic Partnership.

## Apprentices

Asked by **Lord Jones**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many apprenticeships there were in the aerospace industry in (1) 2018, (2) 2019, and (3) 2020; and how many of those apprentices were (a) female, and (b) male. [HL13454]

Asked by **Lord Jones**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many apprentices there were in training in British airports in (1) 2018, (2) 2019, and (3) 2020; and how many of those apprentices were (a) female, and (b) male. [HL13455]

**Baroness Berridge:** The department has published information on apprenticeship starts by broad industry sector between the academic years 2012/13 and 2019/20.

Apprenticeship starts relating to aerospace technology are not currently published separately, however they are most likely to be included in sector H: Transportation and Storage.

The following table shows the number of apprenticeship starts by gender in the transportation and storage industry in the academic years 2017/18 to 2019/20.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Total matched apprenticeship starts	364,840	366,170	301,410
Total Sector H: Transportation and Storage	9,080	11,140	9,450
Male	6,620	7,640	6,460
Female	2,470	3,500	2,990

Regarding the number of apprentices in training in British airports, this information is not held centrally. For further information on apprenticeship starts by sector subject area or geographical location, the 'Apprenticeships and traineeships: January 2021' publication is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/apprenticeships-and-traineeships-january-2021>. The data in the table above relates to apprenticeship starts where a match has been found between the Department for Education's Individualised Learner Record and the Office for National

Statistics Inter-Departmental Business Register. This match allows information about apprentices to be linked to business information relating to the apprentice's employer. In the academic years 2017/18 to 2019/20, 93% of all apprenticeship starts were matched to an employer.

### **Armed Forces: Cadets**

*Asked by Lord Jones*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to amend the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to make Ministry of Defence cadet force adult volunteering a position of trust for the purposes of child sex offences. [HL13453]

**Lord Wolfson of Tredegar:** I recognise that there are concerns about those who might abuse their position of power over a 16 or 17-year-old to pressure them into engaging in a sexual relationship. Such behaviour is likely to be caught by the robust laws we already have in place.

We remain committed to protecting children and young people from sexual abuse and we want to ensure that existing offences are being used effectively to tackle this behaviour, and that those working with young people understand their responsibilities and act appropriately.

To that effect my department, working closely with colleagues across government, has taken forward a review of the existing law, to check that that it is working effectively and to ensure young people are protected. This review involved feedback from a wide range of stakeholders.

It is important that in any consideration for reform in this area we achieve the sensitive balance between the protection of young people and ensuring we do not infringe upon the sexual rights and freedoms of those over the age of 16 granted to them by Parliament.

This is a complex area and we are now considering the findings of the review and next steps.

We expect to be in a position to update Parliament on this work shortly.

### **Armenia: Churches**

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the implementation of restrictions for Armenians to visit the Dadivank Monastery, what representations they have made to the government of Azerbaijan to ensure that Armenians are able to access sites of historical religious importance in areas returned to Azerbaijan. [HL13382]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK Government has made no representations to the Government of Azerbaijan on this issue. However, we continue to urge both Governments to work with UNESCO to ensure the protection of all sites of historical and religious importance.

### **Arms Trade: Export Controls**

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why moral considerations are not included in the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria used to assess arms export licence applications. [HL13767]

**Lord Grimstone of Boscobel:** The Consolidated Criteria provide a thorough risk assessment framework and require us to consider the possible impact of providing equipment and its capabilities. HM Government will not grant an export licence if to do so would be inconsistent with the Consolidated Criteria.

### **Askham Bryan College: Newton Rigg College**

*Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the acquisition of Newton Rigg College in Cumbria by Askham Bryan College in York in 2011 met their standards of propriety in public sector procurement; and what plans they have, if any, to review the negotiation process that took place during the acquisition. [HL13379]

**Baroness Berridge:** Following the decision by the University of Cumbria in 2010, to cease delivering the provision of further education funded by the Skills Funding Agency and the Young People's Learning Agency, the Skills Funding Agency led an open and competitive procurement process, in accordance with Part B of Schedule 3 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006, to secure an alternative provider or providers for the delivery of arts provision in Carlisle and predominately land-based provision at Newton Rigg. As a result of this competition, the funding for students studying further education at the University's Brampton Road building was transferred to Carlisle College, and the funding for students studying further education at Newton Rigg, together with the further education assets at Newton Rigg, was transferred to Askham Bryan College. The procurement was subject to a review by Cabinet Office in 2011 and its findings have been published on gov.uk and are attached.

The successor organisation to the Skills Funding Agency, the Education and Skills Funding Agency now procure provision in accordance with the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations, 2015. In some circumstances, for example the provision of education and training for young people, separate arrangements apply, but processes and procedures are fair and transparent. Where this applies, we use a mix of local negotiation and tendering appropriate to the circumstances in each case.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL13379\_attachment [HL13379 attachment .pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-22/HL13379>

## Aung San Suu Kyi

Asked by *Lord Darzi of Denham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of cases of detainment without charge by the government of Myanmar; and what representations they have made to the government of Myanmar to secure the release of Aung San Suu Kyi. [HL13391]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is deeply concerned by the arbitrary detention of democratically elected politicians, civil society, protesters and foreign nationals. We secured a strong statement from the G7 immediately after the coup condemning the actions of the military. We worked with partners at the UN Security Council and the UN Human Rights Council to ensure that there was a strong coordinated message from the international community about the actions of the military. The Security Council was clear that all those detained arbitrarily should be released. We have also summoned the Myanmar Ambassador twice and stressed that those in arbitrary detention must be released and to seek assurances as to the wellbeing of those detained, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi.

## Aviation: Coronavirus

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the requirement for additional border checks for passengers entering the UK from 'red list' countries on queues at (1) Heathrow airport, and (2) other airports; and what plans they have to increase the number of Border Force officers on duty dealing with passenger border checks in order to improve people's ability to maintain social distancing. [HL13486]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** We will never compromise on border security and continue to fill our vital function of keeping the border secure and are deploying additional officers to provide support as and when required. Border Force officers have played a vital role during this pandemic.

There is extensive signage throughout the airport – including in immigration halls – reminding passengers to adhere to the Government's social distancing guidance, but there are points in the airport journey where social distancing is not always possible. Border Force officials implement social distancing as an effective control measure. Every airport, including Heathrow, has a responsibility to comply with social distancing and Covid measures on site.

## Big Ben: Repairs and Maintenance

Asked by *Lord West of Spithead*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker when will (1) the scaffolding be removed from, and (2) the refurbishment be completed of, the Elizabeth Tower. [HL13535]

Asked by *Lord West of Spithead*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what was the original estimated cost of the refurbishment of the Elizabeth Tower; when was that refurbishment originally intended to be completed; and what is the expected final cost of that refurbishment. [HL13536]

**Lord Vaux of Harrowden:** The Senior Deputy Speaker has asked me, as Chair of the Finance Committee, to respond on his behalf.

Scaffolding was removed around the roof level of the Elizabeth Tower in October 2020. More scaffolding is expected to be removed towards the end of this year and continuing into 2022.

Covid-19 has restricted the progress of the refurbishment. The completion date will be later than the planned 2021 date, and is now expected in 2022. Further information on the revised completion date will be announced once the schedule of works is finalised.

The original outline business case for the Elizabeth Tower assessed the costs at £29.7m. In 2017, the final business case for the Elizabeth Tower was approved at a value of £61m, subsequently revised in February 2020 to £79.7m. The additional costs due to the impact of COVID-19 are currently being assessed.

## Bivalve Molluscs: UK Trade with EU

Asked by *Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on 17 February (HL12930), whether they will place a copy of the correspondence between the Department and the European Commission in the Library of the House. [HL13366]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** A copy of the correspondence between the Department and the European Commission has been deposited and has been available to Members since 17 February.

## Borders: Facilities

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the use of Special Development Orders to give planning permission for inland border facilities in England meets their obligations under (1) the Aarhus Convention, and (2) the Kiev Protocol, to provide environmental information to the public. [HL13484]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** Special Development Orders (SDOs) respect the public's access to environmental information under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs). Information requests on SDOs and building the new facilities are likely to come within scope of the EIRs, as would most construction-related issues. This applies to requests and proactive disclosure.

The use of SDOs is provided for under *The Town and Country Planning (Border Facilities and Infrastructure) (EU Exit) (England) Special Development Order 2020*. There is a provision in the Order for proactive disclosure of information to, and engagement with, a number of interested parties. The Order does not disapply measures such as EIRs or Freedom of Information Act that implement our Aarhus Convention obligations with regards access to information. Most requests for information on planning will fall within the scope of the EIRs, and thus the relevant parts of Aarhus: Articles 2, 4, 5 and 9. These are the definition of environmental information, handling requests for environmental information, proactive publication of environmental information, and the appeals process where the requester is not content with the response from the public authority.

There are two main routes for the information generated to be covered by the definition in regulation 2(1) of the EIRs:

1) The planning rules (and any adjustment to them through this Order) are measures and legislation under regulation 2(1)(c) that will impact upon the land and landscape under regulation 2(1)(a). Implementing the order will result in building works; breaking the ground for the new building, digging up the road to extend infrastructure, destruction of habitats, and the generation of waste and emissions. Other elements of the environment, such as air, water and biological diversity, may also be affected by the works permitted by the Order.

2) The second route is more direct: the construction works will be an activity under regulation 2(1)(c) that affect the land, landscape and the other elements of the environment in regulation 2(1)(a), as in point 1 above.

*The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)) Regulations 2017(8)* state that EIA developments (which are not subjected to the SDO orders rules) must be subjected to an EIA. This must be submitted before the relevant planning authority, the Secretary of State or an inspector in order to grant planning permission. The EIA and screening procedures determine whether the development is likely to have significant environmental effects, along with the Environmental Statement applications. These are accompanied by publicity requirements such as public consultations and publication of environmental information prior to the decision of the relevant authority.

Finally, the Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) is an inventory of pollution from industrial sites and other sources, and the Kiev Protocol requires that this information is publicly accessible. The UK maintains a publicly accessible national PRTR that enables the public to have access to environmental information concerning the activities listed in Annex 1 of the Protocol.

The UK remains committed to the objectives of the PRTR, both domestically and internationally, and continues to monitor its implementation of the Protocol.

## British Overseas Territories: Maldives

Asked by **Baroness Whitaker**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 15 February (HL12876) and the judgment by the Special Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea on 28 January concerning the delimitation of a maritime boundary between the Exclusive Economic Zones of Mauritius and Maldives in the vicinity of the Chagos Archipelago, what assessment they have made of whether the UK and the Republic of the Maldives are also entitled to agree a delimitation of a maritime boundary between the UK (in respect of its claim to the British Indian Ocean Territory) and the Republic of the Maldives. [HL13540]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The judgment by the Special Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) was in relation to the delimitation of a maritime boundary claimed by Mauritius to exist between Mauritius and the Republic of Maldives in the Indian Ocean. The UK was not a party to those 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 Maldives.

## Charities: Official Receiver

Asked by **Lord Lipsey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review (1) the role, and (2) the practice, of the Official Receiver with regard to charities. [HL13463]

**Lord Callanan:** The Official Receiver is a statutory office holder whose role is set out in legislation, primarily the Insolvency Act 1986. The operational practice of the Official Receiver, with regard to all matters in which an Official Receiver is appointed, is kept under review to reflect developments in legislation and case law.

## Choirs and Orchestras: Coronavirus

Asked by **Lord Clement-Jones**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to issue new guidance to amateur choirs and orchestras on their ability to rehearse and perform; and if so, when. [HL13733]

**Baroness Barran:** On 22 February the Prime Minister set out the roadmap gradually ending the current lockdown for England.

Amateur activity will be permitted from Step 3 which will begin no earlier than 17 May. The performing arts guidance will be updated in advance of each step of the roadmap.

The timings outlined in the roadmap are indicative, and the Government will be led by data, rather than fixed dates. Before taking each step, the Government will review the latest data and will only ease restrictions

further if it is safe to do so. The indicative, 'no earlier than' dates in the roadmap are all contingent on the data and subject to change.

### Contact Tracing: Contracts

*Asked by Lord Beecham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the criteria for the award of contracts to private companies for England's COVID-19 Test and Trace services; what is the estimated cost of the Test and Trace programme; and what assessment they have made of reports that Test and Trace contractors are failing to meet targets. [HL11390]

**Lord Bethell:** Each of the Departmental COVID-19 contracts contain information on the award criteria, whether as a Direct Award using regulation 32(2)(c) under the Public Contract Regulations 2015 under which authorities are allowed to procure goods, services and works with extreme urgency in exceptional circumstances or a call off contract from an existing Government framework contract.

The Government has allocated a total of £22 billion to the Test and Trace programme in 2020-21 with a further £15 billion for 2021-22. All contracts are being monitored to ensure that performance and quality assurance standards are being met. Where poor performance has been identified we have taken appropriate measures to rectify this.

### Coronavirus: Care Homes

*Asked by Lord Willis of Knaresborough*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they first started to collect data on care home deaths from COVID-19 in England. [HL13542]

*Asked by Lord Willis of Knaresborough*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they first published the weekly death toll of care home residents from COVID-19 in England. [HL13543]

*Asked by Lord Willis of Knaresborough*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many care home residents in England died from COVID-19-related symptoms in each week from 1 September 2020 to date. [HL13546]

**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 Willis of Knaresborough House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW  
01 March 2021

Dear Lord Willis,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Questions asking a) when data was first collected on care home deaths from COVID-19 in England (HL13542), b) when the weekly death toll of care home residents from COVID-19 in England was first published (HL13543), and c) how many care home residents in England died from COVID-19-related symptoms in each week from 1 September 2020 to-date (HL13546).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for publishing statistics on deaths in England and Wales. Mortality statistics are compiled from information supplied when deaths are certified and registered as part of civil registration. The ONS produces a weekly report[1] on provisional deaths involving COVID-19, and from 19 January 2021 onwards it has included data on deaths involving COVID-19 in care home residents in England and Wales in 2020 and 2021<sup>2</sup>. The term "care home resident" used in this publication refers to all deaths where either (a) the death occurred in a care home or (b) the death occurred elsewhere but the place of residence of the deceased was recorded as a care home. The figures should not be confused with "deaths in care homes" as reported elsewhere, which refers only to category (a).

As well as the ONS mortality data, the Care Quality Commission (CQC; the independent regulator of health and social care in England) provides numbers of deaths involving COVID-19 in care homes and care home residents in England. These data are based on the date the death was notified to the CQC and has been published by the ONS as part of the weekly bulletin<sup>3</sup> since 28 April 2020. Data on whether the death was a result of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 has been collected by the CQC since 10 April 2020<sup>4</sup>. Table 1 below shows the number of deaths involving COVID-19 in care home residents, by week of notification to the CQC, starting from week ending 4 September 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Table 1: Number of deaths involving COVID-19 in care homes residents, by week of notification, weeks ending 4 September 2020 to 19 February 2021, England [2] [3] [4]

Year	Week number	Week ending	Deaths involving COVID-19
2020	36	04/09/2020	21
2020	37	11/09/2020	39
2020	38	18/09/2020	49
2020	39	25/09/2020	58
2020	40	02/10/2020	83
2020	41	09/10/2020	105
2020	42	16/10/2020	142
2020	43	23/10/2020	217

Year	Week number	Week ending	Deaths involving COVID-19
2020	44	30/10/2020	293
2020	45	06/11/2020	456
2020	46	13/11/2020	533
2020	47	20/11/2020	622
2020	48	27/11/2020	706
2020	49	04/12/2020	645
2020	50	11/12/2020	692
2020	51	18/12/2020	731
2020	52	25/12/2020	746
2020	53	01/01/2021	934
2021	1	08/01/2021	1,245
2021	2	15/01/2021	1,750
2021	3	22/01/2021	2,365
2021	4	29/01/2021	2,387
2021	5	05/02/2021	1,848
2021	6	12/02/2021	1,223
2021	7	19/02/2021	843

Source: *Care Quality Commission*

[1]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsregistere dweeklyinenglandandwalesprovisional/latest>

2

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/carehomereside ntdeathsregisteredinenglandandwalesprovisional>

3

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/numberofdeaths incarehomesnotifiedtothecarequalitycommissionengland>

4

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/news/statementsandletters/public ationofstatisticsondeathsinvolvingcovid19incarehomesine nglandtransparencystatement>

[2] Figures are for deaths CQC are notified of on the days specified. Figures only include deaths that were notified by 19 Feb 2021 and may be an underestimate due to notification delays.

[3] Figures are for people who were residents of a care home, regardless of where the death occurred. This is different to deaths occurring in care homes reported elsewhere.

[4] A death involving COVID-19 is based on the statement from the care home provider to the CQC: the assessment of whether COVID-19 was involved may or may not correspond to a medical diagnosis or test result or be reflected in the death certification.

## Coronavirus: Clinical Trials

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are offering to those who volunteer for the COVID-19 human challenge study. [HL13491]

**Lord Callanan:** The safety of any participant in a clinical study is always the absolute priority of the research team. The studies will take place in specialised units with very close monitoring and with medics on hand with treatments if they are needed.

The volunteers for the COVID-19 Human Challenge Study will be compensated for their time. The amount that the volunteers receive will be benchmarked against previous studies and the Research Ethics Committee has reviewed this amount to ensure that it is fair. For expenses such as travel, volunteers will be compensated out-of-pocket.

## Coronavirus: Medical Treatments

Asked by *Baroness Scott of Needham Market*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the use of steroid inhalers for the prevention of serious symptoms of COVID-19. [HL13502]

**Lord Bethell:** The Department has monitored a collection of small studies which have now completed and provided some positive signals on inhaled steroids. This includes the STOIC study at Oxford University which examined the use of inhaled budesonide, a corticosteroid, in the treatment of early COVID-19. STOIC published results which are undergoing peer review. However, larger-scale studies are still needed to confirm the effectiveness and safety of such treatments.

## Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by *Lord Truscott*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the government of Israel's approach to administering COVID-19 vaccinations. [HL11847]

**Lord Bethell:** We have not made any formal assessment of the vaccine deployment outside the United Kingdom's own programme.

However, Ministers and officials continue to monitor vaccine deployment programmes across the world, including Israel's, and share learnings and collaborate internationally on the role of deploying safe, effective vaccines in response to COVID-19.

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to prioritise crematorium and funeral workers for receipt of a COVID-19 vaccination. [HL12377]

**Lord Bethell:** The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) are the independent experts who advise the Government on which vaccine/s the United Kingdom should use and provide advice on prioritisation at a population level. The JCVI identified that the vaccination of frontline healthcare workers should be a priority for the COVID-19 vaccination programme. Frontline staff are at high risk of acquiring COVID-19 infection but also of transmitting that infection to multiple persons who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 as well as to other staff in a healthcare environment.

Crematorium operations may involve handling the deceased and therefore present a risk of exposure to COVID-19. However, these functions do not necessitate entering or accessing a healthcare setting so there is a low risk of transmitting infection to multiple vulnerable persons or other staff in a healthcare environment.

*Asked by Lord Grade of Yarmouth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what lessons they have learnt from the government of Israel's campaign in response to COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy in that country; and what steps they are taking to apply any such lessons to the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines in the UK. [HL12892]

**Lord Bethell:** The Department is regularly in discussions with other countries on a wide range of COVID-19 issues, including Israel, to share learnings and collaborate internationally on the vaccination programme. Feedback from these discussions, where relevant, is used to improve the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines in the United Kingdom.

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of concerns that the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine provides limited protection for the elderly; and what advice they are giving to elderly people who have already had their first dose of this vaccine. [HL13101]

**Lord Bethell:** The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has advised that current evidence does not suggest any lack of protection against COVID-19 in people aged 65 years old or over who receive COVID-19 Oxford/AstraZeneca Vaccine. Their data shows that the vaccine produces a strong immune response in the over 65 year olds and that it is safe. Therefore we are confident in the decision to authorise the vaccine in this age group.

This decision is in line with that made by the European Medicines Agency, who have authorised COVID-19 Oxford/AstraZeneca Vaccine in people from 18 years of age, including those aged 65 years old and above. On 10 February, the World Health Organization have also stated that the benefits of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine outweigh any risks and the shot should be recommended for use, including in people aged 65 years old and over.

The Department has also been working closely with Public Health England and NHS England and NHS Improvement to provide authoritative information to the public on COVID-19 vaccination, including an information pack for healthcare professionals and the public about the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.

## **Côte D'Ivoire: Politics and Government**

*Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) economic, (2) humanitarian, and (3) political, situation in Cote d'Ivoire. [HL13461]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Côte d'Ivoire is one of the world's fastest growing economies, despite a slowdown in growth in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. It is listed as number 41 on the World Bank Index and its Annual Growth Rate was 6.2% in 2020. The UK Government is working with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire on the implementation of our Economic Partnership Agreement, signed in October 2020. The agreement will allow businesses to trade without any additional barriers or tariffs. The humanitarian situation in the country remains stable, but a large number of Ivoirians continue to live below the poverty line.

In October 2020, thousands of Ivoirian refugees crossed into neighbouring countries following violence around the presidential elections. The UK Government condemned the electoral violence and supported Ivoirians' right to demonstrate and protest peacefully. The Minister for Africa issued statements on 30 October and 5 November 2020 urging all parties to refrain from spreading disinformation, hate messages and inciting violence. Alongside international partners, we called for genuine political dialogue between all parties in order to resolve outstanding differences and ensure peace and stability for all Ivoirians. The legislative elections on 6 March are on track to take place in a more inclusive environment, with ongoing political dialogue and participation by opposition parties.

## **Courts: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to fund additional Nightingale courts to clear the current court backlog. [HL13521]

**Lord Wolfson of Tredegar:** To ensure the safety of the physical estate and continue our efforts to tackle demand on the system we are investing £142m in court buildings and facilities, and a further £113m on a range of emergency measures – including the recruitment of 1,600 additional staff and creating more Nightingale courts.

This funding – the largest investment in justice for decades – helped the system to turn a corner in December 2020 so that we were closing the same number of cases as before the pandemic in almost all jurisdictions, including Crown Courts.

Up to the end of February 2021 we have opened 23 Nightingale courts providing 44 additional courtrooms. More are opening each week and we are on track to provide a total of 60 courtrooms across the estate by the end of March.

Through our Spending Review settlement, we have secured significant additional funding in the next financial year to assist in the recovery of our courts and tribunals system, and we continue to consider the measures that are needed to achieve this.

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that COVID-19 safety protocols are being enforced in courthouses; and what plans they have to recruit more court support staff in response to the pandemic. [HL13523]

**Lord Wolfson of Tredegar:** HM Courts and Tribunals Service has well entrenched safeguards to ensure safety of all people in its buildings and we have a transparent framework in place to ensure these safeguards are adhered to.

We have worked closely with public health organisations Public Health England, Public Health Wales and Public Health Scotland, and with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to develop this framework which includes the [Organisational Risk Assessment](#) and the [Local Risk Assessment Tool](#) which mandates a weekly - site specific - risk assessment is undertaken by local managers. Information is fed through governance chains including regional senior management, who ensure consistency, and confirm that the processes are embedded and effective. Assessments are shared with a wide range of stakeholders.

Spot checks validate the assurances provided through the Local Assessments. These are conducted by our Assurance function and independently by qualified health and safety consultants. Furthermore, a Government Internal Audit Agency review of our internal Covid-19 health and safety processes, including compliance, concluded that our framework of governance, risk management and control was largely adequate and effective, with no significant weaknesses requiring remedial action.

At least 20 external regulatory interventions (e.g. HSE or local authority Environment Health Team visits) have taken place in HMCTS buildings. In all but one case the inspection team has been satisfied both by our standards and their implementation on the ground.

We also invite all staff and court users to report concerns so that they can be addressed. Concerns can be raised via local management; [‘Let Us Know’](#) or the newly established regional escalation route.

Insofar as staffing is concerned, recruitment commenced from June 2020, to bring in an additional 1600 people to support the work of the courts in tackling

backlogs and to increase capacity in our courts including Crown Courts.

Of the 1600 people required, 1227 are already in post, and a further 354 individuals are undergoing clearances, and expected to join in the next few weeks.

In addition, more court clerks and court administrative staff are being recruited to support the running of Nightingale courts and existing courts to increase sitting day capacity.

## **Crown Court: Recruitment**

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase the recruitment of Crown Court staff. [HL13522]

**Lord Wolfson of Tredegar:** Recruitment commenced from June 2020, to bring in an additional 1600 people to support the work of the courts in tackling backlogs and to increase capacity in our courts including Crown Courts.

Recruitment for these posts have been undertaken through various sources, to increase the number of candidates. These have included running national recruitment campaigns, accepting staff referrals, contacting retired staff members to ask them to return, and increasing our agency workforce.

Of the 1600 people required, 1227 are already in post, and a further 354 individuals are undergoing clearances, and expected to join in the next few weeks.

In addition, more court clerks and court administrative staff are being recruited to support the running of Nightingale courts and existing courts to increase sitting day capacity.

## **Cycling: Bus Lanes**

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) powered, and (2) unpowered, ‘cargobikes’ using bus lanes; and whether they have issued guidance on the use of bus lanes by such vehicles. [HL13363]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Cargo bikes are considered a type of pedal cycle in law. Pedal cycles are allowed to use bus lanes by default, as indicated by the cycle symbol on bus lane signs. Electrically assisted cargo-bikes would be treated as pedal cycles provided they conform to the Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles Regulations 1983 (as amended).

The Department is not aware of any particular concerns with the use of bus lanes by cargo bikes and has not issued any guidance to local authorities on this matter. The detailed design and provision of bus lanes are matters for individual local traffic authorities.

## Disability: Surveys

Asked by *Lord Shinkwin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many responses to the Cabinet Office Disability Unit's National Strategy for Disabled People survey they received within (1) the first, (2) the second, and (3) the third, week of the survey's launch; and when they plan to publish the key findings of this survey. [HL13515]

Asked by *Lord Shinkwin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish (1) the arrangements, and (2) the methodology, for analysing responses to the Cabinet Office Disability Unit's National Strategy for Disabled People survey; and what assessment they have made of the time required for this analysis per thousand responses. [HL13516]

Asked by *Lord Shinkwin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what reasonable adjustments they have made to ensure that the timeline for disabled people to respond to the Cabinet Office Disability Unit's National Strategy for Disabled People survey takes into account the extra time that it will take some respondents to complete the survey on account of their disability. [HL13519]

Asked by *Lord Shinkwin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish in one document all the questions in the Cabinet Office's National Strategy for Disabled People Citizen Space Survey. [HL13613]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The Government is committed to transforming the lives of disabled people, and will publish the National Strategy for Disabled People this year. It will be informed by insights from the lived experience of disabled people, and will focus on the issues that disabled people say are most important across all aspects of life.

On Friday 15th January, we launched the online UK Disability Survey, which complements the range of engagement already undertaken and ongoing, including lived experience research with disabled people, discussions with the Disabled Charities Consortium, the Regional Stakeholder Networks and others. Contributions to the survey will feed not only into the development of the strategy but also its delivery.

The survey questions were also included in the Easy Read document published online on the survey page (link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-in-the-uk-survey>). The key findings and analysis of the survey will be published in due course.

## Education Recovery Commissioner

Asked by *Baroness Whitaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the objectives of the new appointee to the post of Education Recovery Commissioner; and how they intend to take account of the educational deprivation of Gypsy, Traveller and Roma children. [HL13541]

**Baroness Berridge:** The government is committed to helping children and young people regardless of background to make up learning lost as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

In January 2021, my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, committed to work with parents, teachers and pupils to develop a long-term plan to help pupils make up their learning over the course of this Parliament. As an immediate step to support early years settings, schools and colleges, on 24 February, we committed an additional £700 million to support summer schools, tutoring, early language interventions and additional support to schools to help pupils make up their learning.

We have appointed Sir Kevan Collins as the Education Recovery Commissioner to advise on this broader plan. The objectives of the Education Recovery Commissioner as outlined in the terms of reference are to advise on the design and implementation of potential interventions that will help students catch up learning lost due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The Education Recovery Commissioner will also consider how schools and the system can more effectively target resources and support at pupils and areas in greatest need, regardless of background.

The terms of reference for the Education Recovery Commissioner are published here: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/960070/Terms\\_of\\_reference.pdf#:~:text=Education%20Recovery%20Commissioner%3A%20role%20specification%20and%20terms%20of,approach%20for%20education%20recovery%2C%20with%20a%20particular%20focus.](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/960070/Terms_of_reference.pdf#:~:text=Education%20Recovery%20Commissioner%3A%20role%20specification%20and%20terms%20of,approach%20for%20education%20recovery%2C%20with%20a%20particular%20focus.)

## Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

Asked by *Lord Birt*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to bring forward regulations to require operators of electric vehicle charging points to make their services interoperable with other charging networks in order to allow drivers to use any membership card at a charging point. [HL13368]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Government is committed to ensuring consumers have reliable access to a comprehensive vehicle charging network so that they can easily and conveniently charge their cars. The Government is currently consulting on using its powers

under the Automated Electric Vehicles Act to mandate minimum requirements, including requiring chargepoint operators to make their services interoperable with other charging networks, to improve the experience of consumers when using a public chargepoint. We will continue to support industry and consumers to make the switch to cleaner vehicles. We will publish a clear delivery plan in 2021.

### **Ethiopia: Humanitarian Aid**

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that aid workers are permitted (1) to deliver humanitarian aid, and (2) to assess the needs of the population, in Ethiopia. [HL13385]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK remains deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in Tigray and has been consistent in calling for free and unfettered humanitarian access. The Foreign Secretary raised the need for humanitarian access to Tigray with Prime Minister Abiy during his recent visit to Ethiopia and pressed for a political dialogue to bring lasting peace to the region. The Minister for Africa re-enforced the urgency of the need for humanitarian access when he spoke with the Ethiopian Ambassador on 24 February. The UN estimates that up to 1.3 million people affected by the conflict need humanitarian assistance, though the lack of free and sustained access makes it extremely challenging to determine the actual impact of the conflict on civilians - an estimated 80% of Tigray region remains beyond the reach of relief agencies.

The UK is working closely with humanitarian and development agencies to make sure aid reaches civilians affected by the fighting. UK-funded aid agencies in Tigray are working hard to deliver support in challenging circumstances, including food, shelter, water and healthcare. The Foreign Secretary visited Gondar, the site of a humanitarian hub in the neighbouring Amhara region on 22 January. He heard how £11.4m of UK Aid is supporting the World Food Programme and NGOs to ensure the delivery of aid to those affected by the conflict.

### **European Convention on Human Rights**

*Asked by Baroness Dooccy*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the decision by the European Court of Human Rights on 16 February that the UK was in violation of Articles 4 and 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights, what steps they are taking to prevent further such breaches in future. [HL13399]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Government is committed to tackling the heinous crime of modern slavery and ensuring that victims are provided with the support they need to begin rebuilding their lives. In 2015, we introduced the landmark Modern Slavery Act, giving law enforcement agencies the tools to tackle modern

slavery, including maximum life sentences for perpetrators and enhanced protection for victims. The Act also introduced the statutory defence (Section 45) for victims of modern slavery to protect vulnerable people from being prosecuted for crimes they were forced to commit by their exploiter.

In relation to the case of VCL and AN vs the United Kingdom, which relates to the position prior to the enactment of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the Government is carefully considering the Court's judgment.

### **Exchange Rates**

*Asked by Lord Vinson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact that a rapid and sustained rise in the value of the Pound could have on the UK's economic recovery; and what assessment they have made of the need for intervention by the Bank of England in such cases. [HL13529]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The UK does not have an exchange rate target and the government does not have a desired level for sterling – the rate is set by the market.

Currency markets move up and down and it would not be appropriate for the Treasury to speculate on the impact of currency moves on the real economy. Any impact would necessarily adjust over time and be sensitive to the broader economic and financial context. The independent Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England has responsibility for monetary policy. Its primary objective, set out in law, is to maintain price stability, defined as a symmetric inflation target of 2 per cent, as measured by the twelve month increase in the Consumer Prices Index. The separation of fiscal and monetary policy is a key feature of the UK's economic framework, so the Government does not comment on the conduct or effectiveness of monetary policy.

The pound currently sits 12% and 10% below the 10-year average exchange rate against the dollar and euro respectively.

### **Fisheries: Quotas**

*Asked by Lord Krebs*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their strategy for reducing quotas if fish stocks fall below their maximum sustainable yield. [HL13462]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** Scientific advice indicating that fish stocks have fallen below their maximum sustainable yield will inform the UK's positions in annual negotiations to determine the total allowable catches (TACs). In addition, a key part of our approach to rebuilding the health of depleted stocks is improving selectivity in mixed fisheries. The on-going development of Fisheries Management Plans will also assist in addressing such issues and inform the TAC-setting process moving forward. Fisheries Management Plans

require assessments of the health of fish stocks and policies to restore and/or maintain stocks at levels capable of supporting sustainable harvesting. Where appropriate, they will set out actions to improve data collection and ways to establish sustainable harvest rates.

### Food: UK Trade with EU

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the estimated timetable for producing electronic certification to replace paper documentation for foodstuffs being exported from the UK to the EU. [HL13450]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The majority of export health certificates have been digitised so can be completed online and they are now hosted on EHC Online, replacing the manual process that was previously required to request and certify a certificate. Further progress in the digitisation of EHCs will be made later this year with electronic signatures and the removal of Crown Gold paper being phased within EHC Online. As part of the broader strategy for 2025, we want to work towards full end to end development of electronic signatures and certificates, including the exchange of these with trading partners' IT systems.

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what compensation is available for perishable foods in just-in-time supply chains which have been delayed at the EU border and had to be destroyed as a result. [HL13451]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The Seafood Disruption Support Scheme provided support to seafood businesses exporting highly perishable fresh and live seafood which lost value or were destroyed as a result of export delays in January. The scheme closed on 28 February. The Marine Management Organisation is assessing claims and will make payments during March.

We are working closely with traders to identify and unblock issues as quickly as possible to avoid the need for disposal.

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of the required official veterinarians have been recruited to ensure that food standards border checks on products of animal origin can be maintained. [HL13452]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** When the next phase of border controls start from 1 April 2021, Defra estimates that we will have 100% of the required OV's in place.

Defra has provided £14m funding to local authorities in England to support Port Health Authorities (PHAs) with the recruitment and training of over 500 new staff, including Official Veterinarians, to conduct the new checks on EU imports of animal products, including physical checks. The readiness team in DEFRA continue

to engage regularly with all PHAs who have received funding to provided support on isolated challenges and ensure that this funding is used as effectively as possible.

### Forced Marriage

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were (1) charged, and (2) convicted, with (a) forcing someone to marry, and (b) breaching a forced marriage protection order, under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, in (i) 2016, (ii) 2017, (iii) 2018, (iv) 2019, and (v) 2020. [HL13499]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home office does not hold information on the number of people that were charged with forced marriage offences or breaching a forced marriage protection order.

The number of convictions for forced marriage offences is held by the Ministry of Justice.

The number of convictions for offences relating to forced marriage and breaching forced marriage protection orders for calendar years 2016-2019 can be found in the table below.

<i>Found Guilty</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>
36.1 Forced marriage	0	0	3	0
66.6 Breach of a forced marriage protection order	5	1	4	2

Data for 2020 is due to be published in May 2021.

The figures given in the table relate to defendants for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 in dealing with the issue of forced marriage. [HL13500]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The UK is a world-leader in the fight to end the practice of forced marriage, with our dedicated Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) leading efforts to combat it both at home and abroad.

The Government made forced marriage a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to better protect victims and send a clear message that this practice is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the UK. That Act also makes it a criminal offence to breach a Forced Marriage Protection

Order, and provides anonymity for victims of forced marriage.

Those provisions sit as part of the Government's wider approach to tackling forced marriage. We are committed to ensuring that professionals understand that forced marriage is a criminal offence and have the training and guidance they need to provide effective advice and support on this issue. The Government has published statutory multi-agency guidance and made available free e-learning to help professionals to recognise the warning signs and ensure that the right action is taken to help protect those at risk. The FMU also provides regular training on forced marriage to police officers and social workers.

In 2019 the FMU provided advice or support in 1,355 cases related to a possible forced marriage. Over 2,600 Forced Marriage Protection Orders have also been issued since they were introduced.

### Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Correspondence

*Asked by Baroness Sheehan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking in response to the letter from the Britain-Palestine All-Party Parliamentary Group to the Foreign Secretary on 8 February about the eviction of Palestinians in East Jerusalem by Israeli settler organisations. [[HL13510](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We note the letter sent by the Britain-Palestine All-Party Parliamentary Group to the Foreign Secretary on 8 February. We regularly make clear our concerns about the evictions of Palestinians from their homes in East Jerusalem to the Israeli authorities and the Municipality of Jerusalem, both bilaterally and in co-operation with like-minded diplomatic partners. The Fourth Geneva Convention, which applies to all occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, prohibits demolitions or forced evictions absent military necessity. The Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa raised the issue of evictions of Palestinians from their homes, with the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 29 October 2020, and the British Embassy in Tel Aviv raises this issue regularly with the Israeli authorities. 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. On 25 November 2020, the UK Consul General Jerusalem visited families at risk of eviction in Sheikh Jarrah, restating UK opposition to evictions of Palestinians from their homes.

The UK is focused on preventing demolitions and evictions from happening in the first place through our legal aid programme, which supports Bedouin communities and Palestinians facing demolition or home eviction in both the West Bank and East Jerusalem. We continue to urge the Government of Israel to develop improved mechanisms for zoning, planning and

permitting in Area C for the benefit of the Palestinian population, including by facilitating local Palestinian participation in such processes.

### G7: Cornwall

*Asked by Lord Teverson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what mechanism they plan to use to off-set the carbon footprint of the G7 conference in Cornwall; and what plans they have to apply those off-sets in Cornwall. [[HL13525](#)]

**Lord True:** The Cabinet Office is currently investigating a baseline estimate for carbon emissions for the G7 Summit. We are committed to ensuring that as much as is practical will be offset in Cornwall. We are also in discussions with partners across Cornwall to consider plans on how to apply those offsets for example looking at biodiversity recovery, sustainable travel, tree planting and other options.

### Gambling

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the finding of the study in the Nature Human Behaviour journal The association between gambling and financial, social and health outcomes in big financial data, published on 4 February, that increased gambling correlates with lower financial planning, missed mortgage payments, and increased bailiff interaction; and what assessment they have made of the potential for affordability checks in gambling to produce long-term secure financial outcomes for individuals. [[HL13496](#)]

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the finding of the study in the Nature Human Behaviour journal The association between gambling and financial, social and health outcomes in big financial data, published on 4 February, that increased gambling is associated with lower levels of socialisation and spending on local amenities; and what assessment they have made of the impact of online gambling on the local economy. [[HL13497](#)]

**Baroness Barran:** The recently published study, 'The association between gambling and financial, social and health outcomes in big financial data', analysed banking transaction data and reported a correlation between higher rates of gambling spend as a proportion of outgoings and indicators of lower financial inclusion, wellbeing and healthiness. These correlations were generally strongest after the 75th percentile of spend levels. The analysis did not establish a causative link between gambling spend and the indicators identified.

The analysis also demonstrated a correlation between higher gambling spend and reduced spending on other amenities and leisure activities. It did not distinguish

between electronic transactions made to online operators, and those made in local gambling premises, or look at gambling transactions involving cash. It is therefore not possible to assess the impact of online gambling on the local economy using this research.

The government has launched its Review of the Gambling Act 2005 with the publication of a Call for Evidence, and this will look at whether the right protections are in place to protect people who gamble online. We have called for evidence on the case for and against additional controls on online gambling accounts, and whether such controls should be based on affordability. The Gambling Commission's Remote Customer Interaction consultation also called for evidence on the potential for enhanced requirements for online operators to conduct affordability checks to further protect consumers from harm. The deadline for submissions was 9 February, and the Commission is currently reviewing the evidence received.

### Green Homes Grant Scheme

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth on 2 February (145087), whether the Green Home Grant allocations to local authorities set out in Lord Callanan's letter to Peers on 29 January will still be applied if the £2 billion made available for Green Home Grants is not rolled over into 2021/22. [HL13449]

**Lord Callanan:** The £500m government funding for the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (GHG-LAD) scheme is independent of the funding allocated to the Green Homes Grant Voucher scheme. The GHG-LAD scheme is being delivered in three phases:

- Phase 1A; over £74million was allocated to 55 Local Authorities in October 2020 to fund energy efficiency projects in over 100 Local Authorities by June 2021.

- Phase 1B: around £126million of grant offers were made to 81 Local Authorities in January 2021, for delivery of energy efficiency projects by September 2021. Further details of these allocations will be announced in the coming weeks once Memorandums of Understanding with individual Local Authorities have been signed.

- Phase 2: will see funding of £300m allocated to the five Local Energy Hubs this financial year who will work with Local Authorities in their region to deliver energy efficiency projects by December 2021.

### High Speed 2 Railway Line: Noise

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether HS2 Ltd's Noise Prediction Model is more accurate than the Noise Prediction Model developed for HS1; and how this can be demonstrated. [HL13565]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** High Speed 2 is currently using the prediction model originally developed for HS1 to predict noise from the operational railway. Input assumptions have of course been varied to reflect relevant differences, such as the higher speeds of HS2. As set out in the Environmental Statements for Phase 1 and Phase 2a of HS2, this prediction method has been shown to generate noise predictions that agreed well with actual measurements taken of high speed trains in France.

The hybrid Bill process intensively scrutinised how the HS1 noise model should be applied to HS2, and which input assumptions should be used. Where those input assumptions are further refined during the detailed design stage, for example as the performance of the track or rolling stock is refined/confirmed, the new assumptions and their evidence base is shared with local authorities through the relevant HS2 Planning Forum subgroup.

### Home Education

*Asked by Lord Lucas*

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what basis the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England categorises 'children withdrawn from school to be home educated' as 'vulnerable children'. [HL13467]

**Baroness Berridge:** The Office of the Children's Commissioner is independent of the government and Parliament.

Children can be vulnerable for many different reasons. For the majority, being home educated will not affect the risk they are at. The government supports the right of parents to educate children at home when they wish to do so. Educating children at home works well when it is a positive choice and carried out with a proper regard for the needs of the child. However, we are looking carefully at the rise in Elective Home Education (EHE), particularly in respect to those children who have a social worker, education health and care plan or are known to children's social care.

Following the announcement made by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, on 22 February 2021, children are expected to attend provision from 8 March 2021. We are working closely with local authorities to encourage a return to full attendance in school and will be monitoring the situation, particularly to ensure that vulnerable children make a good transition back to school where they have not attended during the period of national restrictions. Where parents are anxious about the safety of their children returning to school, local authorities and school leaders will be reinforcing that it is in the best interests of pupils to return to school, particularly those who are vulnerable and might miss out most from time away from the classroom.

It is the responsibility of local authorities to take action when it appears that the EHE provision made by parents is unsuitable or a request for a child to be electively home educated would place the child at risk. If parents are unable to satisfy the local authority that the provision is

suitable then the local authority can serve a school attendance order on the parents. In April 2019 we issued new and strengthened guidance to local authorities on how they can exercise these powers.

On 20 October 2020 we published advice for parents considering EHE, see link <https://dfemedia.blog.gov.uk/2020/10/20/all-you-need-to-know-about-home-schooling-and-elective-home-education-ehe>. This is designed to be shared with parents, schools, social workers and local authorities, where the option of EHE is raised. The document is intended to make clear implications of withdrawing their child from school and the challenge involved in providing EHE. At the same time we also produced information for local authorities and those who work with children, to set out how we expect those with duties to ensure children receive a suitable education to use their powers to engage with parents considering EHE where appropriate. This is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education>.

### Horizon Nuclear Power

*Asked by Lord West of Spithead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Japan about facilitating a transfer of ownership of Horizon and its sites to another development company or other relevant commercial business. [HL13539]

**Lord Callanan:** Japan is a significant strategic partner for the UK and we regularly discuss a range of issues, including nuclear energy. It would not be appropriate to comment on the detail of these discussions.

The sites at Wylfa and Oldbury are owned by Horizon Nuclear Power and the future ownership of it and its assets is a matter for Hitachi, its parent company.

### Hospitals: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what steps they are taking to ensure that the safety recommendations made in the report by the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch COVID-19 transmission in hospitals: management of the risk – a prospective safety investigation, published in October 2020, are implemented. [HL13439]

**Lord Bethell:** The Department has worked closely with system partners to give careful consideration to the recommendations made and have accepted those recommendations that have been directed at the Department. Detailed actions outlining how the Department intends to implement the recommendations, are set out in our response to the report which is expected to be published by the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch in due course.

### House of Lords: Catering

*Asked by Lord Blencathra*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what plans he has to discuss with the appropriate House committees and authorities the possibility of opening House catering facilities on 17 May, in strict compliance with any COVID-19 rules applicable at that time to cafes, bars and restaurants outside the House. [HL13657]

**Lord Touhig:** The Senior Deputy Speaker has asked me, as Chair of the Services Committee, to respond on his behalf. The policy of the House Administration, endorsed by the House of Lords Commission, is to ensure that facilities on the Lords part of the Parliamentary Estate are provided in accordance with the advice of and guidance from Public Health England to ensure a safe and secure environment for members and staff. The Services Committee and the Commission will keep under review the potential for reopening and reconfiguring facilities in line with that guidance, and will be issuing further information in due course.

### Housing: Construction

*Asked by The Earl of Dundee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what direct support they plan to provide to (1) local authorities, (2) building firms, (3) housing associations, and (4) others, to create sustainable housing developments in England. [HL13401]

*Asked by The Earl of Dundee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what indirect support is available to (1) local authorities, (2) building firms, and (3) others, to create sustainable housing developments; what steps they are taking to advertise such indirect support; and whether it will be presented in a consolidated form to assist potential developers. [HL13403]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** This Government provides direct and indirect support to a wide range of stakeholders, including developers, and delivery partners to ensure the 1 million homes we want to see built over this Parliament are high-quality and consistent with our commitment to net zero.

Through the National Planning Policy Framework, we empower local authorities to make place-based decisions to best reflect local needs and the importance of sustainable development. The revised Framework, which is currently out for consultation, makes a number of changes to strengthen environmental policies, and introduces climate change adaptation and mitigation as part of sustainable development.

The Construction Leadership Council, which is jointly chaired by industry and the BEIS Construction Minister, works with and supports the wider construction industry. The Green Construction Board, the sustainability work stream of the Construction Leadership Council, has

worked with industry, experts and Government officials to produce recommendations on sustainable new homes and the retrofit of existing housing. Homes England also plays an important role in supporting the housing sector to deliver more sustainable homes and places.

The Government also provides direct support to the delivery of high-quality housing. For example, my Department is committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing and is investing over £12 billion in affordable housing over five years, the largest investment in affordable housing in a decade. This includes the new £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme, which will provide up to 180,000 new homes across the country and leverage £38 billion of private investment. All homes built through the programme must meet current building regulations and the Decent Homes standard. Through our new £11.5 billion programme we will be incentivising Providers to build well-designed places by building the National Design Guide into our scoring criteria for Strategic Partnerships.

The forthcoming Heat and Buildings Strategy, will set out further actions we will take for reducing emissions from buildings, while continuing to deliver greater numbers of safe and affordable new homes.

*Asked by The Earl of Dundee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the sustainability criteria of the National Home Building Fund will improve (1) food, (2) land, and (3) the environment, for communities across England. [HL13402]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The National Home Building Fund (NHBF) is made up of programmes of spending which support the regeneration of brownfield sites, unlock homes through provision of infrastructure, and diversify the housing market through support for SMEs, self and custom builders and modern methods of construction. The primary objective of NHBF is to support proposals that will deliver new homes and unlock housing supply. We will set out further criteria for NHBF funding in due course.

*Asked by Lord Richards of Herstoncoeur*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) current housing targets, and (2) the effect of current housing targets on (a) communities, and (b) ecosystems; and what plans they have to reduce such housing targets. [HL13487]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** To help make home ownership affordable for more people, and to help more people rent their own home, we need to deliver more homes. Last year, we committed to review the standard method formula for assessing local housing need and consulted on how we could best balance the need for clarity, simplicity and transparency for local communities with the Government's aspirations for the housing market. In December, following consultation, we changed the standard method to help enable the country to deliver 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s. However, this is

only the starting point in the process of planning for new homes, it is not a housing target. Local authorities will still need to consider the constraints they face locally, including environmental constraints, to assess how many homes can be delivered in their area. Our Planning for the Future reforms propose significant changes to the focus and processes of planning – to secure better outcomes including improving our precious countryside and environment alongside increasing the supply of land for new, beautiful homes and sustainable places. The Environment Bill currently before Parliament will legislate for mandatory net gains for biodiversity as a condition of most new development. The planning system will support the implementation of this and overall environmental outcome enhancements.

## Housing: Insulation

*Asked by Lord Young of Cookham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to suspend repossession of leasehold properties until potentially dangerous cladding in such properties has been replaced. [HL13690]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Government has announced a globally unprecedented investment in building safety and hundreds of thousands of leaseholders will be protected from the cost of replacing unsafe cladding on their homes. On 10 February the Government announced it will provide an additional £3.5 billion grant funding for removal of unsafe cladding on buildings over 18 metres, which brings the total investment in building safety to an unprecedented £5 billion. Lower-rise buildings between 11 and 18 metres, with a lower risk to safety, will gain new protection from the costs of cladding removal through a generous new financing scheme. As part of this financing scheme, no leaseholder will pay more than £50 per month towards the cost of cladding remediation.

This builds on steps already taken to support leaseholders, including £1.6 billion of funding to remediate unsafe cladding, the £30 million waking watch fund to help end excessive costs and new legislation in the Building Safety Bill which will ensure homes are made and kept safer in future.

The schemes will be launched in due course, and we will publish more details on how these will work as soon as we are in a position to do so.

The Government has worked with the lending industry and the regulators to prevent both homeowners and landlords from facing unaffordable bills or repossession if they can't work, or if their tenants can't pay rent due to the impact of coronavirus.

Mortgage holidays have been extended, with applications open to 31 March 2021. Borrowers that have been impacted by coronavirus and have not yet had a mortgage payment holiday will be entitled to a six-month holiday, and those that have already started a mortgage payment holiday will be able to top up to six months without this being recorded on their credit file. Current

FCA guidance states all mortgage holidays must end by 31 July, so while no one can have more than a six-month deferral, any consumer applying now for their first payment holiday will not be able to take the full six months. Information on mortgage payment holidays is set out on the FCA website: <https://www.fca.org.uk/news/press-releases/fca-confirms-support-mortgage-borrowers-impacted-coronavirus>

The FCA has been clear that for borrowers who have taken six months' holiday and continue to face ongoing financial difficulties, firms should continue to provide support through tailored forbearance options. This could include granting new mortgage payment holidays. Mortgage customers in this situation should speak to their lender to discuss their options.

A mortgage holiday is not the right solution for everyone, and a prolonged payment deferral may not be in a consumer's best interest - it is important to remember that whilst someone takes a payment holiday, they will still owe the amount they don't pay during the deferral period, and interest will continue to accrue. Where consumers can afford to re-start mortgage payments, it is in their best interest to do so.

### **Housing: Rural Areas**

*Asked by The Earl of Dundee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to advance sustainable housing and community developments in rural and semi-rural areas in England; and how they are ensuring consistency with other national policies, including the National Planning Policy framework. [HL13400]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. We introduced neighbourhood planning in 2011 to enable local communities to have the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. In addition, our rural exception sites policy in the National Planning Policy Framework allows for small scale affordable housing available in perpetuity to local people to come forward in rural areas outside of the local plan. As we set out in our recent consultation on Changes to the Current Planning System, we recognise that rural exception sites policy is currently underused in many cases, and we will update planning guidance in due course to encourage wider uptake of these sites.

Our White Paper, Planning for the Future, proposes significant changes to the planning system to protect our precious countryside and environment alongside delivering the high-quality sustainable homes communities need. A Government response to these proposals will follow in the Spring.

*Asked by The Earl of Dundee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide incentives to commercial building firms to create housing developments that enhance the quality of life for rural and semi-rural communities. [HL13404]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Our National Planning Policy Framework is clear that in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs, and that local planning authorities should also support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites in rural areas. These are small sites which provide affordable housing to meet the identified local needs of rural communities, helping rural residents to remain in their communities.

As we set out in our recent consultation on Changes to the Current Planning System, we intend to protect the important role that rural exception sites play in delivering affordable homes in rural areas, retaining rural exception sites as a vehicle for delivering affordable housing in designated rural areas. However, we recognise that this delivery mechanism is currently underused in many cases, and we will update planning guidance in due course.

On top of this, our planning reforms intend to establish a clearer, quicker, and more accessible planning system. These reforms will improve the way new entrants and smaller businesses engage with the planning system, delivering the high quality and sustainable homes communities need.

### **Insolvency: South Yorkshire**

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many businesses have declared bankruptcy in each parliamentary constituency in South Yorkshire in the current financial year to date. [HL13504]

**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 South Yorkshire 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 registered company insolvencies from April 2020 to January 2021 (inclusive):

*Estimated number of registered company insolvencies in South Yorkshire by parliamentary constituency of company registered office*

*1 April 2020 to 31 January 2021*

<i>Constituency</i>	<i>Registered Company Insolvencies</i>
Barnsley Central	5
Barnsley East	0
Don Valley	5
Doncaster Central	54
Doncaster North	1
Penistone and Stocksbridge	1
Rother Valley	3
Rotherham	1
Sheffield Central	97
Sheffield South East	14
Sheffield, Brightside and Hillsborough	10
Sheffield, Hallam	182
Sheffield, Heeley	0
Wentworth and Dearne	4
Total	377

Sources: Insolvency Service (compulsory liquidations); Companies House (all other company insolvencies)

The Insolvency Service also holds data on personal bankruptcies in South Yorkshire 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 due to be released in August 2021). The latest published statistics covering the period 2000 to 2019 can be found on the GOV.UK website.

### **Iraq: Kurds**

*Asked by Lord Austin of Dudley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of who is responsible for the rocket attacks in Erbil on 15 February. [HL13346]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) are urgently investigating circumstances around the rocket attacks in the vicinity of Erbil Airport on 15 February. Although publicly claimed by a militia group called Awliya al-Dam (Guardians of the Blood), investigations are still ongoing. The UK has committed along with the US, France, Germany, and Italy to support the GoI's and KRG's efforts, with a view to holding accountable those responsible.

### **Israel: Palestinians**

*Asked by Lord Shinkwin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the President of the United States to support the resumption of direct talks between the government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority. [HL13514]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK works closely with the US on matters relating to the Middle East Peace Process and we will continue to work closely with the US Administration, as we would normally do, on a variety of issues.

Only the leaders of Israel and the Palestinian Authority can determine the needs and aspirations of their people. However, we have encouraged them to resume cooperation and work towards further dialogue. Peace will only come through negotiations between the parties, but international action has a role in facilitating progress. Meanwhile, the parties should do all they can to reverse the negative trends - including systematic settlement expansion and demolitions in the West Bank, violence and incitement, and the dire situation in Gaza.

### **Labour Party and Liberal Democrats: Peers**

*Asked by Lord Grocott*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord True on 11 February (HL12711), what is their assessment of the equivalent figures for (1) the Labour, and (2) the Liberal Democrat, Party when following a similar methodology to the one used to determine underrepresentation of the Conservative Party in the House of Lords. [HL13422]

**Lord True:** Based on that methodology, my assessment is that the Liberal Democrat Party, in particular, is significantly over-represented in the House of Lords.

### **Local Government Finance: Poverty**

*Asked by Lord Turnberg*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the Fair Funding Review on the budgets of local authorities with high levels of deprivation; and what estimate they have made of the expected average change to the annual budgets of local authorities with high levels of deprivation following the implementation of the Fair Funding Review. [HL13527]

*Asked by Lord Turnberg*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that Durham County Council may lose up to £14 million in its annual budget following the implementation of the Fair Funding Review. [HL13528]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Government announced in April that it would not proceed with the implementation of the Review of Relative Needs and Resources, and wider local government finance reform, in 2021-22. This decision was taken in the interest of creating stability for local authorities and has allowed both government and councils to focus on meeting the immediate public health challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As the pressures of the pandemic recede, we will work with local government to understand the lasting impact it has had on both service demands and revenue raising. We will then revisit priorities for reform of the local government finance system, taking account of wider work on the future of business rates and Adult Social Care. No decisions have been taken from which to make assessments of how individual local authorities will be affected, and any final decisions will be taken in the context of this year's Spending Review.

### Medomsley Detention Centre

*Asked by Baroness Hamwee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for (1) the future use, and (2) the occupancy, of the former Hassockfield Detention Centre in Medomsley; and when these plans will be taken forward. [HL13423]

**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 for women by the autumn. Initial discussions with the planning authority have taken place and work has commenced at the site. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed as part of this programme of work.

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

*Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to open an immigration removal centre for women on the site of the former Hassockfield Detention Centre in Medomsley; and what plans they have to expand the use of engagement-focused alternatives to detention to resolve women's immigration centres in the community. [HL13464]

**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 for women by the autumn. Initial discussions with the planning authority

have taken place and work has commenced at the site. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed as part of this programme of work.

Now in its second year, the Action Access pilot has provided women who would otherwise be detained with a programme of support in the community, including case management support. We are working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and they have appointed the National Centre for Social Research to independently evaluate this work, once the pilot concludes in March 2021. The evaluation is scheduled for publication in June 2021. We will use the evaluation to inform our future approach to case-management focused alternatives to detention.

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

### Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Wolverhampton

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the planned new base for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in Wolverhampton will be comparable to the London base in (1) the number of staff employed, (2) the staff grading structure, and (3) the numbers of staff per salary grade. [HL13420]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** As the Department's second HQ, the Wolverhampton office will have a wide range of Civil Service roles and grades, including senior roles, and will also have a regular Ministerial presence.

By 2025 the MHCLG Group will have 500 jobs based in the West Midlands region, and overall the MHCLG Group is moving a total of 800 roles out of London by the end of the decade, with a target to have half of the most senior roles based in the regions by 2030. As a result, the MHCLG London office will reduce by at least a quarter by 2025 but will remain our largest single office.

The Department is, as a priority, conducting a search for suitable premises in the city and expects to be able to announce further information on the timetable for opening the office by the Summer.

### Modern Slavery Act 2015

*Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the Modern Slavery Act 2015; and what action, if any, they are taking as a result of any such assessment. [HL13377]

**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.

In July 2018, the Government commissioned an Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 led by Baroness Butler-Sloss, the then Rt. Hon. Frank Field and the Rt. Hon. Maria Miller MP. The Review considered where the Act is working well and where implementation can be strengthened. The final Review made 80 recommendations across four themes:

- The Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner;
- Transparency in Supply Chains;
- Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (renamed from Independent Child Trafficking Advocates in line with the recommendations of the Independent Review);
- Legal application of the Modern Slavery Act.

The Government response to the Independent Review was published on 9 July 2019, accepting or partially accepting the majority of the Review's recommendations.

Key work that we have taken forward in response to the Independent Review includes:

- In October 2019 we appointed a HMG Modern Slavery and Migration Envoy to drive forward global progress.
- Following a public consultation, the Government committed on 22 September 2020 to taking forward an ambitious package of changes to strengthen and future-proof the Modern Slavery Act's transparency legislation including extending the reporting requirement to public bodies with a budget of £36 million or more.
- In January 2021, the Government announced plans to introduce financial penalties for organisations who fail to meet their statutory obligations to publish annual modern slavery statements under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. These measures require legislative change and will be introduced when parliamentary time allows.
- Creating a free online central reporting service for businesses' modern slavery statements, to make it easier for consumers, NGOs and investors to scrutinise the action that businesses are taking to prevent modern slavery in their supply chains. We are at the final stages of work to launch this service.
- Work to further roll out Independent Child Trafficking Guardians which will continue to be informed by the Independent Review recommendations.
- We have put in place a MoU between the Home Office and the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner to clarify roles and responsibilities.

### Myanmar: Sanctions

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Worcester*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to imposing targeted sanctions against those responsible for the military coup in Myanmar. [HL13549]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is looking at a range of measures to ensure the democratic wishes of the

people of Myanmar are respected. On 25 February, we announced sanctions against six members of the military responsible for their role in serious human rights violations during the coup. This is in addition to the action taken with Canada on 18 February to impose asset freezes and travel bans against three members of the Myanmar military regime. Prior to this, the UK had already imposed targeted sanctions on 16 individuals responsible for human rights violations in Myanmar. This includes the Commander-in-Chief and his Deputy.

The military's influence is pervasive across Myanmar's economy and we have long been clear that Myanmar needs responsible investors. Her Majesty's Government works closely with UK businesses to ensure that they conduct thorough due diligence to try and avoid exposure to military businesses. We will continue to work closely with international partners on next steps, this includes exploring further sanctions.

### Nagorno-Karabakh: Armed Conflict

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Azerbaijan about reports that Azerbaijani forces (1) have treated captured ethnic Armenian troops inhumanely, and (2) used cluster munitions and artillery rockets, in the conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. [HL13386]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK Government is deeply concerned by allegations that cluster munitions and artillery rockets were used by both sides during the recent Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and that prisoners of war have been subjected to cruel, degrading or inhuman treatment. During her recent visits to Armenia and Azerbaijan the Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas urged both parties to ensure thorough investigations into all allegations, and welcomed those Azerbaijani investigations already underway.

### Nagorno-Karabakh: Humanitarian Aid

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to reports that authorisation from the government of Russia is now required for foreign nationals to enter the Nagorno-Karabakh region, what assessment they have made of the impact this will have on the delivery of humanitarian aid to that region. [HL13381]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK Government is aware of reports that Russian peacekeepers stationed in Nagorno-Karabakh are providing authorisation for those who wish to enter the region. Whilst we have not made an assessment on whether this will impact the delivery of humanitarian aid, during her recent visits to Baku and Yerevan the Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas urged closer cooperation between Azerbaijan and Armenia with a view to ensuring that all

humanitarian agencies were able to access the region to deliver aid.

### **Nagorno-Karabakh: Prisoners of War**

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Azerbaijan about its failure to release prisoners of war from the conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region; whether this and other ceasefire violations were raised by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for European Neighbourhood on her recent visit to Baku; and if not, why not. [HL13444]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** During her recent visits to Armenia and Azerbaijan the Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas underlined the importance of returning of all prisoners of war and urged both parties to work closely with the ICRC to expedite the returns where relevant. The Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas also encouraged both sides to abide by the 10 November trilateral peace deal and settle all outstanding matters through talks under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group. The UK Government welcomes the most recent exchange of prisoners of war on 10 February.

### **National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service**

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12782), why they cannot confirm whether the Armenian genocide will be commemorated in the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. [HL13393]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre's main focus is the Holocaust. The exhibition will address subsequent genocides but it is too early to decide what the detail of that content will be.

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12784), whether an educational impact assessment has been carried out for 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. [HL13394]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** As plans are developed for the content of the Learning Centre, the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation will continue to discuss progress with relevant organisations.

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12785), when they plan to put in place a sustainable long-term plan for the management of the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. [HL13395]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** We will put in place a sustainable long-term plan in good time before the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre opens.

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12939), what is the planned timetable for reaching a conclusion on the operating model for managing the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. [HL13397]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Decisions on the operating model will be made in good time before the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre opens.

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12940), what is the planned timetable for reaching a decision on the future management arrangements for Victoria Tower Gardens. [HL13398]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Decisions on the future management arrangements for Victoria Tower Gardens will be taken in good time before the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre opens.

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 17 February (HL 13245), what environmental impact assessment was carried out before the choice of Victoria Tower Gardens as the site for the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre was made. [HL13581]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** A detailed assessment of the environmental impact was made as part of the planning application. The documents are available (attached) at

<https://idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PL0CVYRP27O00>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

assessment of the environmental impact [210305~1.PDF]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-23/HL13581>

## National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Finance

Asked by *Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 12 February (HL12938), how much private funding has been raised so far for the creation of the proposed UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. [HL13396]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Firm pledges of private funding have not been sought in advance of planning permission.

## National Theatre: EU Countries

Asked by *Baroness Kennedy of Cradley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the National Theatre's decision to postpone tours in the EU due to uncertainty about work permits. [HL13459]

**Baroness Barran:** Touring in Europe is currently not possible due to Covid-19 and EU Member States have not set out plans for when it will be. We are working urgently with the UK's creative industries to help ensure they can work confidently in Europe once touring can safely resume. In the meantime, we also urge EU member states to at least match what the UK offers to all EU artists touring here. The UK government strongly believes supporting touring is in the interests of both the UK and EU, and we continue our work on solutions.

## Neighbourhood Development Plans

Asked by *Lord Marlesford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what status a local government Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) has in any consideration by a planning inspector of an application that conflicts with the objectives of the NDP; and what guidance they have made available about the steps to take in the event of any such conflict. [HL13603]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Once adopted, neighbourhood plans become part of the development plan for the local area alongside the Local Plan. Planning law requires that decision takers, including planning inspectors, must determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan (including any neighbourhood plan) unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plan), permission should not usually be granted.

Asked by *Lord Marlesford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what legislation gives authority to a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP); and whether a NDP becomes invalid if there is no local plan which has already taken account of an NDP. [HL13604]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Localism Act 2011 effected amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, giving effect to Neighbourhood Plans. These amendments set out that once a neighbourhood plan is passed at referendum it becomes part of the development plan for the local area and the basis for decision-making. Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The status of a neighbourhood plan as part of the development plan is unaffected by the absence of a Local Plan.

## NHS: Negligence

Asked by *Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of clinical negligence cases that appeared in court in the 2019/20 financial year resulted in the NHS paying damages. [HL13618]

**Lord Bethell:** In many of the small proportion of cases that go to court, the relevant National Health Service body will have already admitted liability, but are contesting claims for excessive fees or damages. In 2019/20, less than 1% of claims proceeded to trial and in 75% of those cases, NHS Resolution achieved a judgement in favour of the NHS.

## Overseas Aid

Asked by *Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the reduction in Official Development Assistance spending will affect funding for (1) climate change, (2) poverty eradication, (3) tackling disease, and (4) conflict; and whether these issues will be raised when the UK hosts (a) COP26, and (b) the G7 summit. [HL13436]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The Foreign Secretary has set out seven core priorities for the UK's aid budget in the overarching pursuit of poverty reduction: climate and biodiversity; Covid and global health security; girls' education; science and research; defending open societies and resolving conflict; humanitarian assistance; and promoting trade and economic growth. We are working through our internal business planning process which will allocate the ODA budget across these priorities and geographies. While final decisions on ODA

allocations for 2021/22 have not yet been made, we will honour our commitment to spend £11.6 billion on climate change over the next 5 years.

### **Overseas Aid: Family Planning and Genitourinary Medicine**

*Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the reduction in Official Development Assistance spending will affect funding for (1) family planning, or (2) sexual and reproductive health and rights; and if so, how. [HL13435]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is proud to defend comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights, including family planning; these are fundamental to the empowerment of girls and women.

The Foreign Secretary has completed the cross-government review of how Official Development Assistance (ODA) will be allocated against the government's priorities for 2021. The aim is to ensure UK ODA is focused on strategic priorities, where it will have the maximum impact, enable greater coherence and deliver the most value for money. Officials are now working through the implications of these allocations. No decisions on individual sectoral budgets have been taken yet by Ministers.

### **Overseas Aid: Females**

*Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether particular support will be offered through Official Development Assistance spending to women in developing countries affected by climate change to help protect the environment; and what plans they have to address this issue at COP26. [HL13433]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The UK Government remains committed to helping developing countries tackle climate change. We are doubling our International Climate Finance (ICF) to £11.6 billion over the next five years, of which at least £3 billion will be invested to protect and restore nature and biodiversity. Climate change disproportionately affects women and girls, and gender equality is a required consideration for ICF, as for all Official Development Assistance.

The UK is committed to hosting an inclusive COP. As part of our COP26 Presidency, we are stepping up work to fulfil the UK's commitments under the Gender Action Plan agreed at COP25, including by implementing gender-responsive domestic climate policies.

### **Overseas Students: Africa**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many students from African countries are enrolled to study in UK universities. [HL13343]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects and publishes data on students enrolled in higher education. Latest statistics refer to the academic year 2019/20.

Counts of student enrolments at UK Higher Education Providers (HEPs) are available by level of study and region of domicile for the academic years 2014/15 to 2019/20 in Table 28 of HESA's Higher Education Student Data pages: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/table-28>.

In the academic year 2019/20, there were 33,290 undergraduate and postgraduate students enrolled at UK HEPs who were domiciled in Africa prior to study.

### **Overseas Students: Scholarships**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many students from African countries attending UK universities receive scholarships other than Chevening or Commonwealth scholarships. [HL13342]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Students from Africa can seek funding to support study at UK universities through a number of routes, including scholarships offered by charities, private organisations and the universities themselves. We do not hold data on the number of scholarships offered through other organisations, however, Chevening and the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission are currently funding 484 and 488 scholars from Africa respectively.

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which countries require their nationals to seek domestic approval before they can apply for Chevening and Commonwealth scholarships. [HL13344]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** There are no arrangements in place with foreign governments which require candidates to seek approval to apply for Chevening scholarships. Nominations for some of the awards that the Commonwealth Scholarships Commission (CSC) funds are made by national agencies. In most cases these are government departments, which ensures that national development priorities are reflected in the candidate selection. Final decisions for all scholarship awards are made by the CSC Commissioners.

### **Palace of Westminster: Correspondence**

*Asked by Lord Norton of Louth*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker how many items of postal correspondence were received in the Palace of Westminster in 2020; and of those, how many were received in the House of Lords. [HL13482]

**Lord Touhig:** The Senior Deputy Speaker has asked me, as Chair of the Services Committee, to respond on his behalf. 858,483 mail items were received on the

Parliamentary Estate in 2020. The Administration does not count which House each item goes to but estimates that approximately 15 per cent of these items were destined for the House of Lords.

Please note that this figure refers to the whole Parliamentary Estate, not just the Palace of Westminster, and these figures do not include parcels, courier items or internal mail.

### **Palestinians: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Baroness Sheehan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines ordered by the Palestinian Authority are not prevented from entering Gaza by the government of Israel. [HL13509]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We welcome the steps that the parties have taken so far to coordinate responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the news that on the 17 February the first shipment of vaccines from the Palestinian Authority was brought into Gaza, with the approval of Israel. We encourage further cooperation between the two parties in this regard. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv and our Consulate-General in Jerusalem regularly urge the Israeli and Palestinian authorities to take steps to improve health and economic conditions in Gaza. We will continue to monitor the availability of vaccines for Palestinians in Gaza and will raise with the relevant authorities accordingly.

### **Parish Councils: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that in the case of specific funding schemes for (1) parks, (2) play areas, (3) leisure facilities, (4) town centres, (5) high streets, (6) community centres, and (7) other facilities for which town and parish councils commonly exercise powers that are concurrent with those of principal councils, town and parish councils are able to apply or compete for funding on the same basis as principal councils. [HL13700]

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that funding for COVID-19 recovery schemes in communities will be available to town and parish councils on the same basis as for principal councils. [HL13701]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Whilst the Government does not have the necessary powers to pay parish and town councils directly, the Secretary of State has written to principal authorities to urge them to discuss appropriate funding support for parish and town councils from within the support we have provided to them. The Government has allocated over £8 billion directly to principal

authorities since the start of the pandemic and has committed to provide a further £3 billion for 2021/22.

Therefore, I would encourage parish and town councils to continue to liaise with the relevant principal authorities on how this money is allocated in their area.

### **Peat Bogs: North of England**

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Great North Bog Initiative. [HL13419]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The Government is committed to the restoration and sustainable management of England's peat. England's peatlands store around 580 million tonnes of carbon but are emitting around 9.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents per year. Restoration, through initiatives such as the Great North Bog, is a crucial tool in combating climate change and achieving the Government's aim to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

We have engaged with the development of the Great North Bog from an early stage. Restoration of these habitats can achieve multiple natural capital benefits, including havens for rare wildlife and flood protection. We have already invested a significant amount of our early Nature for Climate funding in peatland restoration projects in Great North Bog areas, including the Yorkshire Dales, Peak District and the North Pennines AONB.

### **Peers: Training**

*Asked by Lord Marlesford*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what has been the total cost to public funds to date for Members of the House of Lords undertaking Valuing Everyone training. [HL13010]

**Lord McFall of Alcluith:** To date, £82,158 has been spent on Valuing Everyone training for members of the House of Lords. The same training courses have been offered to, and attended by, members of both Houses. This figure includes an assumption of cost per head, as well as 30% share of development costs, pilot sessions and administration fees.

### **Police: Internet**

*Asked by Lord Wasserman*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which police forces in England and Wales have implemented Single Online Home websites; and what assessment they have made of the impact of these websites on providing the public with a consistent way of (1) engaging with their local police force, and (2) accessing police services online. [HL13530]

*Asked by Lord Wasserman*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect all police forces in England and Wales to have implemented Single Online Home websites. [HL13531]

*Asked by Lord Wasserman*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria they used to decide the order in which police forces in England and Wales were given permission to implement Single Online Home websites. [HL13532]

*Asked by Lord Wasserman*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend the scope of Single Online Home websites to provide easy access to available support for victims of crime. [HL13533]

*Asked by Lord Wasserman*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the national governance arrangements for Single Online Home. [HL13534]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** 27 forces are currently live on the Single Online Home (SOH):

*England*

1. Cheshire
2. City of London Police
3. Cleveland
4. Derbyshire
5. Essex
6. Gloucestershire
7. Greater Manchester Police
8. Hampshire
9. Kent
10. Leicestershire
11. Lincolnshire
12. Merseyside
13. Metropolitan Police Service
14. Northamptonshire
15. Staffordshire
16. Surrey
17. Sussex
18. Thames Valley Police
19. Warwickshire
20. West Mercia
21. West Midlands
22. Wiltshire
23. North Yorkshire

*Wales*

24. Dyfed Powys
25. Gwent
26. North Wales
27. South Wales

Additionally, British Transport Police is also on the Single Online Home.

The Programme is regularly assessed by the Home Office for performance and assurance purposes. Through the 27 forces currently on Single Online Home, online services are available to 61% of the population in England and Wales. The platform has recorded just under 2.9 million visitors and 175,450 online reports in January 2021. In the same month, just under 418,000 visitors were redirected to relevant third-party services, providing a better service for the public to support their queries and reducing non-police demand on police forces. In a survey of users, the Single Online Home was shown to be a preferred way of contacting the police (76%) as a more relevant and convenient mean to meet the needs of the public.

All 43 forces in England and Wales have committed to onboarding the Single Online Home. Up to 10 forces will join in 2021/22 and it is expected that all forces will be on the platform by the end of March 2023.

Forces are not mandated to join the Single Online Home, but as an NPCC national programme the expectation is that all 43 forces in England and Wales will join the platform. The onboarding schedule was developed between the Digital Public Contact (DPC) Programme and forces via Statements of Intent where forces provided their commitment to join and what dates worked for them. This enabled forces to factor in other local change initiatives and resource constraints and the Programme to plan for working with different force infrastructures and developing technical fixes to ensure connectivity.

The Single Online Home already provides services to support victims in reporting crime incidents online. This includes a Domestic Abuse online reporting pilot which was launched in October last year. Designed in consultation with forces, ACC Louisa Rolfe, the NPCC Domestic Abuse Lead, and external charities, the service is victim focused and provides victims with a discrete reporting mechanism to access the support they need at a time when Covid-19 presents heightened risk. Following its success, it will now be rolled out nationally from May 2021. A pilot service of Sarah's Law (child sex offender disclosure scheme) also went live with 6 forces on 23 February 2021 ahead of national rollout while other services due to be developed and piloted in 2021/22 include reporting of Anti-Social Behaviour, rape and sexual assaults, and bribery and corruption.

Governance is overseen by the Home Office's Strategic Change and Investment Board (SCIB) and reporting is provided by the Digital Public Contact Programme.

### **Prisoners: Self-harm and Suicide**

*Asked by Lord Beecham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce the incidence of (1) self-harm, and (2) suicide, in prisons. [HL13358]

**Lord Wolfson of Tredegar:** We take every death in custody very seriously, and we are focussing our efforts to

address the levels of self-harm and support those at risk of suicide. This includes tailored action for the women's prison estate, where a rise has been seen in self-harm incidents since Covid-19 measures were introduced.

We are under no illusions about the impact of the measures which were put in place to protect lives during the Covid-19 pandemic and we have made prisoners' safety and wellbeing our priority.

We have produced a range of products to support Governors in devising and implementing local safety and welfare plans designed to mitigate risks and promote wellbeing. Over 25,000 new and existing staff have received self-harm and suicide prevention training to help them better support offenders with complex needs. We've enabled continued family contact through more than 1,600 secure mobile phones and rolled out secure video call technology into every single prison in the male, female and youth estate. Each prisoner is also given £5 PIN credit per week. We have renewed our partnership with the Samaritans who are providing the excellent Listeners scheme, which trains selected prisoners to provide emotional support to their fellow prisoners. We are also delivering more in-cell activities such as distraction packs, supplementary food packs, and additional educational materials to mitigate the impact of isolation.

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 in the women's estate.

We will also be implementing the Offender Management in Custody model in the female estate in April. This will provide each woman 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.

Every prisoner in the male closed estate should have a key worker allocated to them with vulnerable and priority group prisoners having a daily wellbeing check at the minimum and weekly key work sessions where resource and risk allows whilst in regime level 4.

### **Private Rented Housing: Rents**

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of private renters with significant rent arrears since restrictions to address the COVID-19 pandemic were introduced; what assessment they have made of the figure of 800,000 with rent arrears in England and Wales suggested by the National Residential Landlords Association; and what steps they plan to take to prevent large-scale evictions once the protections put in place during the pandemic are lifted in England. [HL13415]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The vast majority of tenants are meeting their rental commitments. Data from the English

Housing Survey (EHS) Household Resilience Study June-July 2020 suggests that around 7% of private rented sector households are in rent arrears compared to around 3% pre-COVID. 5% of private renters had spoken to their landlords and agreed a rent holiday and a further 6% had spoken to their landlords and agreed a rent reduction.

The NRLA also reported that 7% of renters have built up arrears, and that 91% of private renters have not built any arrears since March 2020.

The UK Government has provided an unprecedented package of financial support which is available to tenants. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the wider package of economic support measures are supporting private renters to continue paying their rent. Local housing allowance (LHA) rates will be maintained at their increased level in cash terms in 2021/22, meaning claimants renting in the private rented sector will continue to benefit from the significant increase in the LHA rates applied in April 2020 in cash terms. Even in areas where rents have reduced and so the 30th percentile level has gone down, LHA rates will remain unchanged. For those who require additional support, Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) are available. For 2021-22 the Government will make available £140 million in DHP funding, which takes account of the increased LHA rates.

### **Property: Ownership**

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what records they maintain in relation to land and property in the UK held by non-UK citizens; and whether they will publish a list of the ten non-UK citizens who own the most property in the UK. [HL13489]

**Lord Callanan:** HM Land Registry does not hold information on the nationality of property owners.

### **Railways: North of England**

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have asked Transport for the North to delay submitting their business plan for Northern Powerhouse Rail; and if so, why. [HL13367]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department has asked Transport for the North to submit the Strategic Outline Case for Northern Powerhouse Rail after the Integrated Rail Plan is published. A Strategic Outline Case which is consistent with the Government's policy and funding framework, to be set out in the Integrated Rail Plan, will allow a more rapid alignment around single route options and quicker progress than envisaged in previous plans.

### **Redundancy: South Yorkshire**

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many jobs have been lost in each parliamentary constituency in

South Yorkshire in the current financial year to date. [[HL13503](#)]

**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 Scriven

House of Lords

London

SW1A 0PW

26 February 2021

Dear Lord Scriven,

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 South Yorkshire in the current financial year to date (HL13503).

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 below 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 South Yorkshire.

Estimates from the APS are from a sample survey and as such are subject to a certain level of uncertainty.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

*Table 1: Number of people in employment for the 12 month periods ending September 2019 and September 2020, and net change between the 2 periods, in Parliamentary Constituencies in South Yorkshire*

Parliamentary Constituency	Geocode	Thousands		
		Oct 2018-Sep 2019	Oct 2019-Sep 2020	Net change
Barnsley Central	E14000541	45	41	-4
Barnsley East	E14000542	44	42	-2
Don Valley	E14000667	46	47	1
Doncaster Central	E14000668	48	48	0
Doncaster North	E14000669	44	45	1

Parliamentary Constituency	Geocode	Thousands		
		Oct 2018-Sep 2019	Oct 2019-Sep 2020	Net change
Penistone and Stocksbridge	E14000876	50	51	2
Rother Valley	E14000903	41	47	6
Rotherham	E14000904	41	40	-1
Sheffield Central	E14000919	63	64	0
Sheffield South East	E14000920	41	45	4
Sheffield, Brightside and Hillsborough	E14000921	44	42	-2
Sheffield, Hallam	E14000922	59	63	4
Sheffield, Heeley	E14000923	52	49	-3
Wentworth and Dearne	E14001028	44	41	-3
South Yorkshire	E11000003	662	665	4

Source: ONS

## Religious Buildings: Planning

*Asked by Lord Beith*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to consult church organisations covered by the Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (England) Order 2010 as part of the Planning for the Future consultation; and what plans they have to change the exemptions under that Order. [[HL13361](#)]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** Following the Planning for the Future White Paper consultation last year on changes to the planning system, the Government continues to engage with a wide range of stakeholders as we develop our detailed proposals. This includes reforms to the planning framework for listed buildings to ensure their significance is conserved while allowing, where appropriate, sympathetic changes to support their continued use and address climate change.

## Renewable Energy

*Asked by Baroness Blackstone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the results of the consultation on Aligning UK international support for the clean energy transition will be published; and what plans they have to publish policy proposals on the basis of the results of that consultation. [[HL13372](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** As stated in the consultation document, the Government will publish its response as soon as possible, once it has considered the evidence

provided and taken a decision on the optimum implementation date for the policy shift.

### Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations

*Asked by Baroness Garden of Frogmal*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Ministry of Defence's Review of the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations 2019, published on 24 March 2020, what plans they have to increase volunteer support for the Reserve Forces' and Cadets Associations under the proposed formation of a Non-Departmental Public Body. [HL13410]

**Baroness Goldie:** The 2019 Review of the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations (RFCAs) recognises that a key strength of the RFCAs is their extensive volunteer membership, which brings with it a breadth of expertise and community links.

Through the establishment of a Non-Departmental Public Body, The Ministry of Defence will look to both preserve and enhance the volunteer ethos, establishing a diverse and inclusive organisation representative of the communities in which they serve, enabled by a vibrant and active volunteer cohort.

*Asked by Lord De Mauley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to maintain, and (2) to increase volunteer (a) support, and (b) influence, in the work of the Reserve Forces' and Cadets Associations' under the proposed formation of a Non-Departmental Public Body. [HL13695]

**Baroness Goldie:** The 2019 Review of the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations (RFCAs) recognised the value that the RFCAs bring to Defence and that a key strength is their extensive volunteer membership and community links. In implementing the Review's recommendations, the Ministry of Defence will look to both preserve and enhance the volunteer ethos, establishing a diverse and inclusive organisation. This includes interim changes to the Schemes of Association to ensure alignment with Equality and Discrimination legislation and to better enable the RFCAs to attract wider talent that is representative of the communities in which they work.

### Social Media: Racial Discrimination

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they plan to take to tackle racism on social media platforms. [HL13524]

**Baroness Barran:** Racism online is completely unacceptable in an open and tolerant society. We must do all we can to tackle it.

The Government is committed to tackling racism, including the spread of racist content online. In December

2020, we published the full government response to the Online Harms White Paper consultation, which sets out new expectations on companies to keep their users safe online. Under a new legal duty of care, in-scope companies, including social media, will need to tackle illegal content and activity on their services and take swift and effective action against such material.

Companies providing high-risk, high-reach services will also need to undertake regular assessments of the risk posed to adults by 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.

The full government response also set out plans to publish an Online Media Literacy Strategy. The Strategy will explore the existing media literacy landscape, and set out the Government's plans to ensure a coordinated and strategic approach to media literacy education for all citizens. This will support users to make informed and safer decisions online, including taking action against online hate such as racism.

### Specialised Committee on Fisheries

*Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect the Specialised Committee on Fisheries to be established under the provisions of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. [HL13469]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** • The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement provides for a number of Specialised Committees which sit underneath the Partnership Council. The Specialised Committee on Fisheries will provide a forum for discussion and co-operation in relation to sustainable fisheries management.

• Until the TCA has been ratified in European parliament, the Partnership Council and Specialised Committees will not become operational. The membership and administration of the Partnership Council and the supporting Specialised Committees is being worked through at a UK level in anticipation of ratification.

### Sri Lanka: War Crimes

*Asked by Lord Naseby*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they were aware that the UN Human Rights Council was putting together a report on alleged war crimes in Sri Lanka between 1 January and 18 May 2009. [HL13480]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK government has not received a request from any UN Human Rights Council mechanism for copies of despatches written by

the former defence attaché Lieutenant Colonel Gash, and has no plans to provide any.

*Asked by Lord Naseby*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 16 February (HL13011), what plans they have to supply the UN Human Rights Council with a copy of the 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. [HL13481]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK government has not received a request from any UN Human Rights Council mechanism for copies of despatches written by the former defence attaché Lieutenant Colonel Gash, and has no plans to provide any.

### Syria: Humanitarian Aid

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that all UN-authorised crossings into Syria are reopened permanently for the safe entry of humanitarian goods; and whom they plan to consult on this matter. [HL13446]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK regularly raises the issue of UN-mandated crossborder access, including most recently on 25 February, at the UN Security Council. We continue to use our position at the UN Security Council and in bilateral discussions, informed by regular consultation with UN agencies, United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock, human rights organisations and others, to push for greater aid access into Syria and to urge renewal of Resolution 2533.

We are appalled that Russia, backed by China, has twice sought to block cross-border aid access into Syria, placing political support for the Assad regime above lifesaving support for the Syrian people. The UK remains committed to the delivery of aid to those most in need in Syria, through all mechanisms. We strongly support the renewal of UNSCR 2533 and are urging members of the UN Security Council to vote in favour of renewing the resolution to avoid further humanitarian disaster.

### Telecommunications: Rural Areas

*Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in expanding communications network coverage in rural areas; and what plans they have to share the resources used by the Emergency Services Network to achieve such coverage. [HL13710]

**Baroness Barran:** The Government's £1 billion Shared Rural Network (SRN) agreement with the Mobile Network Operators, will see the operators collectively

increase 4G mobile coverage to 95% by the end of the programme. While the programme is still in its early stages, we anticipate that areas of the UK will see improvements in coverage long before its completion. On 27 January 2021, the operators O2, Three and Vodafone announced a joint venture to build and share 222 new mobile masts to boost rural coverage across the United Kingdom and deliver the first stage of the SRN. This will see 124 new sites built in Scotland, 33 in Wales, 11 in Northern Ireland, and 54 in England.

Furthermore, on 24 February, EE announced it will be expanding 4G in more than 500 areas in this year to improve rural connectivity across the UK as part of the programme. This will include 333 in England, 132 in Scotland, 76 in Wales, and 38 in Northern Ireland. 110 areas have already been upgraded since the SRN deal was signed, with a further 469 to follow this year in the first phase of the programme.

The Government is committed to delivering value for money for the taxpayer by sharing infrastructure where possible for the Shared Rural Network. The Home Office will make the Extended Area Service (EAS) infrastructure, which is part of the new Emergency Services Network (ESN), available to all mobile operators for deployment as part of SRN. In some specific cases, SRN site upgrades may not be possible due to insurmountable practical or cost barriers.

### Tourism: EU Countries

*Asked by Lord Aberdare*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement on (1) the activities, and (2) the livelihoods, of UK professional international mountain leaders, and in particular those whose mountain tours pass through several EU countries. [HL13338]

*Asked by Lord Aberdare*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that UK-based mountain tourism businesses are not prevented from continuing their activities in the EU unless they replace their UK guides with guides from an EU country. [HL13339]

**Baroness Barran:** The Withdrawal Agreement protects UK nationals who live or are a frontier worker in an EU Member State at the end of the Transition Period. Those who have had a professional qualification recognised under the EU legislation listed in the Withdrawal Agreement will keep the right to practise the profession in the Member State in which they live or work. This includes many professions in scope of the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive such as engineering and accounting.

As of 1 January 2021, UK-qualified professionals who wish to supply services in the EU should seek recognition for their qualifications using the national rules in EU Member States. Professionals should check the European Commission's Regulated Professions Database to find out

if their profession is regulated in the state in which they are seeking to work. They should then contact the single point of contact for that country to find out how to get their professional qualification recognised. Alternatively, they can seek advice from the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications (UK NARIC) to find out which regulatory or professional body they should contact.

The UK-EU TCA provides a framework under which the UK and the EU may agree Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) on the recognition of professional qualification covering the UK and all 27 EU Member States. Once an arrangement is adopted under the TCA, UK professionals will be able to use the terms outlined in the arrangement to secure recognition for their professional qualifications within EU Member States.

Arrangements are implemented on a profession-by-profession basis and depend upon reciprocal cooperation from both the UK and EU Member States. The framework enables UK and EU professional bodies or authorities to make recommendations on MRAs to the Partnership Council. Once an arrangement has been adopted, a professional qualified in the UK (e.g. an engineer) will be able to use the terms outlined in the arrangement to secure recognition of their qualifications within an EU Member State.

The Government continues to engage with stakeholders in the tourism sector to hear their priorities for the UK's future relationship with the EU. Officials are currently engaging with the tourism trade bodies, including the British Association of International Mountain Leaders (BAIML) to gather feedback on priority regulators and qualifications for the tourism sector.

*Asked by **Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that UK-based mountain tourism businesses can continue to employ UK nationals as tourist guides in the EU. [[HL13430](#)]

**Baroness Barran:** The Withdrawal Agreement protects UK nationals who live or are a frontier worker in an EU Member State at the end of the Transition Period. Those who have had a professional qualification recognised under the EU legislation listed in the Withdrawal Agreement will keep the right to practise the profession in the Member State in which they live or work. This includes many professions in scope of the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive such as engineering and accounting.

As of 1 January 2021, UK-qualified professionals who wish to supply services in the EU should seek recognition for their qualifications using the national rules in EU Member States. Professionals should check the European Commission's Regulated Professions Database to find out if their profession is regulated in the state in which they are seeking to work. They should then contact the single point of contact for that country to find out how to get their professional qualification recognised. Alternatively, they can seek advice from the UK Centre for Professional

Qualifications (UK NARIC) to find out which regulatory or professional body they should contact.

The UK-EU TCA provides a framework under which the UK and the EU may agree Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) on the recognition of professional qualification covering the UK and all 27 EU Member States. Once an arrangement is adopted under the TCA, UK professionals will be able to use the terms outlined in the arrangement to secure recognition for their professional qualifications within EU Member States.

Arrangements are implemented on a profession-by-profession basis and depend upon reciprocal cooperation from both the UK and EU Member States. The framework enables UK and EU professional bodies or authorities to make recommendations on MRAs to the Partnership Council. Once an arrangement has been adopted, a professional qualified in the UK (e.g. an engineer) will be able to use the terms outlined in the arrangement to secure recognition of their qualifications within an EU Member State.

The Government continues to engage with stakeholders in the tourism sector to hear their priorities for the UK's future relationship with the EU. Officials are currently engaging with the tourism trade bodies, including the British Association of International Mountain Leaders (BAIML) to gather feedback on priority regulators and qualifications for the tourism sector.

## **Trade Promotion: Public Appointments**

*Asked by **Lord Balfie***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Grimstone of Boscobel on 23 February (HL13226), whether they will now answer the question put, namely, why they have appointed a Trade Envoy for Taiwan; and why they have not appointed a Trade Envoy for the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. [[HL13556](#)]

**Lord Grimstone of Boscobel:** Trade Envoys engage with emerging and developing markets where substantial trade and investment opportunities have been identified by the UK Government. The appointment by the Prime Minister in January 2016 of a Trade Envoy to Taiwan was based on feedback received from the British Trade Office there and underlined the growing importance of the UK-Taiwan trade and investment relationship.

Taiwan offers opportunities for UK businesses in a number of sectors, which was highlighted during last autumn's UK-Taiwan trade talks, including education, science and innovation. Further proof of this is the number of UK firms that are present in Taiwan.

We are constantly reviewing suitable 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 making the final decision. There are no plans to appoint a Trade Envoy to Northern Cyprus.

## Type 26 Frigates: Procurement

Asked by *Lord West of Spithead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the statement by the Prime Minister on 19 November 2020 that they are “taking forward ... plans for eight Type 26 and five Type 31 frigates, and support ships to supply our carriers” (HC Deb, col 488), why they have not yet ordered the remaining planned Type 26 frigates. [HL13633]

**Baroness Goldie:** I refer the noble Lord to the reply I gave him on 16 December 2020, in response to Question HL11193.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL11193 - Type 26 Frigates [Hansard Extract HL 11193.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-23/HL13633>

## UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Asked by *Baroness Valentine*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the prospectus for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund; and what criteria will be used in assessing bids. [HL13626]

**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.

The Government will publish a UK-wide investment framework in the Spring and confirm multi-year funding profiles at the next Spending Review.

## UK Trade with EU

Asked by *Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to digitise export health certificates and other customs documents required for exporting goods to the EU. [HL13468]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The Export Health Certificate Online (EHC Online) service is currently live with digitised forms covering all EU exports and currently covering just over 80% of rest of the world trade. To date, in excess of 130,000 EHC's have been applied for on the service and the system is working well.

## UN Climate Conference 2021: Females

Asked by *Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to consult women's civil social groups in

connection with COP26; and how they will engage with these groups. [HL13434]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** Championing women's roles as decision-makers, educators and climate leaders is essential if we are to deliver effective, long-term solutions to climate change and ensure that women and girls are empowered as agents of change, including at COP26.

There is a dedicated civil society and youth engagement team in the COP Unit that facilitates engagement with diverse women and gender groups in addition to a team responsible for gender policy that works on implementing the COP25 Gender Action Plan. Officials also lead 6 weekly calls with civil society and youth groups to update on COP Unit priorities and planning. Both have good representation of women's civil society groups and are a part of the Presidency's wider approach of ensuring civil society is at the heart of COP26 preparations.

The COP President Designate has also set up the Civil Society and Youth Advisory Council which is meeting monthly in the run up to COP26. The most recent meeting took place on 24 February 2021 where gender and climate change was discussed. Officials also regularly meet with the high level Friends of COP, who advise the UK Presidency on a variety of issues such as gender and inclusion.

## Undocumented Migrants: EU Nationals

Asked by *Lord Green of Deddington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures are in place to identify EU citizens in the UK who overstay their visas. [HL13421]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** EU migrants whose visas expire will be identified and treated in the same way as any other overstayers.

## Universal Credit: Deductions

Asked by *Lord Field of Birkenhead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many Universal Credit claimants in each parliamentary constituency have had money deducted; and what was (1) the average size of the amount deducted, (2) the total amount deducted, and (3) the proportion of each sum deducted to repay advance payments. [HL13408]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** From 3rd April 2020, deductions from Universal Credit for some government debt, such as Tax Credits, benefit overpayments and Social Fund Loans were suspended for 3 months. This was done to ease the financial pressure of debt recovery on benefit claimants and to also allow Debt Management staff to be re-deployed to focus on the unprecedented volume of new claims received during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Universal Credit advance repayments are made gradually over 12 months, and deductions are capped at

30 per cent of a claimant's standard allowance. This is further to the reduction of the overall maximum level of deductions from 40 per cent to 30 per cent of the standard allowance since October 2019.

From October 2021, the repayment period will be extended from 12 months to 24 months and the deductions cap will be reduced from 30 per cent to 25 per cent.

For those who find themselves in unexpected hardship, advance repayments can be deferred for up to three months in certain cases.

The requested information surrounding deductions to Universal Credit payments by parliamentary constituency is shown in the attached table.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table one [HL13408 UC Deductions Table.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-22/HL13408>

## Universities: Freedom of Expression

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their proposals to champion freedom of speech in universities extends to (1) hate speech, and (2) antisemitic speech, as defined by the International Holocaust Remembrance Association. [HL13580]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, announced new measures to strengthen free speech and academic freedom at universities in England on 16 February 2021, in order to stamp out unlawful silencing on campuses. The new measures set out in the policy paper will help to ensure that our universities are places where free speech can thrive. The policy paper can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-free-speech-and-academic-freedom>.

However, the right to free speech does not include the right to harass others, or to incite violence or terrorism. The government has always been very clear that there is no place in our society, including in higher education, for hatred or any form of harassment, unlawful discrimination or racism, including antisemitism. Universities have clear responsibilities in this regard: they and other higher education providers should be at the forefront of tackling hatred.

In October 2020, the Secretary of State wrote to all higher education providers in England urging adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism. It is estimated that at least 31 additional institutions have adopted the definition since this letter, with more indicating their intention to adopt. We have been clear that adopting the IHRA definition sends a clear and important signal to students and staff that antisemitism is

taken seriously and it will not be tolerated. The IHRA definition allows providers better to understand and recognise incidents of antisemitism, which helps them to address hatred or unlawful discrimination in higher education settings. We will continue to call on providers to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism.

The government does not see a conflict between protecting freedom of speech and adopting the IHRA definition. Indeed, our strengthened protections for free speech are likely to support Jewish students who on a number of occasions have had their freedom of speech curtailed by others. Universities have clear legal responsibilities regarding discrimination and harassment, and must balance these with their legal duties to protect free speech.

We will continue to work across government to ensure that racism and religious hatred of any kind is not tolerated anywhere, including in our world-leading universities.

*Asked by Lord Smith of Finsbury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the free speech duties they intend to place on universities will prohibit the implementation by universities of the duties placed on them under the Prevent programme. [HL13617]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, set out new measures to strengthen free speech and academic freedom at universities in England on 16 February 2021, in order to stamp out unlawful silencing on campuses. The new measures set out in the policy paper will help to ensure that our universities are places where free speech can thrive.

Higher education providers will continue to be subject to the Prevent duty under Section 26(1) of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The government is clear that the Prevent Duty should not be used to suppress free speech; rather, it requires providers, when exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. There is no prescription from government (or the Office for Students) in regard to what action providers should take once they have had due regard. The legislation imposing the Prevent duty in relation to higher education specifically requires that providers must have particular regard to their duty to ensure freedom of speech and to the importance of academic freedom. As they already do, providers will continue to balance their legal duties, both in terms of ensuring freedom of speech and academic freedom, and also of protecting student and staff welfare.

## Vagrancy Act 1824

*Asked by Lord Shipley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to repeal the Vagrancy Act 1824. [HL13718]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** This is a complex issue and that is why a review is the right course of action and we are looking at all options.

Work is ongoing and the Government will update on its findings in due course.

### Visas: EU Countries

*Asked by Baroness Hamwee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what basis they are not extending the £55 fee discount for a UK work visa to five EU member states. [[HL13424](#)]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The UK has long standing arrangements in its legislation for the nationals of countries which have signed and 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.

It is only with the end of free movement this legal obligation is now relevant to those EU countries which have ratified the 1961 Council of Europe Charter. The reduction is therefore only available to nationals of countries which have ratified the 1961 Charter, whether or not those countries are EU countries.

The UK's legal obligations in relation to this matter relate to the implementation of the Council of Europe treaty, and do not arise from the UK's former relationship with the EU or the TCA.

*Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made on securing exemptions to visa requirements for (1) UK nationals performing short-term paid work in the EU, and (2) EU nationals undertaking such work in the UK. [[HL13432](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) already includes measures for short-term business visitors, who can perform a list of 11 activities without requiring a work-permit, subject to a limited number of Member State reservations. EU Member States may allow more activities without a work-permit than those specified in the agreement. This will vary country to country.

Visa-free travel is not usually part of Free Trade Agreements, although the UK and EU both allow visa-free visits in their domestic laws. EU nationals can visit the UK for up to 6 months and perform a wide range of business activities (which can be found under the 'Permitted Activities' of the Immigration Rules). UK nationals can visit the EU for 90 days in every 180 days and also perform a range of visitor activities, although these will vary from Member State to Member State.

### War Pensions: Social Security Benefits

*Asked by Lord Empey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the War Disablement Pension is disregarded in its entirety when calculating entitlement to social security benefits. [[HL13407](#)]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** In the calculation of Universal Credit, War Disablement Pension is disregarded in its entirety.

In the calculation of the legacy income-related benefits administered by the Department which Universal Credit is replacing (Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance and Income-related Employment & Support Allowance), there is a weekly disregard of £10.

A similar £10 weekly disregard also applies in State Pension Credit. With regards to Housing Benefit, regulations permit local authorities to disregard beyond the standard disregard amount of £10 a week, the whole or part of the War Disablement Pension.

### Women's Prisons

*Asked by Lord Judd*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their announcement of 23 January of up to 500 new places for women in prisons, (1) what was the evidence base for this decision, (2) how much each cell will cost, (3) what is their estimate for the additional running costs for these places for each of the next 20 years, (4) what alternative uses these places will be put to in the event they are not needed, and (5) what evaluation they made regarding the effectiveness of this decision compared to investing in women's community groups designed to prevent crime. [[HL13456](#)]

**Lord Wolfson of Tredegar:** Our prison population projections published in November 2020 show that the female prison population is projected to rise by around two-fifths by 2026 (1,300 women) with most of that rise coming in the next two years. Our projections took into consideration the impact of the planned recruitment of a further 23,400 police officers – the impact of which cannot be ignored. Doing nothing is not an option. It is our responsibility to ensure that those women who need to be in custody are held in appropriate, decent and safe accommodation. The design of the new accommodation is being developed to be trauma-informed and gender-specific with improved outcomes for women. Our design principles include requirements around ensuring suitable visiting spaces are provided, greater in-cell communication options informed by what we have learned from the COVID pandemic, and in open designs the potential inclusion of rooms to support overnight visits for mothers and their children (currently already delivered in two prisons within the women's estate).

We are currently unable to confirm how much each cell will cost or provide an estimate for additional running costs for the next 20 years. This is in large part as the cells will be a mixture of both open and closed places – and the inevitable variation in ancillaries costs which would need to be taken in to account.

In the event these additional cells are no longer needed, this new accommodation will enable us to close old, poorer quality capacity in parts of the women's estate. This is also an established aim of the custodial element of our Female Offender Strategy.

We are not investing in these prison places at the expense of women's community services - this is not an 'either/or' approach. As well as investing in prison places to meet projected demand we are investing approximately £80m in community drug treatment, £70m in accommodation services, and a further £2m to support 38 grassroots organisations doing incredible work steering women away from the criminal justice system. In addition to this, we are developing new Residential Centres for

women in the community which is being initially piloted in Wales.

## **World War II: Genocide**

*Asked by Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 17 February (HL 13247), when (1) a decision will be taken to establish a chair of Holocaust Studies, and (2) an endowment fund will be established to support such studies; what estimates they have made of the costs of such a chair and endowment fund; and whether they continue to be committed to such aims, six years after the then-Prime Minister accepted those recommendations of the Holocaust Commission Report. [[HL13582](#)]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Holocaust Memorial Foundation continues to consider how best to deliver all the recommendations made in the Commission's report Britain's Promise to Remember.

## Index to Statements and Answers

<b>Written Statements.....1</b>	
Commercial Spaceflight.....1	Fisheries: Quotas ..... 14
Covid-19 Road Map: Planning and Hospitality ...1	Food: UK Trade with EU ..... 15
Judicial Mandatory Retirement Age.....2	Forced Marriage ..... 15
Unauthorised Encampments: Police Powers .....3	Foreign and Commonwealth Office:
<b>Written Answers.....5</b>	Correspondence ..... 16
African Union.....5	G7: Cornwall ..... 16
African Union: Diplomatic Relations.....5	Gambling ..... 16
Apprentices.....5	Green Homes Grant Scheme ..... 17
Armed Forces: Cadets .....6	High Speed 2 Railway Line: Noise ..... 17
Armenia: Churches.....6	Home Education ..... 17
Arms Trade: Export Controls .....6	Horizon Nuclear Power ..... 18
Askham Bryan College: Newton Rigg College....6	Hospitals: Coronavirus ..... 18
Aung San Suu Kyi.....7	House of Lords: Catering..... 18
Aviation: Coronavirus .....7	Housing: Construction..... 18
Big Ben: Repairs and Maintenance .....7	Housing: Insulation..... 19
Bivalve Molluscs: UK Trade with EU .....7	Housing: Rural Areas ..... 20
Borders: Facilities.....7	Insolvency: South Yorkshire ..... 20
British Overseas Territories: Maldives.....8	Iraq: Kurds..... 21
Charities: Official Receiver .....8	Israel: Palestinians ..... 21
Choirs and Orchestras: Coronavirus.....8	Labour Party and Liberal Democrats: Peers..... 21
Contact Tracing: Contracts.....9	Local Government Finance: Poverty ..... 21
Coronavirus: Care Homes .....9	Medomsley Detention Centre ..... 22
Coronavirus: Clinical Trials .....10	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Wolverhampton ..... 22
Coronavirus: Medical Treatments .....10	Modern Slavery Act 2015..... 22
Coronavirus: Vaccination.....10	Myanmar: Sanctions ..... 23
Côte D'Ivoire: Politics and Government.....11	Nagorno-Karabakh: Armed Conflict ..... 23
Courts: Coronavirus.....11	Nagorno-Karabakh: Humanitarian Aid ..... 23
Crown Court: Recruitment .....12	Nagorno-Karabakh: Prisoners of War ..... 24
Cycling: Bus Lanes.....12	National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service..... 24
Disability: Surveys .....13	National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Finance ..... 25
Education Recovery Commissioner .....13	National Theatre: EU Countries ..... 25
Electric Vehicles: Charging Points.....13	Neighbourhood Development Plans ..... 25
Ethiopia: Humanitarian Aid .....14	NHS: Negligence ..... 25
European Convention on Human Rights .....14	Overseas Aid..... 25
Exchange Rates .....14	

## Index to Statements and Answers

<p>Overseas Aid: Family Planning and Genito- urinary Medicine .....26</p> <p>Overseas Aid: Females .....26</p> <p>Overseas Students: Africa .....26</p> <p>Overseas Students: Scholarships .....26</p> <p>Palace of Westminster: Correspondence .....26</p> <p>Palestinians: Coronavirus .....27</p> <p>Parish Councils: Coronavirus .....27</p> <p>Peat Bogs: North of England .....27</p> <p>Peers: Training .....27</p> <p>Police: Internet .....27</p> <p>Prisoners: Self-harm and Suicide .....28</p> <p>Private Rented Housing: Rents .....29</p> <p>Property: Ownership .....29</p> <p>Railways: North of England .....29</p> <p>Redundancy: South Yorkshire .....29</p> <p>Religious Buildings: Planning .....30</p> <p>Renewable Energy .....30</p> <p>Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations .....31</p> <p>Social Media: Racial Discrimination .....31</p> <p>Specialised Committee on Fisheries .....31</p> <p>Sri Lanka: War Crimes .....31</p> <p>Syria: Humanitarian Aid .....32</p> <p>Telecommunications: Rural Areas .....32</p> <p>Tourism: EU Countries .....32</p> <p>Trade Promotion: Public Appointments .....33</p> <p>Type 26 Frigates: Procurement .....34</p> <p>UK Shared Prosperity Fund .....34</p> <p>UK Trade with EU .....34</p> <p>UN Climate Conference 2021: Females .....34</p> <p>Undocumented Migrants: EU Nationals .....34</p> <p>Universal Credit: Deductions .....34</p> <p>Universities: Freedom of Expression .....35</p> <p>Vagrancy Act 1824 .....35</p> <p>Visas: EU Countries .....36</p> <p>War Pensions: Social Security Benefits .....36</p>	<p>Women's Prisons ..... 36</p> <p>World War II: Genocide ..... 37</p>
--	--