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

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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

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

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

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Written Statements

Monday, 26 April 2021

Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions

[HLWS930]

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

I have today laid before Parliament, under the powers of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018, the Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Regulations 2021.

The sanctions regime established by these Regulations seeks to prevent and combat serious corruption around the world by allowing for asset freezes and travel bans to be imposed on individuals or organisations involved in serious corruption. It is a smart tool allowing the Government to target corrupt actors and their enablers. It will prevent those responsible from entering the UK or laundering their ill-gotten assets here. These sanctions will help to ensure that the UK is not a safe haven for those involved in serious corruption, including those who profit from it.

The Global Anti-Corruption sanctions regime will stand alongside the Global Human Rights sanctions regime and give the UK an additional, powerful device to prevent and combat serious corruption around the world.

Today, I will also give an Oral Statement to set out the new sanctions regime and publish the first persons to be designated under it.

Contingent Liabilities Notification: NIHR National Biosample Centre

[HLWS931]

Lord Bethell: The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) National Biosample Centre is a state-of-the-art biosample storage and processing facility. It was established in 2014 through a capital grant from the then Department of Health to the University of Oxford, with the aim of enhancing the nation's capability and capacity to support medical, health and life sciences research into disease mechanisms, new diagnostics and treatments. The NIHR National Biosample Centre remains a key national asset in the context of the Government's commitment to the life sciences and, since April 2020, it has also served as the Milton Keynes Lighthouse Lab for COVID-19 testing.

To help ensure the long-term financial viability of the NIHR National Biosample Centre, and following consideration of several options, I have approved the transfer of the assets and leasing business from the University of Oxford to the Department of Health and Social Care; in return, the Department will pay £1 and provide the University of Oxford with two indemnities relating to its ownership.

I have today presented a departmental Minute notifying parliament of the two contingent liabilities arising from the provision of these indemnities. Details of the contingent liabilities are set out in the Minute.

Fan-led Review of Football Governance

[HLWS932]

Baroness Barran: My Honourable Friend the Minister for Sport and Tourism, Nigel Huddleston MP, has made the following Statement:

The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport announced an independent fan-led review of football governance on 19 April. This will be chaired by the Honourable Member for Chatham and Aylesford.

This manifesto commitment followed a number of high profile club collapses in recent years, including Bury Football Club which resulted in its expulsion from the English Football League. Football clubs are integral parts of our local communities and it is vital that they are protected. The European Super League proposals, which would have been detrimental to the entire football pyramid, demonstrated that now is the right time to launch the review.

The Government has now published the [Terms of Reference](#) for the review. It will seek to make recommendations on ways to improve the governance, ownership and financial sustainability of clubs in English football, building on the strengths of the football pyramid. This will include examining the Owners' and Directors' Tests, exploring ownership models from other countries, and assessing the merits of an independent regulator.

Football begins and ends with fans and we have seen that passionately displayed over the past few days, with clubs being the beating heart of their communities. This review will help put football on a firmer footing for the future and ensure that supporters' voices are heard.

A copy of the Terms of Reference will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Football Governance ToR [Football Governance Review_ Terms of Reference .pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2021-04-26/HLWS932/>

Kalifa Review of UK Fintech

[HLWS933]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: My right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Rishi Sunak) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Innovation is at the forefront of our vision for the future of UK financial services. The Government is committed to ensuring that the UK remains at the global cutting edge of technology and innovation in financial services. Creating the conditions needed for our Fintech businesses

to grow and compete, both here and abroad, is central to delivering on this ambition. This is why, at Budget 2020, I asked Ron Kalifa OBE to carry out an independent review of the UK Fintech sector.

The Kalifa Review of UK Fintech (the Review) [1] was published on 26 February 2021. It made a number of recommendations aimed at Government, regulators, and industry across five areas: Policy and Regulation, Skills and Talent, Investment, International Attractiveness and Competitiveness, and National Connectivity. At publication, HM Treasury welcomed the Review and highlighted key recommendations including:

- A Centre for Finance, Innovation, and Technology to strengthen national coordination across the Fintech ecosystem to boost growth.
- A regulatory ‘scalebox’ to provide additional support to growth stage Fintechs.
- Amendments to UK listings rules to make the UK a more attractive location for Initial Public Offerings (IPOs).
- Improvements to tech visas to attract global talent and boost the Fintech workforce.

Here we have set out the actions that Government and regulators are taking in response to the Review’s recommendations.

Centre for Finance, Innovation and Technology

The Government recognises the potential for a private-sector-led Centre for Finance, Innovation and Technology (CFIT) as an accelerator for Fintech sector growth. It can achieve this through research, thought leadership, and working with regional Fintech hubs and national Fintech bodies to identify and address barriers to growth to the benefit of the sector across the whole of the UK. I have confirmed that the Government supports the creation of this Centre and that it will work closely with the Fintech community to make it a reality.

Regulatory Scalebox

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has also welcomed the Kalifa Review and has set out steps it will be taking to deliver against the Review’s idea for a ‘regulatory scalebox’, by enhancing its existing regulatory toolkit. These actions include:

- Launching ‘Always Open’ to make the Regulatory Sandbox available on a rolling basis.
- Clarifying the scope of qualifying propositions for the Regulatory Sandbox to ensure as many firms as possible are able to access support.
- Launching, in conjunction with the City of London Corporation, the second phase of the Digital Sandbox pilot, inviting applications to test proof of concepts to solve sustainability and climate change financial challenges.
- Considering how to provide a ‘one-stop-shop’ for growth-stage firms to dock in and easily navigate what sources of FCA support are available to them.

- Working with industry over coming months to identify further solutions for supporting firms manage the journey to scale.

The FCA has also announced plans to create a regulatory ‘nursery’ for enhanced oversight of newly authorised firms, enabling an opportunity for additional support as firms become used to the requirements of regulatory compliance.

Listings regime

The Lord Hill Listings Review, which was published at Budget 2021, made recommendations to boost the UK as a destination for IPOs and optimise the capital raising process on UK markets, addresses a number of the Kalifa Review’s recommendations for attracting more Fintech listings to the UK. The Government set out details of its response to Lord Hill’s Review in a Written Ministerial Statement on 19 April (HCWS919). In parallel, the FCA plans to consult on issues raised by the Kalifa Review including reducing the minimum ‘free float’ a company must have when it lists, and whether premium listed companies can have dual share class structures.

Scale-up visa

The Government demonstrated its support for attracting international talent to the UK at Budget 2021 by announcing creation of a ‘scale-up visa stream’. The new stream will be created within a new elite points-based route that will allow employees with a job offer at the required skills level from a recognised UK scale up, including Fintechs, to qualify for a fast-track visa, without the need for sponsorship or third-party endorsement. The Government will set out further details by July and the new route will be implemented by March 2022.

International competitiveness

The Department for International Trade (DIT) has announced it will create two new Fintech initiatives in response to the Review. The first is a new Fintech cohort within DIT’s Export Academy initiative. This will provide bespoke, 1-2-1 advice to eligible UK Fintechs who are ready to scale into key markets such as North America, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Tailored advice will cover topics such as legal, tax, regulation, accounting, and market entry matters, all of which will support the international expansion ambitions of Fintechs on the programme. This is in addition to the wide range of existing DIT export support services currently available for UK businesses. DIT will also establish a Fintech Champions scheme, comprising of leading UK Fintech advocates who are successfully exporting. DIT Fintech Champions will fly the flag for UK Fintech overseas and support the next generation of UK Fintechs in their growth journeys through mentoring and peer to peer learning. Both initiatives will enhance UK Fintech overseas, further elevating the UK’s status as a world leading Fintech Hub.

Regulation for digital finance

The Review also made recommendations more broadly for the Government to develop a regulatory framework for digitalisation and emerging technology in financial

services. The Government is taking forward a number of initiatives in these areas:

Along with the Bank of England, HM Treasury has launched a Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) Taskforce to coordinate the exploration of a potential UK CBDC – the Government and the Bank of England have not yet made a decision on whether to introduce a CBDC in the UK. A CBDC would be a new form of money that would exist alongside cash and bank deposits, rather than replacing them; the Government recognises that cash remains important to millions of people across the UK, and has committed to legislating to protect access to cash.

HM Treasury and the Bank of England are launching a CBDC Engagement Forum to gather strategic input on all non-technology aspects of CBDC.

The Bank of England is also launching a CBDC Technology Forum to gather input on all technology aspects of CBDC.

The Bank of England has launched a new account type that will allow access to central bank money by innovative financial market infrastructure providers to allow them to provide enhanced wholesale payment and settlement.

The Government has announced a financial market infrastructure (FMI) sandbox for firms exploring how to use technologies, such as distributed ledger technology (DLT), to innovate in the settlement of financial securities. This regime will aim to support firms, which are developing this new technology, with a more flexible and tailored approach to meeting requirements in current legislation, whilst appropriately balancing any risks to financial stability, market integrity and consumer protection. This new regime will be inspired by the FCA's sandbox and HM Treasury will work together with the Bank of England and the FCA to deliver this.

In 2020 the Government committed to creating a framework of standards, governance, and legislation to enable a UK Digital Identity market. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) published a draft Trust Framework for consultation in February this year which sets out the Government's vision for the rules governing the future use of Digital Identities. A next iteration is expected to be published this summer.

The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy is taking forward work on Smart Data and has committed to bringing forward legislation to better enable data-sharing across-sectors, including Open Finance. The FCA published a Call for Input on Open Finance in 2019 and published a Feedback Statement in March this year. This set out that the FCA will work closely with the Government as it takes forward the work on legislation as well as assessing the regulatory framework that would be needed to support Open Finance.

Tax

The Review also highlighted the benefits of tax incentive schemes in supporting Fintech growth and at Budget 2021 the Government announced steps it is taking

to ensure the schemes work as efficiently as possible, including:

- A Call for Evidence on the Enterprise Management Incentive scheme to seek views on whether the scheme is meeting its objectives, and examine whether more companies should be able to access the scheme.
- A review of R&D tax reliefs which follows the consultation last year on expanding the qualifying expenditures to include cloud computing and data.

The Kalifa Review also makes various recommendations that Government considers industry is best placed to take forward and I am grateful to Ron Kalifa for bringing these to my attention.

I would like to conclude by thanking Ron Kalifa and his team for their exceptional work in producing this seminal Review. Ron has succeeded in producing insightful analysis, and garnering widespread support from industry for a suite of proposals that keep us on track for the continued success of UK Fintech.

I look forward to taking forward the steps I have outlined today.

[1]https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/978396/KalifaReviewofUKFintech01.pdf

Whiplash Reform Programme Update

[HLWS934]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The Government remains firmly committed to the implementation on 31 May 2021 of the necessary and proportionate measures to control the number and cost of claims for whiplash as, set out in Part 1 of the Civil Liability Act 2018. It also intends to implement on 31 May the associated increase, from £1000 to £5,000 to the small claims track limit for road traffic accident (RTA) related personal injury claims.

The Government had previously considered an increase, from £1000 to £2000, to the small claims track limit for all other types of personal injury claims, including employers and public liability claims. However, having considered the views of a number of stakeholders, including from a wide range of representatives from across the insurance industry and the personal injury and trade union sectors, the government has decided to both limit the proposed increase in the small claims limit for all other personal injury claims to £1,500 instead of £2,000 and to defer the implementation of this measure until April 2022.

Delivering this reform remains a key Government priority but we believe that a more modest increase in the small claims track limit for non-RTA related claims is justified. Pausing its implementation for 12 months will enable greater focus to be placed on the commencement of the whiplash reforms and the launch of the new Official Injury Claim service for claimants on 31 May 2021. This decision will also provide affected stakeholders additional time to prepare for the increase in April next year.

Written Answers

Monday, 26 April 2021

10 Downing Street

Asked by **Baroness Jenkin of Kennington**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the outturn spending from the public purse on the Prime Ministerial residence in Downing Street in each financial year since 1997 for which records are held. [HL14191]

Lord True: The Downing Street complex is a working building, as well as containing two Ministerial residences. As has always been the case, refurbishments and maintenance are made periodically. The Government is legally required to maintain the Downing Street buildings to the high standards appropriate to its Grade 1 and 2 listed status in consultation with Historic England. The listed status, as well as security and other relevant factors, significantly add to the cost of maintenance and repairs, compared to normal properties.

Across successive governments, Prime Ministers have received an annual allowance of up to £30,000 a year from the public purse to contribute towards the costs associated with maintaining and furnishing of the residency within the Downing Street estate.

Such works contribute to assets owned and held by the nation for use by Ministers, including for example for hosting official guests.

Figures for outturn spending from that allowance on the No 11 flat (the residence of the Prime Minister since 1997) are as follows.

To assist public scrutiny, they are presented in cash terms at the time of the payments, and in real terms (equivalent costs today).

| Year | Cash outturn | Real terms* |
|---------|--------------|-------------|
| 1997-98 | £16,471 | £25,299 |
| 1998-99 | £48,336 | £73,040 |
| 1999-00 | £32,189 | £48,425 |
| 2000-01 | £37,501 | £55,406 |
| 2001-02 | £32,945 | £47,973 |
| 2002-03 | £32,707 | £46,587 |
| 2003-04 | £21,094 | £29,414 |
| 2004-05 | £14,012 | £18,996 |
| 2005-06 | £35,293 | £46,617 |
| 2006-07 | £14,832 | £19,050 |
| 2007-08 | £28,150 | £35,164 |
| 2008-09 | £27,083 | £32,939 |
| 2009-10 | £29,389 | £35,181 |
| 2010-11 | £30,000 | £35,267 |

| Year | Cash outturn | Real terms* |
|---------|--------------|-------------|
| 2011-12 | £13,335 | £15,442 |
| 2012-13 | £0 | £0 |
| 2013-14 | £20,490 | £22,840 |
| 2014-15 | £0 | £0 |
| 2015-16 | £29,106 | £31,744 |
| 2016-17 | £19,400 | £20,647 |
| 2017-18 | £0 | £0 |
| 2018-19 | £6,134 | £6,270 |
| 2019-20 | £0 | £0 |

*Using HMT figures for GDP deflator for 2019-20.

Note: The annual allowance may be combined or spread to support works across financial years.

Figures exclude essential works to make good the premises prior to occupation.

No works took place in 2019-20 partly due to the general election and the Covid pandemic.

Audited figures of spending from the allowance for the 2020-21 financial year are not yet available; works have taken place by long-standing Downing Street contractors on painting, sanding and floorboards. Any costs of wider refurbishment in this year have been met by the Prime Minister personally.

The Government has been considering the merits of whether works on parts or all of the Downing Street estate could be funded by a trust; this could mirror long-standing arrangements in place for Chequers (a private trust) or for Dorneywood (a charitable trust), reducing the need for subsidy from the public purse. Such matters are legally complex and policy development is ongoing. The Government engaged with the Leader of the Opposition's Office on the proposals in July.

Matters concerning works on the Downing Street estate, including the residences, will be covered in the Cabinet Office's forthcoming annual report and audited accounts.

Abattoirs: Inspections

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the availability of English-speaking Official Veterinarians to monitor abattoirs. [HL14806]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Department can confirm that all vets working in abattoirs, on behalf of the Food Standards Agency or for Food Standards Scotland, providing statutory controls and certification duties, are registered with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and speak English.

Abortion: Telemedicine

Asked by **Baroness Stroud**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the ability to screen for ectopic

pregnancies via telemedicine abortion services. [HL14837]

Lord Bethell: No assessment has been made. The Department does not set clinical practice. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists has issued clinical guidelines *Coronavirus (COVID-19) infection and abortion care: Information for healthcare professionals*. A copy is attached. The guidance sets out that taking a history and a symptom-based approach, with an ultrasound if indicated, is consistent with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guidance on the diagnosis and management of ectopic pregnancy. The Royal College's guidance includes a decision aid for clinicians to use to help determine if an ultra-sound scan is required.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

COVID-19 Infection and Abortion Care [2020-07-31-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-and-abortion-care.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-04-12/HL14837>

Afghanistan: Peace Negotiations

Asked by **Baroness Hodgson of Abinger**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to raise at the G7 summit the limited participation of women in the Afghan peace process; and what plans they have to increase the participation of women in this process and other global peace processes. [HL14750]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to promoting women's full, equal and meaningful participation in all aspects of peace and security. The UK is committed to making gender equality a cross-cutting theme in its G7 Presidency and plans to discuss Afghanistan, including the importance of an inclusive peace process, at the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers meeting. An inclusive peace settlement between Afghans is the only way of achieving lasting peace. The UK is supporting efforts to achieve this. Within Afghanistan, the UK provides technical advice to the Afghan Ministry of Peace, training for the Afghan negotiating team, and capacity building support to the Afghan women's network and civil society organisations. The UK's partnership with the Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid (CORDAID) provides mentoring to a diverse cadre of 30 female peacebuilders and promotes peace discussions across 15 provinces. At the UN, the UK is co-host of the Group of Friends of Women in Afghanistan, and recently hosted a high-level event on 19 March to discuss how the international community can more effectively ensure Afghan women's safety, and their meaningful participation at all levels of the peace process.

The UK National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security shows how the UK aims to increase women's meaningful participation in peace processes globally. The UK continues to support the International Civil Society

Action Network's Protection Framework for women peacebuilders, to ensure women's safety is not a barrier to their participation. We will also continue to support the Women Mediators across the Commonwealth network, having provided over £2 million since 2018.

Africa: Overseas Aid

Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to (1) maintain, or (2) increase the level of funding in 2021/2022 for (a) parliamentary strengthening, and (b) promoting pluralism in Africa; and what plans they have to (i) maintain, or (ii) increase this funding through the Westminster Foundation for Democracy in 2021/2022. [HL14692]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As outlined in the recently-published Integrated Review, the UK will support strong, transparent and accountable political processes and institutions overseas. The Government will continue to use its development budget to champion and strengthen democratic institutions, human rights, free media and effective governance. Supporting open societies is a priority in Africa, the way we act to promote democracy and defend democratic freedoms in each country is dependent on the context and needs of the country concerned. The Westminster Foundation for Democracy is an important partner in delivering this work in many African contexts.

The impact of the global pandemic on the UK economy has forced us to take the tough but necessary decision to temporarily reduce how much we spend on Official Development Assistance (ODA). We will temporarily move to a target of spending 0.5 per cent of Gross National Income (GNI) on ODA, rather than 0.7 per cent. This is a temporary measure and we will return to 0.7 per cent when the fiscal situation allows. We are now working through the implications of these changes for individual programmes. No decisions have yet been made on individual budget allocations.

Antisocial Behaviour and Crime

Asked by **Lord Hay of Ballyore**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of current levels of (1) knife crime, (2) anti-social behaviour, and (3) gun crime, in England and Wales. [HL14739]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The ONS published the findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (for year ending March 2020) on 8 September 2020, which included a section on perceptions of anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents. The report noted that 7% of all adults in England and Wales reported a high-level of perceived ASB, a similar proportion to the year ending March 2019 and an overall reduction in the perception of high-levels of ASB since 2003 (21%). Furthermore, firearms offences recorded by the police in

England and Wales decreased by 7% in the year ending September 2020, compared with the previous year (to 6,242 offences). And offences involving the use of knives or sharp instruments decreased by 3% over the same period (to 47,119 offences).

Asylum: Housing

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

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many asylum seekers they have asked (1) Mears, (2) Serco, and (3) Clearsprings Ready Homes, to provide accommodation for as part of Operation Oak. [HL14716]

Lord Greenhalgh: We currently have c8100 people in hotels, with our providers working to procure sufficient accommodation across the UK to exit contingency accommodation and maintain a business as usual operation thereafter.

We require providers to work at pace but have directed them to only procure accommodation which is safe and secure for asylum seekers and the communities in which they live.

We remain committed to working in partnership with local authorities, through the use of the Strategic Migration Partnerships to ensure the views of local authorities are included when forward planning.

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

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there is a maximum recommended length of stay for asylum seekers in contingency accommodation before they are offered more suitable long-term accommodation. [HL14717]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: There is no maximum recommended length of stay for asylum seekers in contingency accommodation.

The global pandemic and the pause on the cessation of support has meant that the supported population has grown and in order to ensure the health of both asylum seekers and the community in which they live the Home Office has had to use contingency accommodation to avoid destitution.

We would encourage Local Authorities who do not currently house supported asylum seekers, such as Durham, to participate in the asylum dispersal scheme so that we can minimise the length of stay in contingency accommodation

Au Pairs

*Asked by **Baroness Hodgson of Abinger***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the UK's departure from the EU on au pairs; and whether au pairs who are EU citizens will still be able to work in the UK for one year. [HL14748]

Lord Greenhalgh: As has been the case since 2008, the UK's points-based immigration system will not offer a dedicated route for au pairs.

Those who wish to employ an au pair can either look to offer a package which makes it attractive to those arriving in the UK with general rights to work, such as our Youth Mobility Schemes, or use the wide range of childcare options in the UK relied upon by most families.

EU citizens who arrived prior to 31 December 2020, including au pairs, are eligible to apply for status under this government's EU Settlement Scheme which grants a general right to work in the UK.

*Asked by **Baroness Hodgson of Abinger***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the role of au pair schemes (1) in creating ties with young people from EU countries, (2) in promoting UK values to au pairs arriving in the UK, and (3) in providing affordable childcare. [HL14749]

Lord Greenhalgh: As has been the case since 2008, the UK's points-based immigration system will not offer a dedicated route for au pairs.

There are other immigration routes which will exist for people who may wish to take up these roles, such as those on the Youth Mobility Scheme (YMS). The YMS results in around 20,000 young people from around the world, with capacity for more, to experience life in the UK. Each YMS is based on a reciprocal agreement giving benefits to UK Citizens as well.

Immigration cannot be seen as the sole solution to providing cheaper childcare, there are a wide-range of childcare options available in the UK which are relied upon by most families.

Azerbaijan: Human Rights

*Asked by **Baroness Cox***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the US Department of State 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Azerbaijan, published on 30 March. [HL14713]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government has not made an assessment of the US Department of State 2020 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Azerbaijan. Support for human rights and human rights defenders is a priority around the world, and we continue to raise human rights issues with the Azerbaijani Government accordingly. During her recent visit to Azerbaijan, the Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas raised the importance of respect for human rights, including the need to support a vibrant and active civil society, the importance of ensuring women's rights and protection, and the need to encourage a free media environment. Her Majesty's Ambassador to Azerbaijan also routinely engages on these issues.

Bangladesh: Overseas Aid

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much aid have they provided to support (1) the government of Bangladesh, and (2) agencies operating in Bangladesh, with the arrival of Rohingya refugees; and what plans they have to lead international efforts to find permanent settlement for Rohingya refugees. [HL14759]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has been a leading donor to the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh, having committed £293.5 million since August 2017. This has been channelled through UN agencies and NGOs, working alongside the government of Bangladesh. UK aid has been instrumental in improving the lives of the 890,000 refugees and the vulnerable local Bangladeshi communities in Cox's Bazar district. Our funding has provided lifesaving support including food, healthcare, nutrition, education, clean water and sanitation, and targeted support for women and girls. The UK continues to lead international efforts to maintain attention on the Rohingya crisis and seek durable solutions and accountability for atrocities committed. This includes work through the UN Security Council and the international conference hosted in October 2020 alongside the US, EU and UN.

Banks: EU Countries

Asked by **Lord Myners**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what talks they have held with banks about requests by the EU to move more (1) functions, and (2) people, from offices in the EU to the UK; and what assessment they have made of any such requests. [HL14795]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Treasury officials and Ministers carry out extensive engagement with the banking sector, regularly meeting with a wide range of firms as part of the process of policy development and delivery. Details of ministerial and permanent secretary meetings with external organisations on departmental business are published on a quarterly basis and are available online ^[1].

The Bank of England (through the Prudential Regulation Authority) and the Financial Conduct Authority are responsible for supervising financial services firms in the UK.

The EU's actions are fundamentally for them to articulate. We believe open markets are a global good, and they are best supported by global standards and effective regulation. Fragmentation is not in anyone's interests.

The Chancellor set out in November our ambitious plans to renew the UK's position as the world's pre-eminent financial centre – ensuring it is more open, technologically advanced, a global leader in green finance, and of course well-regulated.

^[1]<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>.

Bees

Asked by **Lord Teverson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the occurrence of the small hive beetle in Europe on their Pest Risk Analysis; and further to the importation of bees from Italy, what plans they have to update the Pest Risk Analysis. [HL14848]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Biosecurity is a priority for this Government, and we recognise that Small hive beetle represents a serious threat to our honey bees.

Following the detection of Small hive beetle in the far south of Italy in 2014, Defra published a contingency plan and contingency exercises have taken place regularly so that inspectors from the National Bee Unit (NBU) are prepared to deal with any suspected occurrence of this invasive pest in England or Wales. To date, Small hive beetle has not been detected in Europe beyond the far south of Italy.

Exports of bees from the affected region of Italy are not permitted. Exports from other regions in Italy are subject to notification requirements and health certification to ensure freedom from key pests and diseases including Small hive beetle. Laboratory analysis and follow up checks are carried out by NBU inspectors.

We are working with the NBU, beekeepers and other stakeholders to stop Small hive beetle from entering the UK. An extensive surveillance programme is in place for exotic pests. NBU inspectors currently conduct around 6,500 apiary inspections each year. Our Sentinel Apiary Programme ensures that there is enhanced surveillance at high-risk apiaries near ports and airports. Inspectors also provide training and guidance on pest recognition to beekeepers.

Along with colleagues in the Devolved UK Administrations, we are monitoring the impact of the new trading arrangements with EU countries and our contingency protocols will be reviewed and updated accordingly.

Asked by **Lord Teverson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the occurrence of the small hive beetle in Europe, what plans they have to ban the import of honey bee queens from Italy. [HL14849]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Small hive beetle was first detected in Europe in 2014, in the far south of Italy, and safeguard measures have been maintained by the Italian authorities since then. While further cases have occurred in the same area in subsequent years, Small hive beetle has not been detected outside the far south of Italy.

Exports of honey bees from the affected region of Italy are not permitted. The Government has no plans to ban

imports of honey bee queens from unaffected regions of Italy.

Asked by Lord Teverson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Healthy Bees Plan 2030, what steps they plan to take to prevent the importation of package bees from Europe into Great Britain through Northern Ireland. [HL14850]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: EU member states may export bees to Northern Ireland in line with intra-Union trade rules. This means that packages and colonies may be exported to Northern Ireland provided they have been notified in advance and are accompanied by a valid health certificate confirming that the consignment is free of key pests and diseases.

Movements of queens, packages and colonies from Northern Ireland to Great Britain remain permitted. There is, and will remain, unfettered access for Northern Ireland goods including honey bees to the rest of the UK market.

The Healthy Bees Plan 2030 describes how we will work in partnership with beekeepers and other stakeholders. This includes actions to stop Small hive beetle from entering the UK. An extensive surveillance programme is in place for exotic pests. National Bee Unit inspectors currently conduct around 6,500 apiary inspections each year. Our Sentinel Apiary Programme ensures that there is enhanced surveillance at high-risk apiaries near ports and airports. Inspectors also provide training and guidance on pest recognition to beekeepers.

Belfast Agreement

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the implementation of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. [HL14885]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: This Government remains fully committed to the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and ensuring that all obligations under it continue to be met. The Belfast/Good Friday Agreement provided a foundation for peace and a framework for prosperity for Northern Ireland.

The 10th April marked 23 years since the signing of the Agreement. In that time there has been a transformative change in Northern Ireland where peace has brought stability and opportunities, and enabled Northern Ireland to develop into the vibrant place it is today.

Blood Cancer: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the risks to, and (2) the most effective treatment and vaccination options for, blood cancer patients in relation to COVID-19; and what discussions they have had with health agencies on this subject. [HL11894]

Lord Bethell: Patients with blood cancer are included in the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's priority group four, for individuals who are clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19. Patients with blood cancer outside of these diagnoses would be included in priority group six for at-risk groups.

Vaccination of patients undergoing treatment for cancer will be carefully considered by clinicians. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published *COVID-19 rapid guideline: managing COVID-19* on cancer treatments during the COVID-19 pandemic. A copy is attached. Public Health England (PHE) continues to monitor the impact of COVID-19 vaccines on a broad range of outcomes including symptomatic disease, infection and hospitalisations. NICE and PHE continue to advise the Government on these guidelines, which are reviewed and updated regularly.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

COVID-19 rapid guideline: managing COVID-19 [COVID-19 rapid guideline_managing COVID-19 (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-01-07/HL11894>

Boats: Exhaust Emissions

Asked by Lord Krebs

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on 22 March (HL13985), what plans they have to reduce air pollution from diesel (1) engines, and (2) generators, on canal boats moored in residential areas. [HL14775]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Government is working to address emissions from canal boats as part of our wider commitment to improve air quality. Recent efforts have focussed on reducing pollution from solid fuel burning but government is actively exploring what options are available in the longer term to eliminate harmful emissions from the small diesel engines used on watercraft including the inland waterways sector.

Analysis undertaken by the Department for Transport has identified that alternative fuels and power sources will be needed in order to achieve substantial long-term reductions in air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions from the inland and UK domestic fleets. In response to this the Government has recently launched the Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition, a £20m fund aimed at supporting innovation in the wider maritime sector and accelerating the commercial availability of low and zero emissions technology for vessels in the UK. While primarily focused on maritime activity it is expected that this fund will also benefit related sectors including inland fleet, particularly in areas like engine technology and alternative fuels.

Additionally, the maritime elements of the Government's forthcoming Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP) will consider the wider opportunities to

reduce pollutant emissions arising from our transition to net zero in 2050 and will consult upon appropriate policy responses to support this outcome. The TDP is planned for publication in late Spring.

Brain Cancer: Research

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Carlisle

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will allocate the remainder of the £40 million pledged to brain cancer research announced in May 2018. [HL14707]

Lord Bethell: We are unable to specify an exact date when the remainder of the £40 million will be allocated, as we are relying on researchers to submit high-quality research proposals in this very difficult area. However, we are working to improve the number and quality of applications by working with the Tessa Jowell Brain Cancer Mission towards funding workshops for previously unsuccessful researchers to support them in submitting higher quality research applications.

Brain: Tumours

Asked by Baroness Jay of Paddington

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the response by Lord Bethell on 19 January (HL Deb, cols 1080–4), what progress they have made towards developing research projects on brain tumours, and in particular on young people with brain tumours. [HL14920]

Lord Bethell: As part of the Tessa Jowell Brain Cancer Mission, the National Institute for Healthcare Research has received 69 applications, 10 of which have been funded and a further seven are under consideration. One of the funded applications is focused solely on children and others include young people.

British Irish Intergovernmental Conference

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what date they plan to hold the next British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference. [HL14819]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference is an important element of Strand Three of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, and stands to promote bilateral cooperation at all levels on all matters of mutual interest within the competence of the UK and Irish Governments.

We will of course look for the appropriate time for the next BIIGC, especially in the context of strengthening the bilateral relationship between the UK and Ireland, now that we have left the EU.

British Nationality: Assessments

Asked by Lord Wallace of Saltaire

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applicants for (1) British citizenship, and (2) long-term residence in the UK, took the Life in the UK test in (a) Welsh, and (b) Scots Gaelic, in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [HL14854]

Lord Greenhalgh: In the last 3 years, there has been one Life in the UK test taken in Welsh, and no tests have been taken in Scots Gaelic.

The test taken in Welsh was a customer applying for British Citizenship.

British Nationals Abroad: Death

Asked by Lord Leigh of Hurley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to improve the (1) procedures, and (2) policies, for UK citizens seeking assistance following a death abroad, in particular in respect of repatriation of deceased relatives, subsequent to the murder of Daniel and Amelie Linsey in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday 2020. [HL14777]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) consular staff are available to offer appropriate and tailored support to British nationals and their families, 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year. The support we can provide is set out in Support for British nationals abroad: A guide, available on GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-british-nationals-abroad-a-guide>). The FCDO seek continuously to improve our processes and services by acting on feedback and reviewing what we do. The FCDO is an active member of international consular forums and learns from, and shares experiences and best practice with, a range of other countries.

The FCDO provides tailored support to families bereaved overseas, including providing information on local police and judicial procedures. Since 2015, the FCDO's Murder and Manslaughter Team have provided dedicated tailored support to families bereaved through homicide abroad. This includes working closely with a range of other organisations such as police Family Liaison Officers where these are deployed, and the Homicide Service in England and Wales, to help families access specialist services. A Memorandum of Understanding between the FCDO, National Police Chiefs Council, and the Chief Coroner of England and Wales has been updated and was published on GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/murder-manslaughter-and-infanticide-of-british-nationals-abroad-2>) in September 2020, setting out how each organisation coordinates delivery of their respective roles and responsibilities.

Buildings: Insulation

Asked by *Lord Ravensdale*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish their plans about the support they intend to provide to leaseholders in buildings below 18 metres in height that require fire safety remediation work; and what additional support they plan to provide to those leaseholders beyond the provision of the Government-backed loans they announced on 10 February. [HL15072]

Lord Greenhalgh: Between 11 metres and 18 metres the risk profile of buildings is different and will not always require the same level of remediation when risks are identified. However, we want to make sure the residents and leaseholders in these buildings also have peace of mind and financial certainty. That is why the Government has announced a generous financing scheme which will mean that buildings of 11-18 metres in height will be able to access finance for the remediation of unsafe cladding, with a commitment that leaseholders will not need to pay more than £50 a month towards this. By providing this financing scheme we are ensuring that funding is available for remediation, accelerating the process and making homes safer as quickly as possible.

On 10 February the Government announced it will provide an additional £3.5 billion, which 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. This brings the total investment in building safety to an unprecedented over £5 billion.

We realise the need to get unsafe cladding remediated as swiftly as possible as public safety is our first priority. We will publish further details as soon as possible.

Buildings: Safety

Asked by *Lord Hendy*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide a 'roadmap' setting out the allocation of responsibilities relating to (1) fire safety, and (2) building safety, between departments. [HL14744]

Lord True: The Government is delivering fundamental reform of building and fire safety across both the Building Safety Bill and Fire Safety Bill.

The List of Ministerial Responsibilities can be found on GOV.UK.

Burkina Faso: Religious Freedom

Asked by *Lord Suri*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the freedom of religion or belief in Burkina Faso. [HL14841]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Religion-based and intercommunal violence is part of a broader trend of security deterioration in Burkina Faso. We are deeply concerned about this insecurity, which is having a tragic impact on communities of all faiths. The UK condemns all attacks, including those targeting particular religions or ethnic communities. Nobody should live in fear because of their identity or beliefs.

At recent G5 Sahel meetings, the Minister for Africa and the Foreign Secretary set out the need to address impunity for human rights abuses and violations and improve efforts to enhance stability in the Sahel region. We are committed to using our memberships of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Council of Europe, International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance and other international organisations and networks to promote and protect Freedom of Religion or Belief for all.

Cephalopods and Shellfish: Animal Welfare

Asked by *Baroness Hodgson of Abinger*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the peer review for the Review of the Evidence for Sentience in Decapod Crustaceans and Cephalopod Molluscs report has been completed; and when the accompanying Seafish Report into welfare risks facing these sea creatures will be published. [HL14747]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Defra has commissioned an independent external review of the available scientific evidence on sentience in decapods and cephalopods. This review and the Seafish Report are both expected to be published shortly.

Charitable Trusts

Asked by *Lord Lee of Trafford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to encourage the creation of new charitable trusts focussed on supporting local and regional charitable community activities and initiatives. [HL14776]

Baroness Barran: The government does not have specific plans to encourage the creation of new charitable trusts to support local community initiatives. Local and regional charities play a vital role in strengthening communities and increasing social cohesion and are best placed to understand the needs of their communities. The voluntary and community sectors are independent from government and rely on the hard work of staff and volunteers, as well as funding from individuals, businesses, trusts and foundations.

The Charity Commission for England and Wales produces a range of resources to support individuals who wish to set up a new charity. This guidance is available online here: <https://www.gov.uk/set-up-a-charity>.

The government acts as a steward for these sectors and meets regularly with charities and social enterprises at both ministerial and official level to discuss sector

challenges and opportunities. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, this has included distributing the £750 million civil society sector support package announced by the Chancellor on 8 April 2020 and ensuring that fundraising and volunteering can take place safely where it is possible to do so. Over many years the government has worked in partnership with a range of local community foundations and trusts. Most recently this has included the Community Match Challenge and the Big Night In to distribute funding to small local charities as quickly as possible.

Civil Disorder: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) ongoing civil unrest, and (2) political situation, in Northern Ireland. [HL14820]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The sporadic, localised disorder which we have seen in Northern Ireland is completely unacceptable, and it is clear that the factors behind it are complex and multifaceted.

The Ministerial team in the Northern Ireland Office have been in close contact with political and community leaders in Northern Ireland and it is clear that the only way to resolve differences is through dialogue.

The Government commend the Northern Ireland Executive for how they have worked collectively in handling the recent unrest, and welcomed their joint statement on 8 April that set out a common position from all Executive parties against the violence and declared their support for law and order and policing.

Construction: Billing

Asked by *Lord Aberdare*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to add any guidance on retentions to the Construction Playbook when it is next reviewed. [HL14673]

Asked by *Lord Aberdare*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to monitor (1) adoption of, and (2) compliance with, the Construction Playbook by (a) departments, and (b) their arm's-length bodies. [HL14674]

Lord True: The Construction Playbook, published in December 2020, includes 14 key policy reforms which will help government and industry work better together to deliver quality public works and value for money. It applies to all central government departments and their ALBs on a 'comply or explain' basis and we have strengthened approvals processes, including Cabinet Office controls for projects over £10m total value and the Treasury approvals process, to ensure compliance.

We recognise that this will be a journey and adoption will be demonstrated through 'faster, better, greener' public works achieved by a greater proportion of projects applying the Playbook over time and support will be

provided to departments and ALBs to embed the Construction Playbook into their public works projects and programmes.

We are committed to annually reviewing the content of the Construction Playbook including working to facilitate prompt, fair and effective payment practices throughout the supply chain. The use of Project Bank Accounts is required unless there are compelling reasons not to do so and the Prompt Payment Measure allows contracting authorities to exclude suppliers on the basis of poor payment performance. At this time we do not have any plans to provide additional guidance on cash retentions specifically.

Coronavirus and Influenza: Death

Asked by *Lord Kilclooney*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people in England died in the first three months of 2021 due to (1) flu and (2) COVID-19. [HL14771]

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 Rt Hon. the Lord Kilclooney

House of Lords

London

SW1A 0PW

19 April 2021

Dear Lord Kilclooney,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am replying to your Parliamentary Question asking how many people in England died in the first three months of 2021 due to (1) Flu and (2) COVID-19 (HL14771).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for publishing statistics on deaths registered in England and Wales. Mortality statistics are compiled from information supplied when deaths are certified and registered as part of civil registration.

Cause of death is defined using the International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th edition (ICD-10). Deaths where the underlying cause was Influenza and Pneumonia are defined by the ICD-10 codes J09 to J18, deaths. Where the underlying cause of deaths was COVID-19, these are defined by the ICD codes U07.1, U07.2 and U10.9.

Table 1 below provides the number of deaths, in England, where the underlying cause of death was (1) Influenza and Pneumonia or (2) COVID-19 for the first two months of 2021. Data for March 2021 has not yet been compiled but will be released within our *Monthly Mortality Analysis [1]* dataset, scheduled for release on 22 April.

The number of deaths for 2021 are provisional.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Table 1: Number of deaths where the underlying cause of death was Influenza and pneumonia or COVID-19, in England, 2021 [2] [3] [4] [5] [6]

| Month | Influenza and pneumonia | | COVID-19 | |
|----------|-------------------------|--|------------------|--|
| | Number of deaths | Age standardised mortality rate per 100,000 population | Number of deaths | Age standardised mortality rate per 100,000 population |
| January | 1,291 | 27.4 | 25,716 | 545.9 |
| February | 1,118 | 26.3 | 16,682 | 392.3 |

Source: ONS

[1]

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

[2] Figures are for deaths registered, rather than deaths occurring, in each calendar year.

[3] Deaths for England exclude non-residents.

[4] Figures for England are based on geographical boundaries as of February 2021.

[5] The International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Edition (ICD-10) definitions are as follows: Influenza and pneumonia (J09-J18), COVID-19 (U07.1, U07.2 and U10.9).

[6] Figures for 2021 are provisional.

Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many accredited providers of the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme were not regulated lenders; and whether they will publish the names of such providers. [HL14794]

Lord Callanan: Details of lenders accredited to deliver the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme were published on the British Business Bank's website while the scheme was in operation.

Providing a list would incur a disproportionate cost to the Department. Each lender's regulatory status is available on the relevant regulator's website.

Coronavirus: Disease Control

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission at (1) vaccination centres, and (2) associated transport hubs. [HL11903]

Lord Bethell: NHS England and NHS Improvement have stated that vaccination sites should be administering the vaccine in line with best infection prevention and control procedures, including social distancing,

ventilation and wearing masks. Large scale centres should have an environmental risk assessment in place which is expected to cover requirements for ventilation in a pandemic when transmission and virus shedding is a significant concern. A copy of NHS England and NHS Improvement's guidance *COVID-19 Vaccination Centres: Operating Framework. Information and guidance on operating Vaccination Centres* is attached.

The Department for Transport has produced guidance for transport operators to help them keep transport settings safe and reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. This includes regular disinfecting and thorough cleaning of transportation, ensuring availability of hand sanitiser and enabling social distancing at transport hubs. A copy of *Coronavirus: Safer transport guidance for operators* is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

COVID 19: Safer Transport Guidance for Operators [Coronavirus (COVID-19) safer transport guidance for operators.pdf]

COVID-19 Vaccination Centres: Operating Framework [C1034-operating-framework-information-and-guidance-on-operating-vaccination-centres-v1.1-20-january-21.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-01-07/HL11903>

Asked by Lord Triesman

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) organisation, and (2) advertisement, of all-night parties during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the ones in Primrose Hill in March; what assessment they have made of the impact of such events on (a) drug dealing and use, (b) nuisance noise for local residents, and (c) littering; and what steps they are taking with police forces to prevent such events taking place. [HL14851]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The vast majority of the public have complied with the measures the Government has put in place during the pandemic, and we expect everyone to continue to do the right thing and follow the rules and guidance that will help keep us all safe. Our police forces face unprecedented challenges as they play the critical role of maintaining public order during this public health emergency. We have moved quickly to give the police the powers and guidance they need to support compliance with essential social distancing measures, this includes quadrupling the penalty for attending an illegal gathering of over 15 people in England to £800, doubling on each successive offence up to a maximum of £6,400.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) accuracy, and (2) usefulness, of lateral flow tests, following reports that the rate of

false positives returned by these tests has increased as the prevalence of COVID-19 has fallen. [[HL15034](#)]

Lord Bethell: New analysis of community testing data shows lateral flow device (LFD) tests to have a specificity of at least 99.9%. For every 1,000 LFD tests carried out, there is less than one false positive result. Rapid testing using LFDs detects cases quickly in under 30 minutes, meaning positive cases can isolate immediately, breaking chains of transmission.

Coronavirus: Swimming Pools

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the findings of the study undertaken by Imperial College London and Water Babies, reported on 12 April, which found that swimming pool water can inactivate the COVID-19 virus in 30 seconds in the right conditions. [[HL14942](#)]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England has not made an assessment.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people in total were vaccinated against COVID-19 in the UK using (1) the Oxford/AstraZeneca, and (2) the Pfizer/BioNTech, vaccine in each week since the beginning of 1 December 2020. [[HL11802](#)]

Lord Bethell: The information is not collected in the format requested.

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assurances AstraZeneca gave about its commitment to manufacture the Oxford vaccine prior to either (1) a successful testing programme, or (2) approval by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. [[HL11806](#)]

Lord Bethell: Assurances agreed between the Government and Oxford/AstraZeneca are bound by commercially confidential contracts.

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government why only 975 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine are scheduled for delivery to Newbury Racecourse; and what plans they have to increase the number of such doses (1) delivered to, and (2) administered at, Newbury Racecourse. [[HL11935](#)]

Lord Bethell: No specific assessment on the delivery of COVID-19 vaccine to Newbury Racecourse has been made.

Each Primary Care Network receives their own supply and work has been carried out with local clinical

commissioning group colleagues to ensure that vaccine supply aligns with the number of registered patients in the priority cohort groups. NHS England and NHS Improvement are working with vaccination sites across the country to ensure that supplies are replenished as required to ensure an adequate and consistent supply of vaccine.

Asked by Baroness Gardner of Parkes

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that the amount of time between the administration of the first and the second dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine does not exceed six weeks. [[HL12051](#)]

Lord Bethell: Since December 2020, the Government's policy has been to offer people their second vaccine dose up to 12 weeks after their first dose. The decision to update the dosing interval will give as many people at the highest risk their first dose as soon as possible and it is in line with the conditions of authorisation from Medicines and Healthcare and Regulatory Authority for the vaccine.

This approach is based on advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation and four UK Chief Medical Officers and is designed to save lives. Analysis carried out by Public Health England suggests that the COVID-19 vaccination programme prevented 6,100 deaths in England up to the end of February 2021.

The Government is in constant contact with the vaccine manufacturers and remains confident that the supply of vaccine to the UK will not be disrupted, and will enable everyone to receive their second dose within 12 weeks of their first.

Asked by Lord Pendry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of concerns raised by recipients of the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine about the Government's decision to extend the time between the administration of the first and second doses of the vaccine; what steps they are taking to assure recipients of the first dose of its efficacy; and what plans they have to publish guidance about the efficacy level of a single dose. [[HL12310](#)]

Lord Bethell: Public confidence in the vaccine programme is of paramount importance. The Government will continue to provide clear and regular updates to the public on progress and the impact of the programme, including publishing evidence on the effectiveness of the vaccines and data on adverse reactions to the vaccines.

Public Health England (PHE) has been monitoring the effectiveness of the vaccines, including the effects of dosage schedules. NHS England regularly publishes guidance and runs public information campaigns on the vaccines, to ensure the public is fully aware and informed. Data from PHE's SIREN study shows that both available vaccines, Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca, provide high protection against COVID-19 infections after a single dose, beyond 56 days of having been

vaccinated. A copy of Public Health England's *Annex A: Report to JCVI on estimated efficacy of a single dose of Pfizer BioNTech (BNT162b2 mRNA) vaccine and of a single dose of ChAdOx1 vaccine (AZD1222)* is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Annex A: Report to JCVI on estimated efficacy [annex-a-phe-report-to-jcvi-on-estimated-efficacy-of-single-vaccine-dose (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-01-19/HL12310>

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether a patient's consent to have a COVID-19 vaccination followed by another approximately three weeks later is still effective if the second vaccination is delayed. [HL12480]

Lord Bethell: The process for consent applies to all vaccines, including those against COVID-19. An individual gives consent to receive a full course of treatment rather than consenting to a time frame for when the treatment is to be received. Consent remains valid unless the individual who gave it withdraws it.

Asked by Baroness Young of Old Scone

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide as much detail as possible on (1) those who have refused COVID-19 vaccination, and (2) those who have not responded to invitations for COVID-19 vaccination, (a) to local public health directors and their staff, and (b) to local primary care networks and clinical commissioning groups; if they plan to provide such information, when they will do so; and what assessment they have made of the potential to use such information to undertake local COVID-19 tracing and vaccine promotion with these groups. [HL13147]

Lord Bethell: There are currently no specific plans to collect data on vaccination refusal or non-response. NHS England and NHS Improvement publish daily, weekly and monthly data on the progress of the vaccination programme across England.

At a local level, local authority directors of public health receive daily updates on vaccine uptake in their areas, by Middle Layer Super Output Area and key subgroups including by gender and ethnicity. Directors of Public Health are provided with this information to support local delivery approaches and improve uptake across all communities.

Asked by Baroness Young of Old Scone

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to lift the embargo on sharing local COVID-19 vaccination uptake data (1) by priority group, and (2) by ethnic group, with primary care networks and clinical commissioning groups; and what assessment they have made of whether sharing this data would

increase the effectiveness of local vaccination efforts. [HL13149]

Lord Bethell: There is no embargo on sharing local COVID-19 vaccination data. This data is published weekly online by NHS England and NHS Improvement.

We are also collecting and monitoring uptake data to drive and improve the national deployment plan, as well as sharing data to support local uptake action and decision-making.

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that homeless people without access to GP services receive a COVID-19 vaccine. [HL13231]

Lord Bethell: The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) recognises that many people who are homeless or sleeping rough are likely to have underlying health conditions which would place them in priority group six. These conditions are likely to be under-diagnosed or not properly reflected in general practitioner (GP) records. The JCVI has advised that homeless people without access to GP services should be offered the vaccine without the need for a National Health Service number or GP registration.

There is work being undertaken to update our operational guidance on reaching rough sleepers and homeless people based on this recent JCVI advice. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government are working closely with NHS England and NHS Improvement to support outreach, and further work is being done to explore the availability of effective on-street models which could be used to support this work. Local teams are now prioritising all homeless people for vaccination alongside priority group six.

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to promote take-up of COVID-19 vaccines amongst black and other ethnic minority communities. [HL13376]

Lord Bethell: We frequently engage with local authorities, faith leaders and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) organisations to provide advice and information about COVID-19 vaccines and how they will be made available. Our communications include targeted information and advice via TV, radio and social media. This has been translated into 13 languages. Print and online material, including interviews and practical advice has appeared in hundreds of national, local and specialist titles including BAME media outlets. In addition, since February a number of mosques and other places of worship have been hosting pop-up COVID-19 vaccination centres.

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that those who have received a first dose

of a COVID-19 vaccine receive the second dose within 12 weeks. [[HL14764](#)]

Lord Bethell: To ensure the dosing schedule is maintained, vaccine supplies have already been set aside to ensure that everyone who has already received their first dose will receive their second dose within 12 weeks of their first. There are currently no delays in the administration of the second dose of the vaccine.

The National Immunisation Management System (NIMS) is the centralised service for the management of both the COVID-19 and seasonal flu vaccination programmes established by NHS England. If an individual is invited for a COVID-19 vaccination via a general practitioner (GP) this information is entered onto the patients' GP record after vaccination and on the NIMS. A second vaccination appointment can then be offered to the patient in the following 12-week period. Where a patient has been invited to book their own appointment, they will also be required to book their second appointment 11 to 12 weeks after the first.

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they have made available to those who do not receive an appointment for a second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine within 12 weeks of receiving a first dose. [[HL14765](#)]

Lord Bethell: In some exceptional circumstances, people may not receive their invitation for their second dose, for example if they had their first dose overseas or they have changed their address between doses. If a full 11 weeks has passed since the first dose and a second appointment has not been offered, they should contact the national booking system online or by calling 119.

Asked by Baroness Scott of Needham Market

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they expect general practitioners to use their clinical judgement in including patients with existing diseases in Group 6 for COVID-19 vaccinations if they consider them to be at risk of exacerbation of their underlying disease should they become infected with COVID-19. [[HL14828](#)]

Lord Bethell: Clinicians, including general practitioners (GPs) are able to use their clinical judgement to categorise patients as clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) because they consider them to be at very high risk of serious illness from COVID-19. Those categorised as CEV are in priority group four of phase one of the vaccination programme. Those who are not categorised as CEV but have underlying conditions that the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advises have increased clinical risk from COVID-19 are in priority group six. Within the broad set of clinical conditions within priority group six, GPs and other clinicians are able to add individuals to this group. They are able to use clinical judgement to take into account the risk of COVID-19 exacerbating any underlying disease

that a patient may have, as well as the risk of serious illness from the virus itself.

Asked by Lord Dodds of Duncairn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the efficiency of the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations in each region of England, and (2) how that compares with the roll-out of such vaccinations in (a) Northern Ireland, (b) Scotland, and (c) Wales. [[HL14912](#)]

Lord Bethell: Each region within England and each of the devolved administrations have different population levels, clinical needs and logistical challenges to meet when deploying COVID-19 vaccines. The Government assesses the efficiency of the programme against these and other factors.

The Government works with the devolved administrations to ensure the vaccine programme is rolled out as quickly and efficiently as possible in each region. Allocation of vaccines is based upon the Barnett Formula. This ensures that all of the United Kingdom receives a fair share of vaccines. Approximately 27.1 million people in England, 838,000 in Northern Ireland, 2.6 million people in Scotland and 1.6 million in Wales have now received their first dose.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking (1) to address the efficacy of the 12 week gap between doses of the COVID-19 vaccine for blood cancer patients, and (2) to protect such patients who have received one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine from exposure to COVID-19. [[HL14925](#)]

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking (1) to reduce the gap between doses of the COVID-19 vaccine for cancer patients, and (2) to protect such patients who have received one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine from exposure to COVID-19. [[HL14927](#)]

Lord Bethell: To optimise the period between doses of the COVID-19 vaccine for all cancer patients, the timing of second dose administration can be varied on clinical advice according to the patient's individual situation. For immunosuppressed cancer patients, the second dose can be given at different timescales to the 12 weeks routinely in place for most people.

Cancer patients undergoing immunosuppressive therapies, where clinically appropriate, should receive their vaccine doses at least two weeks prior to commencing therapy when their immune system is better able to respond. To maximise vaccine efficacy this may entail offering the second dose between the recommended minimum for that vaccine - three or four weeks after first dose - and the recommended maximum of 12 weeks. Although shielding has been paused, current guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people including

immunosuppressed cancer patients advises them to follow the rules and guidance that are in place for the wider population.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation has (1) been sent, and (2) discussed, the peer-reviewed Sars CoV-2 for cancer patients (SOAP) study on the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines for cancer patients. [[HL14928](#)]

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Sars CoV-2 for cancer patients (SOAP) study on the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines for cancer patients, what plans the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation has (1) to change, and (2) to apologise for, its statements about (a) the scientific efficacy of the size of study, (b) that study's evaluation of T Cell responses, and (c) that study's lack of consistency of immunological markers, and its conclusion that the study provides no data of relevance for policy recommendations to be made. [[HL14929](#)]

Lord Bethell: The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) was sent the pre-print article on 15 March 2021, which was discussed at its meeting on 16 March 2021. The minutes of the meeting will be published in due course.

The JCVI has not made any public statements on this study. JCVI has reassured the public that lower immune responses following vaccination do not necessarily infer weaker or absent protection against disease.

Credit

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of The Woolard Review: A review of change and innovation in the unsecured credit market, published on 2 February. [[HL14816](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government welcomes The Woolard Review – A review of change and innovation in the unsecured credit market. The review will contribute to the evidence base to inform the Government's future decisions in relation to this market.

We have already taken action to respond to the review's urgent recommendation for government to legislate to regulate interest-free Buy-Now-Pay-Later agreements, announcing on 2 February that these agreements will be regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). On 19 March, the Government tabled an amendment to the Financial Services Bill to provide the Government with the powers to ensure a proportionate approach to this regulation.

The review acknowledges that the longer-term recommendations it makes will take time to implement. The FCA will build these recommendations into their forthcoming Business Plan, as one driver of their

priorities for 2021-22. The Government will work with the FCA to deliver to them as appropriate.

Crown Commercial Service: Financial Services

Asked by Lord Holmes of Richmond

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure financial technology solutions are considered as part of the Debt Resolution Services supplier roster being created by the Crown Commercial Service. [[HL14753](#)]

Lord True: The Debt Resolution Services Framework will include specific lots for data and affordability solutions. These will be supplied by organisations that provide a range of technology and digital solutions including but not exclusive to; conversational artificial intelligence, open-banking, credit reference agency data, and automated standard financial statements.

Public Sector organisations can utilise these solutions and services to better understand customer financial circumstances and ensure affordable outcomes while providing increased access and choice in the way that customers interact with the services.

It is anticipated that the contract notice for the Debt Resolution Services Framework will be published in June 2021.

Department of Health and Social Care: Conservative Party

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many meetings Ministers in the Department of Health and Social Care have had since March 2020 with (1) individuals, or (2) representatives of companies, that have made donations to the Conservative Party; and what the purpose of any such meeting was. [[HL14980](#)]

Lord Bethell: The information is not held in the format requested and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Developing Countries: Genito-urinary Medicine

Asked by Baroness Sugg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to continue their support for the Women's Integrated Sexual Health programme. [[HL14839](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is proud to defend universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights which is fundamental to the empowerment of women and girls. Global health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, is a top priority for the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

As announced last year, the impact of the global pandemic on the UK economy has forced us to take the tough but necessary decision to temporarily reduce how much we spend on Official Development Assistance (ODA). We will temporarily move to a target of spending 0.5% of Gross National Income (GNI) on ODA, rather than 0.7%.

Diabetes: Health Services

Asked by Lord Hay of Ballyore

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much was spent on diabetes services in England in 2019/20. [HL14740]

Lord Bethell: Information on total diabetes spend is not collected or held centrally as most services for people living with diabetes is commissioned locally.

To date NHS England has invested approximately £120 million of transformation funding into local services to target variation and improve performance in the treatment and care of people living with diabetes since 2017/18.

Disability

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) whether their National Strategy for Disabled People will be published after the Cabinet Office's systematic review of the lived experience of disabled people (CCZZ21A07) is completed, and (2) how it will take into account the findings of that review. [HL14832]

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they commenced the National Strategy for Disabled People survey before the Cabinet Office's systematic review of the lived experience of disabled people (CCZZ21A07) was completed. [HL14833]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The systematic review of the evidence on the lived experience of disabled people in the UK is expected to conclude in autumn 2021. It is one strand of the Disability Unit's analytical work. It is part of a long-term programme of analytical work to improve and systematise the evidence base and ensure that government departments make decisions that are driven by robust evidence. It will inform the Disability Unit's post-strategy work, including evaluation.

Any publication of the review would not be before Autumn 2021 at the earliest, due to the time it takes to conduct and write-up the review. Ministers will decide whether the final output of the review - or a condensed version of it - will be published, nearer the time.

The UK Disability Survey and the systematic review of the evidence on the lived experience of disabled people are two distinct but complementary strands of our evidence and insight and engagement work.

DNACPR Decisions: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Do Not Resuscitate Orders have been issued during COVID-19 pandemic without consulting either the patient or their relatives. [HL15097]

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there have been different instructions for Do Not Resuscitate Orders for (1) disabled patients, (2) dementia patients, and (3) elderly patients during the COVID-19 pandemic; and whether these have only been issued in consultation with relatives. [HL15098]

Lord Bethell: The Care Quality Commission's report into how Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) decisions were made during the COVID 19 pandemic, found 508 instances where a DNACPR had been placed on a patient's record without their agreement or agreement from their families or carers.

The Department remains clear that it is unacceptable for DNACPR decisions to be applied in a blanket fashion to any group of people and should be fully discussed with the individual and their family where possible and appropriate. Over the last year, clinical leaders have issued a number of statements which emphasise personalised approaches to care and treatment and reiterate that there has never been an instruction or directive issued by the National Health Service to put in place blanket DNACPRs due to medical condition, disability or age.

Domestic Abuse: Victim Support Schemes

Asked by Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on (1) families, (2) children's best interests, (3) the length of family court proceedings, and (4) family court capacity, of delays in access to the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes recommended by the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service; and what steps are they taking to reduce delays in accessing such programmes. [HL14812]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: Access to in person Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes (DAPPs) has been adversely affected during the pandemic due to the necessary face-to-face delivery model. We are aware that some providers are continuing to provide a full service, but that others have had to reduce their offer due to social distancing restrictions.

The Government is therefore working with the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) and the judiciary to process cases as quickly and efficiently as possible in order to minimise the impact that the on-going restrictions to this service may have on

families using the family courts, and vulnerable children in particular.

Economics of Biodiversity Review

Asked by Baroness Sugg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the report *The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review*, published on 2 February, and (2) the importance of investment in family planning and reproductive health in relation to the ecological system. [[HL14838](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government welcomes the publication of the Dasgupta Review on the economics of biodiversity as a strong example of UK thought leadership on an important environmental issue with clear - but often overlooked - economic consequences. The Government will closely examine the Review's findings, call on international partners to do the same, and will respond formally to the Review in due course.

Voluntary family planning has wide-ranging benefits for individuals and societies, including supporting their resilience to climate change. Supporting people in their reproductive choices may also have a positive impact on the conservation of nature over the long term, given the role this plays in empowering women and lowering fertility rates. In this context, it is important to note that it is high income countries that have the greatest impact on the biosphere. The UK is a proud defender of sexual and reproductive health and rights, and between 2015 and 2020 reached an average of 25.3 million women and girls with modern methods of family planning per year.

Egypt: Christianity

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the legal challenges facing the Anglican Church in Egypt from the Protestant Churches of Egypt and the impact this legal dispute on (1) the life of the Anglican Church in Egypt, and (2) Christianity and religious freedom in Egypt. [[HL14835](#)]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Egypt about (1) the official recognition of the recently established Anglican Province of Alexandria and the distinct identity of the historic Anglican Church in Egypt, (2) the effect that the absence of such recognition is having on current legal challenges faced by the Anglican Church in Egypt, and (3) the impact of this legal dispute on (a) the life of the Anglican Church in Egypt, and (b) Christianity and religious freedom in Egypt. [[HL14836](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have been encouraged by the positive steps taken by the Government

of Egypt in recent years, including President Sisi's public commitment to upholding the rights of minorities and freedom of worship, as well as the protections for freedom of religion enshrined in Egypt's constitution. However, we remain concerned by the difficulties being faced by the Anglican Province of Alexandria in receiving official recognition as an independent denomination. Our Embassy in Cairo is in close contact with Archbishop Mouneer about the matter, and we have made senior representations to the Egyptian authorities. Most recently, during their telephone call in March, the Prime Minister and President Sisi agreed on the importance of upholding freedom of religion and belief.

Egypt: Religious Freedom

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of freedom of religion or belief in Egypt. [[HL14834](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK welcomes the positive steps taken by the Government of Egypt in recent years, including President Sisi's public commitment to upholding the rights of minorities and freedom of worship, as well as the protections for freedom of religion enshrined in the Egyptian constitution. We were also encouraged by the opening of the Middle East's largest cathedral in Egypt in 2019.

The UK continues to make clear to the Egyptian authorities the importance we attach to these issues. Most recently, the Prime Minister raised Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) with President Sisi during their telephone call in March 2021. Our strong relationship with Egypt also allows us to raise sensitive issues, such as the ongoing detention of Coptic activist Ramy Kamel, which we most recently raised with the Egyptian authorities in November 2020.

Employment: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce a backdated grant for workers who have not had access to any COVID-19 financial support. [[HL14845](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government understands how difficult the COVID-19 pandemic has been for workers across the UK, and its priority remains to protect people and livelihoods. The Government has provided an unprecedented package of economic support for individuals and businesses with a cumulative cost of £352 billion. Individuals have received support through a number of schemes, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) and the Self Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS). Extensions to both of these schemes were announced at the Budget. As at 15 March 2021, CJRS has supported 11.4 million jobs since its inception, with £57.7 billion being claimed by a total of

1.3 million employers, protecting jobs which may otherwise have been lost, while claims for through SEISS have totalled £19.7 billion.

Under the current terms of the CJRS, employers cannot retrospectively furlough an employee. This was only allowed for the period up to 13 November 2020 to account for the fact that the announcement of the extension of the scheme was made shortly before the CJRS was due to end.

Employment: Older People

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce a tailored employment support scheme for over 50s. [HL14900]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Department is committed to supporting over 50s jobseekers, and a range of special support is available for this group. As part of the 50 plus: choice agenda, we have created a network of 50 PLUS Champions (formerly Older Claimants Champions) throughout all of the 37 Jobcentre Plus districts, who work collaboratively with Work Coaches to raise the profile of over 50s claimants, highlighting the benefits of employing them and sharing best practice.

The Department is also piloting 50+ mentoring circles in England to address any confidence barriers experienced by over 50s claimants and to support them in moving into new jobs, particularly where their sectors have been adversely affected by COVID-19.

More broadly, the Department is supporting people of all ages back in to work through the Plan for Jobs. This provides new funding to ensure more people of all age groups get tailored Jobcentre Plus support to find work, including through building new skills.

The Government also aims to increase Sector based Work Academy programme placements, which provide unemployed participants of all ages with training, work experience and a guaranteed interview for a real job. We are also investing £238m into Job Entry: Targeted Support (JETS) to offer enhanced support to those who have been made unemployed for three months.

To support the long term unemployed, £2.9 billion is being invested in the Restart Programme, which is due to go live from summer 2021. The Restart Programme will support individuals who have been unemployed for over 12 months through regular, personalised support and coaching.

Eritrea: Ethiopia

Asked by Lord Suri

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of (1) Eritrea, and (2) Ethiopia, about attacks in the town

of Axum in which hundreds of civilians are reported to have been killed. [HL14842]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are deeply concerned at the mounting evidence of human rights abuses and violations in Ethiopia's Tigray region. Since the conflict started, the UK has consistently called for an end to fighting, and for all parties to the conflict to prioritise the protection of civilians - we have done this both in public statements and in engagements with the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea. The Foreign Secretary raised with Prime Minister Abiy during his visit to the region earlier this year. The Minister for Africa spoke to the Eritrean Ambassador to the in March, and the British Ambassador in Asmara continues to raise concerns - most recently on 15 April with the Eritrean Foreign Minister. The Minister for Africa made specific reference to the reports from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch on the human rights violations of civilians in Axum, Ethiopia in his tweet of 26 February.

Eritrea's role in the conflict is particularly concerning; there are numerous reports of atrocities involving Eritrean forces, and the presence of Eritrean forces is fuelling insecurity. These forces must leave Ethiopia immediately, in line with the commitment made by Prime Minister Abiy on 26 March. We also note PM Abiy's statement on 23 March that the perpetrators of human rights atrocities should face justice - whoever they are. We need to see action now to stop further atrocities and to allow for the independent investigation of those that have occurred. In a joint statement on Ethiopia with 41 other countries at the 46th Session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) of 26 February we condemned in the strongest terms the reported killings of civilians. The G7 Statement of 2 April made clear that independent, transparent and impartial investigation is essential and that those responsible for human rights atrocities must be held to account.

Ethiopia: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the visits by representatives of the (1) government of the United States, and (2) European Union, to Ethiopia, what steps they are taking to co-ordinate international efforts to end the war in that country. [HL14677]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The G7, under the UK Presidency, issued a joint statement on 2 April that expressed our strong concerns about recent reports on human rights violations and abuses, and violations of international humanitarian law in Tigray. We jointly called for the end of violence and the establishment of a clear inclusive political process that is acceptable to all Ethiopians, including those in Tigray and which leads to credible elections and a wider national reconciliation process. We are in close and regular contact with international partners, including the US and EU, about the situation in Ethiopia.

EU Nationals

Asked by **Lord Foulkes of Cumnock**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many non-Irish EU citizens over the age of 65 they estimate live in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) Northern Ireland, and (4) England. [HL14730]

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 Rt Hon. the Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

House of Lords

London

SW1A 0PW

20 April 2021

Dear Lord Foulkes,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question asking how many non-Irish EU citizens over the age of 65 are estimated to live in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) Northern Ireland, and (4) England (HL14730).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) have estimated from data gathered by the Annual Population Survey that the numbers of non-Irish EU citizens over the age of 65 living in the countries of the UK are as shown in Table 1 below. This has been published on the ONS website[1].

Table 1, Annual Population Survey estimates of non-Irish EU nationals, aged 65 and over, residing in the UK, by UK country, July 2019 to June 2020, in thousands

| UK Country | Estimate | +/- Confidence interval |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| England | 105 | 18 |
| Wales | 2 | 2 |
| Scotland | 5 | 3 |
| Northern Ireland | 1 | 1 |

Source: ONS

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

[1]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/adhocs/13146annualpopulationurveyestimatesofnonirishenationalaged65andoverresidingintheukbyukcountryjuly2019tojune2020>

Events Industry: Coronavirus

Asked by **Lord Ravensdale**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they have put in place to enable venues such as the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham to stage

national and international trade exhibitions and events. [HL15070]

Baroness Barran: My Department is taking a number of steps to support the reopening of the business events and exhibition sector.

We seek to reopen business events and conferences in Step 3, subject to a capacity cap. Attendees at outdoor business events will be capped at 50% capacity, up to 4,000 people. Attendees at indoor business events will be capped at 50% capacity, up to 1,000 people.

Step 3 will take place no earlier than 17 May, and at least five weeks after Step 2, following a further review of the data and the four tests.

As part of our efforts to get such events back in full operation, we have launched the Events Research Programme to explore when and how large events can return with reduced social distancing requirements.

Females: Peace Negotiations

Asked by **Baroness Hodgson of Abinger**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make a statement at the G7 summit on (1) the safety of women engaged in peace processes, and (2) the provision by G7 countries of funding (a) bodyguards, and (b) other security measures for women involved in global peace processes. [HL14751]

Asked by **Baroness Hodgson of Abinger**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to highlight the importance of ensuring women's participation in peace negotiations, in particular in Afghanistan, at the G7 summit on 11 to 13 June. [HL14871]

Lord True: Gender equality is at the heart of our Presidency of the G7 this year, centred around the themes of ending violence against women, women's economic empowerment, and education for women and girls. To support this the Prime Minister has reconvened the Gender Equality Advisory Council.

The UK has championed women's meaningful participation in peace processes, including in Afghanistan, South Sudan and Yemen and supported grassroots women building peace and countering violent extremism. The UK remains committed to supporting Afghanistan on its path to a more peaceful and positive future. Only a negotiated and inclusive settlement will safeguard the rights and freedoms that Afghans want and deserve. We will continue to make clear to all sides that any Afghan-led political settlement must preserve progress, including protection for women and minorities.

The Government's Covid-19 Secure guidance for the visitor economy will be kept up to date over the coming months, in line with the reopening process for the sector.

The Global Travel Taskforce reported on 9th April with recommendations aimed at facilitating a return to international travel as soon as possible, while still

managing the risk from imported cases and variants of concern. We will confirm by early May if non-essential international travel can resume on 17 May.

Females: Politics and Government

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to raise awareness at the G7 summit of (1) the impact of the underrepresentation of women in politics on girls' education, and (2) the impact of the underrepresentation of women in peace processes and peace building on girls' education, in conflict zones. [HL14752]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Women's participation in public and political life yields benefits across society. The UK is committed to promoting women's full, equal, and meaningful participation and leadership in all decision-making structures, including peace and security. We will make gender equality a cross-cutting theme for our G7 Presidency. We are also using the G7 to promote our two ambitious global targets to get 40 million more girls in school, and 20 million more girls reading by age 10, over the next 5 years.

When women meaningfully participate in peace processes, the resulting agreement is almost two thirds less likely to fail. The UK is a world leader in Women, Peace and Security, supporting enhanced global stability and breaking down the barriers to education faced by children living in conflict.

Financial Services: Directors

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the statutory (1) role, and (2) responsibilities, of authorised corporate directors following the performance of Link Financial Solutions in the collapse of Woodford Investments. [HL14793]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government is committed to ensuring that the UK has a robust framework for financial regulation and that consumers are treated fairly. The FCA is responsible for overseeing the conduct standards of financial services firms. The Government does not currently have plans to review the statutory role of authorised corporate directors (ACDs). However, the FCA is currently reviewing how effectively responsibilities are undertaken by 'host' ACDs – which are ACDs outside the group structure of the delegate investment manager. The FCA expects to complete this work in the first half of this year.

Fire Safety Bill

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to Written Answer by Lord Greenhalgh on 24 March (HL14079), prior to the Fire Safety Bill being introduced to

Parliament, what changes were made to the draft text of the Bill to satisfy representations made by (1) Her Majesty The Queen, (2) His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, or (3) their representatives; and what plans they have to publish their correspondence with (a) Her Majesty The Queen, (b) His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, or (c) their representatives, related to draft text of the Fire Safety Bill. [HL14694]

Lord Greenhalgh: There were no changes made or requested to the text of the Fire Safety Bill by any member of the Royal Household, therefore, the government has no plans to publish any correspondence.

Flexible Working

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to support businesses to incorporate hybrid working arrangements on a long-term basis. [HL14847]

Lord Callanan: The Government has committed to consult on making flexible working the default unless employers have good reasons not to. The consultation will consider flexible working in all its forms – it is not just about where people work, but also about when they work and the associated number of hours. The consultation will be launched in due course.

In March 2018, the Flexible Working Taskforce – a partnership across business groups, trade unions, charities, and government departments – was set up and ran for a period of 18 months to advise the Government on policies and proposals around flexible working.

Earlier this year, my Hon. Friend the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets wrote to the co-chair of the Taskforce, Peter Cheese, Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), to commission a further 18 months' work from the Taskforce to help inform the Government's thinking as we develop the detail of new policies and navigate the impact of Covid-19 on future ways of working.

The Taskforce has been asked to produce advice for employers on "hybrid" and other ways of working within the next six months, which will aim to support businesses in addressing the challenges, issues, and opportunities associated with these new ways of working.

Food Banks

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to improve the relationship between grocery stores and food banks, specifically to encourage the use in food banks of food that would otherwise become waste. [HL14825]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Foodbanks are independent, charitable organisations and the UK Government does not have any role in their operation. However, since 2018 over £11 million has been awarded

to the surplus food redistribution sector to help them acquire more surplus food from the supply chain to those in need.

Hundreds of projects both large and small have been supported across the country in providing infrastructure such as vehicles, freezers and fridges. In addition, through the Waste and Resources Action Programme we continue to work closely with the redistribution sector and across the food chain to tackle any barriers to increasing redistribution including through the provision of tools and guidance.

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to introduce a shelf-labelling scheme to inform customers of the food items that are most needed in food banks. [HL14826]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Food banks are independent, charitable organisations and the UK Government does not have any role in their operation. Decisions about shelf-labelling are therefore a matter for food bank providers.

Further Education: Admissions

Asked by Baroness Garden of Frogmal

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications were made to colleges for enrolment on courses for the forthcoming academic year by the end of January (1) 2019, (2) 2020, and (3) 2021. [HL14734]

Baroness Berridge: We do not hold college application data on enrolments. We publish actual enrolments as collected on the Individualised Learner Record in the further education and skills statistics publication, available here: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/further-education-and-skills>.

Global Partnership for Education: Finance

Asked by Baroness Sugg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to pledge funds to the Global Partnership for Education before the forthcoming G7 summit; what plans they have to make representations to foreign governments to pledge funds to the Global Partnership for Education; and what plans they have to meet (1) the Send my Friend to School coalition, or (2) other civil society organisations, to discuss the pledging of funds to the Global Partnership for Education. [HL14840]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has placed girls' education, and broader gender equality at the heart of our G7 Presidency. We have set out two ambitious global objectives to get 40 million more girls into school, and 20 million more girls reading by age 10 in the next 5 years. We are using our G7 Presidency to rally others in getting behind these objectives, and stand up for every girl's right to 12 years of quality education.

A well-funded GPE will be central to delivering these global objectives, especially in securing education financing from developing countries' domestic budgets. We are looking forward to hosting the Global Education Summit to refinance GPE with the Government of Kenya in July. Outreach to foreign governments about pledges to GPE is in hand, and we are in regular dialogue with civil society organisations, including the Send My Friend to School coalition. Details of the UK's next contribution to GPE will be announced in due course.

Government Departments: Construction

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance they provide to (1) departments, and (2) their respective arms-length bodies, regarding the use of cash retentions in (a) construction, and (b) maintenance projects. [HL14669]

Lord Callanan: Guidance is not provided to departments and arms-length bodies, regarding the use of cash retentions in construction and maintenance projects.

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) construction, and (2) maintenance, contracts issued by departments since 1 January 2018 have used cash retentions; what was the total value of these retentions; how many of these retention monies have been released; and how long on average it took to release these monies. [HL14670]

Lord Callanan: Information is not collected on the use of cash retentions in construction and maintenance contracts for Central Government.

Government Departments: Flags

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the publication of guidance that requires the Union flag to be flown all year round on UK Government buildings, what plans they have to require UK Government buildings in Wales to also fly the flag of Wales. [HL14823]

Baroness Barran: Currently, Union flags are only required to be flown on all UK Government buildings on designated days. The new guidance asks for the flag to be flown all year round, unless another flag is being flown – such as another national flag of the UK, or a county flag, or other flags to mark civic pride.

The UK Government would very much encourage flying the Flag of Wales alongside the Union Flag, where there are two flagpoles.

In England, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will be amending planning rules to allow for two flags to be flown from one flagpole.

We would very much encourage the Welsh Government to make a similar liberalisation to planning rules in Wales, to help champion the shared identities that unite our country.

Greensill

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will reopen the British Business Bank's investigation of loans made by Greensill Capital, including disclosure around the (1) issuing, (2) funding, and (3) distribution, of such loans; and whether any of the findings of the original investigation were known before Greensill Capital was granted accredited lender status. [HL14796]

Lord Callanan: The investigation into Greensill Capital's compliance with the terms of the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme is currently ongoing.

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the British Business Bank had any communication with the Rt Hon David Cameron on the decision to accredit Greensill Capital as a Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme lender; what form any communication took; whether Mr Cameron was mentioned in Greensill Capital's (1) formal application, or (2) oral discussion, around their application; and whether the British Business Bank consulted (a) Her Majesty's Treasury, (b) the Financial Conduct Authority, or (c) the Prudential Regulation Authority, on the decision to grant lender status. [HL14797]

Lord Callanan: From our records, there is no indication that David Cameron approached the British Business Bank on behalf of Greensill Capital, and we are not aware of any such approach being made.

We cannot comment on the content of lenders' applications to the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme or Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme schemes as they are commercially sensitive.

None of HM Treasury, BEIS, the Financial Conduct Authority or the Prudential Regulation Authority had a role in the British Business Bank's decision to accredit Greensill Capital.

Hunterston Power Stations: Radioactive Waste

Asked by Baroness Clark of Kilwinning

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with the Scottish Government relating to radioactive waste held at the site of the Hunterston nuclear power station; and, in any such discussions, how they addressed existing radioactive waste policy. [HL14709]

Lord Callanan: Officials regularly engage with officials in the Scottish Government to discuss issues relating to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and to discuss the management of radioactive waste. BEIS officials also regularly engage with EDF and with Magnox Limited, who are respectively responsible for the Hunterston B and Hunterston A sites to discuss a range of matters, including any relevant issues relating to the management of radioactive waste. Policy on the management of radioactive waste is a devolved matter. While there are regular discussions between the Scottish Government and BEIS officials on radioactive waste management policy matters generally, there have been no recent specific discussions between the UK Government and the Scottish Government relating to radioactive waste held at the Hunterston site (A and B nuclear power stations).

Hunterston Power Stations: Safety

Asked by Baroness Clark of Kilwinning

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with EDF regarding safety issues at (1) Hunterston B, and (2) Hunterston A, nuclear power stations since 2015. [HL14710]

Lord Callanan: All generating nuclear power stations and nuclear decommissioning sites must comply with our stringent nuclear safety laws, overseen by a robust and independent regulator, the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR).

Hunterston B is a generating nuclear power station that is operated by EDF. BEIS officials meet regularly with EDF to discuss a range of matters relating to the generating fleet of power stations including relevant safety issues, performance of all stations including Hunterston B.

Hunterston A power station is being decommissioned. Magnox Limited, a subsidiary of Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the site. BEIS officials meet regularly with NDA and Magnox Ltd staff to understand relevant safety issues, progress and performance at all Magnox sites including Hunterston A.

Asked by Baroness Clark of Kilwinning

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held in relation to safety issues regarding civil vessels operating in close vicinity to (1) the Hunterston nuclear power station, and (2) nuclear power stations in general. [HL14712]

Lord Callanan: No discussions have been held specifically in relation to safety issues posed by civil vessels operating in close vicinity to any nuclear site.

Nuclear sites must comply with the UK's stringent nuclear safety regulations, overseen by a robust and independent regulator, the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR).

The primary responsibility for nuclear safety, and the assessment of potential risks to a nuclear licensed site from all hazards, rests with the licence holder – in this case Magnox for Hunterston A and EDF Energy for Hunterston B. Under the licence conditions, licensees are required to consider the effect of a wide range of potentially hazardous events (man-made and environmental) and demonstrate that any associated risks to the nuclear facility are manageable and will not result in catastrophic consequences within the nuclear facility's risk assessment (known as the 'safety case').

The ONR would not permit any site to operate if it judged that its safety case was not sufficiently robust and demonstrated that it could operate and shutdown safely under hazardous conditions.

Immigration Controls

Asked by Baroness Neville-Rolfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the statement by the Home Secretary on 24 March (HC Deb, cols 921–36), what are the (1) family reunion rights, (2) associated timescales, for asylum seekers who are granted asylum, and (3) the family reunion rights for illegal arrivals from a safe country. [HL14931]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The current family reunion policy allows a partner and children under 18 of those granted protection in the UK to join them here, if they formed part of the family unit before the sponsor fled their country. Over 29,000 visas have been issued under this route in the last 5 years.

Currently, a person is eligible to sponsor a family reunion application as soon as they have been granted refugee status or humanitarian protection. There is no limit or timescale when they stop becoming eligible, other than if they become naturalised and obtain British citizenship. Once someone overseas applies for a family reunion visa, our customer service standard is 60 UK working days for straightforward cases.

As set out in the New Plan for Immigration policy statement published on 24 March, we are committed to review the refugee family reunion routes available to refugees who have arrived through safe and legal routes. Subject to considering consultation responses, those who are granted the new temporary protection status are proposed to have limited family reunion rights.

We have initiated a comprehensive consultation and engagement process which is open now until 6 May. We will use this opportunity to listen to a wide range of views from stakeholders across the sector, as well as members of the public. All policy development will be undertaken in line with the law, including our equalities duties and international obligations.

Immigration: EU Nationals

Asked by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications to the EU Settlement Scheme from people both over the age of 65 and living in Scotland have been successful. [HL14731]

Asked by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many non-Irish EU citizens over the age of 65 living in Scotland they estimate have not applied for the EU Settlement Scheme. [HL14732]

Asked by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government what reasons have been identified for unsuccessful applications for the EU Settlement Scheme from people over 65 living in Scotland; under what circumstances late applications will be permitted; what exceptional circumstances will be permitted; and how mitigation for (1) illness, and (2) disability, will be taken into account. [HL14733]

Lord Greenhalgh: The latest published information to the end of December 2020 shows 3,670 people over the age of 65, resident in Scotland, were granted settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) and a further 1,080 were granted pre-settled status, representing 98.5% of applications concluded for over 65s resident in Scotland. 20 applications were refused on eligibility or suitability grounds, 40 were withdrawn or void and less than 10 were invalid.

The latest figures can be found in table EUSS_04 on the Home Office's 'EU Settlement Scheme statistics' web page available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/eu-settlement-scheme-quarterly-statistics-december-2020>.

The published figures for the EUSS refer specifically to applications made to the scheme and cannot be directly compared with Office for National Statistics estimates of the resident population of EU/EEA nationals in the UK. The published EUSS figures include non-EEA national family members, Irish nationals and eligible EEA citizens not resident in the UK, none of whom are usually included in ONS estimates of the resident EU/EEA national population.

Furthermore, the population estimates do not take account of people's migration intentions and will include people who have come to the UK for a range of purposes, including some who have no intention to settle in the UK.

On 1 April 2021, the Home Office published non-exhaustive guidance on what constitutes reasonable grounds for missing the 30 June 2021 deadline for applications to the EUSS by those EU, EEA and Swiss citizens, and their family members, resident in the UK by

the end of the transition period. This will underpin a flexible and pragmatic approach to considering late applications under the scheme, including in light of illness and disability issues.

The guidance can be found in ‘Making an application: deadline’ in ‘EU Settlement Scheme: EU, other EEA and Swiss citizens and their family members’ at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-caseworker-guidance>.

Asked by Lord Green of Deddington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of applications made under the EU Settlement Scheme; and of why this number is now nearly one million more than the upper estimate included in the report Impact Assessment for EU Settlement Scheme – Updated analysis, published in March 2019. [HL14735]

Lord Greenhalgh: The latest published information on EU Settlement Scheme applications and outcomes can be found in the Home Office’s ‘EU Settlement Scheme statistics’ monthly publication, which is available at:

[EU Settlement Scheme statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk).

The Impact Assessment for the EU Settlement Scheme (March 2019) is available at:

[The Immigration and Nationality \(Fees\) \(Refund, Waiver and Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk).

This discussed the assumptions, risks, uncertainties and exclusions surrounding its estimate of eligible citizens and made clear it should be considered as indicative and not as minimum and maximum estimates.

Immigration: Fees and Charges

Asked by Lord Wallace of Saltaire

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they calculate the fees for (1) British citizenship, and (2) long-term residence in the UK, applications; and whether those fees are used (a) only to cover the direct expenses incurred from such applications, and (b) to defray the overall Home Office budget. [HL14855]

Lord Greenhalgh: All immigration and nationality fees are set taking account of the criteria set out at Section 68(9) of the Immigration Act 2014:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/22/section/68>.

These criteria include the cost of processing the application; the benefits and entitlements provided by a successful application; and, the wider cost of running the Border, Immigration and Citizenship (BIC) System.

Fees from immigration products and services contribute to funding a sustainable BIC System and ultimately reduce the reliance on tax-payer funding. The Home Office keeps fees for immigration and nationality

applications under review and ensures they are within the parameters agreed with Parliament.

Immigration: Hong Kong

Asked by Lord Green of Deddington

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) people, and (2) children, are included in the 27,000 British Nationals (Overseas) applications referred to in their press release of 8 April, National welcome for Hong Kong arrivals. [HL14736]

Lord Greenhalgh: The new Hong Kong BN(O) route was launched on 31 January 2021, with the new digital application launching on 23 February.

As of 19 March 2021, approximately 27,000 BN(O) status holders and their family members have applied for the route.

Further breakdown of the application numbers and updated figures will be published as part of the the ‘Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release’, the next update is due for publication on 27 May 2021 and will be found at:

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

Infrastructure: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Dodds of Duncairn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the National Infrastructure Commission about infrastructure development in Northern Ireland. [HL14868]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Prime Minister announced the Union Connectivity Review on 3 October 2020. The review, which is chaired by Sir Peter Hendy CBE, aims to support the Government's work to build a stronger, fairer economy for the future by establishing how the quality and availability of transport infrastructures can support economic growth and quality of life across the whole of the UK. The review is considering transport connectivity between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland via road, rail and air, and across the Irish Sea.

Sir Peter Hendy is being supported by an advisory panel of experts, which includes a Commissioner for the National Infrastructure Commission. The terms of reference for the review also ask Sir Peter to consult widely with relevant government agencies, including the National Infrastructure Commission, alongside the devolved administrations, local authorities and their infrastructure commissions.

The Union Connectivity Review interim report was published on 10 March 2021 and the final report will be published in the summer. The Government will carefully consider the report and recommendations.

Internet: Offences against Children

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to protecting children from sexual abuse online, for example through joining up the upcoming online harms legislation with the new strategy on violence against women and girls. [HL14817]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Violence against women and girls can have lifelong physical and mental impacts on victims, as well as causing knock-on negative effects for their families, friends and for society as a whole. The risks which existed ten years ago are still there, but the pace of societal and technological change means that new and evolving forms of abuse are continuously emerging.

We will be publishing a new Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy this year which will help to better target perpetrators and support victims of these crimes, and increase our ability to tackle emerging forms of VAWG such as 'upskirting' and revenge porn.

We are working closely both across government departments and within the Home Office to ensure the strategy is joined up with the upcoming online harms legislation in which the strongest protections from harmful or inappropriate content are for children and young people.

All companies in scope will be required to fulfil the duty of care by ensuring that they take reasonably practicable steps to tackle relevant illegal content, such as online child sexual exploitation and abuse, and protect children where they are likely to access their services. For content which is legal but harmful, the online safety legislation will close the gap between what companies say they do, and what they actually do by ensuring companies enforce their terms of service.

Internet: Safety

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that children and their parents or carers have effective education about internet safety, specifically online abuse and sexual exploitation, and about what healthy relationships look like in the digital world. [HL14818]

Baroness Berridge: The Department is committed to supporting schools to deliver high quality teaching of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) which includes teaching about online safety and is compulsory in all state-funded schools in England.

Health Education includes specific content about online safety and harms and includes being taught what positive, healthy and respectful online relationships look like, the effect of online actions on others and knowing how to recognise and display respectful behaviour in an age

appropriate way. As with all curriculum teaching, schools have the flexibility to tailor their teaching to specific cohorts and to the needs of their pupils.

The RSHE statutory guidance sets out that at primary school, pupils will be taught about online relationships and being safe in an online context. At secondary school, pupils will be taught about online and media and internet safety and harms. A full breakdown of content can be found in the RSHE statutory guidance and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationship-s-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>.

To further support this, the department published Teaching Online Safety in School which highlights potentials harms and risks and suggests how they might be addressed through the curriculum. The risks include how content can be used and shared, grooming, pornography and live streaming: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools>.

Guides for parents and carers of primary and secondary age pupils that schools and parents can use to help them with teaching about RSHE can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools.

The new RSHE subjects complement the embedded computing curriculum, which covers the principles of online safety at all key stages, including teaching on how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private, and where to go for help and support when they have concerns about content or contact on the internet or other online technologies.

Iran: Nuclear Power

Asked by *Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the International Atomic Energy Agency, published on 31 March, which stated that Iran "was using 5,060 IR-1 centrifuges installed in 30 cascades, 696 IR-2m centrifuges installed in four cascades and 174 IR-4 centrifuges installed in one cascade to enrich natural UF₆ up to 5 per cent U-235 at FEP"; and what representations they have made to the government of Iran about those reported breaches of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. [HL14714]

Asked by *Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reported decision of government of Iran to block daily access of UN inspectors to its nuclear facilities; and what representations they have made to the government of Iran. [HL14715]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains committed to preserving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of

Action (JCPoA). We are concerned by Iran's continued and systematic non-compliance with its nuclear commitments under the JCPoA. The UK has repeatedly made clear in public and in private, both bilaterally and with the governments of France and Germany (as E3), that Iran must return to full compliance with its commitments. In his call with President Rouhani on 10 March, the Prime Minister stressed that while the UK remains committed to making the JCPoA a success, Iran must stop all nuclear activity that breaches the terms of the deal and come back into compliance. The E3 has made frequent official level representations to the Iranians on this issue both in Tehran and Vienna. Iran's announcement on 16 April that they have started uranium enrichment up to 60% using advanced centrifuges is a serious and deeply worrying development. As the E3 said in a statement on 14 April, the production of highly enriched uranium constitutes an important step in the production of a nuclear weapon. Iran has no credible civilian need for enrichment at this level.

We fully support the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its safeguards mandate, which is an essential part of the global non-proliferation system. The UK, unilaterally and as E3, has urged Iran to fully co-operate with the IAEA, including on all issues related to the IAEA's separate safeguards investigation. We remain concerned by Iran's decision to restrict access and oversight by the IAEA of its nuclear programme from 23 February.

Iran's continued systematic non-compliance with its JCPoA commitments is undermining the non-proliferation benefits of the deal and jeopardising our efforts to preserve it. We continue to work with the parties to the JCPoA and the US Administration to find a diplomatic way forward that realises the benefits of the deal, and call upon Iran not to take any further steps which violate its JCPoA commitments and make a return to mutual compliance harder to achieve.

Israel: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment have they made of the decision by Pearson Education to pause the distribution of two textbooks by author Hilary Bash following allegations by academics that its text regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had been altered. [HL14829]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The content and quality assurance of textbooks is a matter for individual publishers. Her Majesty's Government is aware that concerns have been raised and understand that Pearson will take action where necessary.

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of

Israel regarding the summons by Israeli forces of a 14-year-old Palestinian boy for interrogation. [HL14831]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation, including the treatment of Palestinian children. We remain concerned about Israel's extensive use of administrative detention which, according to international law, should be used only when security makes this absolutely necessary rather than as routine practice and as a preventive rather than a punitive measure. We remain committed to working with Israel to secure improvements to the practices surrounding children in detention and regularly raise this with the Israeli Ministry of Justice.

Israeli Settlements: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect Palestinians living in the West Bank from violence from Israeli settlers. [HL14830]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We welcome the Government of Israel's decision to establish a special governmental unit and implement legislative changes to tackle settler violence. Nonetheless, we continue to urge the Israeli authorities to thoroughly investigate every instance and to bring those responsible to justice and end the culture of impunity. Our long-standing objective is a negotiated two-state solution which will allow Palestinians and Israelis to live in peace, lessening the likelihood of politically driven violence and incitement to violence.

Legislative Drafting

Asked by Baroness Noakes

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to undertake the review exploring approaches to drafting legislation on subjects that prompt questions around language announced by Lord True on 25 February (HL Deb, col 960); and when they plan to inform Parliament of the outcome of that review. [HL14799]

Lord True: The Government is committed to ensuring the law is respectful and representative of all people while ensuring it can be clearly interpreted. The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel has already begun work reviewing current and historic practice in legislative drafting to inform the consideration of future drafting options. I will write to update the Noble Lady before the House rises for the summer.

Levelling Up Fund: Northern Ireland

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on regional inequality of

the funding for Northern Ireland provided through the Levelling Up Fund. [HL14888]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The UK Government is committed to levelling up across all parts of the United Kingdom to ensure that no community is left behind, particularly as we recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund will invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, including regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in cultural and heritage assets.

We are taking a different approach to delivering the Fund in Northern Ireland, which takes account of the different local government landscape compared to England, Scotland and Wales. By treating Northern Ireland as one geographical area, we will ensure all communities have equal access to apply for the Fund.

For the first round of funding, at least 3% of total UK allocations will be set aside for Northern Ireland.

The deadline to submit bids for the first round of the fund is noon on Friday 18 June 2021.

Literacy: Secondary Education

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that secondary schools are equipped to help new pupils with basic literacy. [HL14846]

Baroness Berridge: The government is committed to continuing to raise literacy standards, particularly those of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. English is fundamental to education and provides the knowledge and skills pupils need to communicate with others, both in school and in the wider world. English provides opportunities for pupils to develop these key communication skills through work on spoken language, reading and writing.

English is a core subject of the National Curriculum and is a requirement from age 5 to 16. The National Curriculum was revised, and programmes of study came into effect from September 2014. The programmes of study are designed to ensure that all pupils acquire a wide vocabulary, a good understanding of grammar, and proper knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading and writing. Further information on the National Curriculum can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>.

The English Language GCSE provides all students with robust foundations in reading and good written English, and with the language and literary skills which are required for further study and work. The English Literature GCSE rewards students for engaging with a wider range of literature at a deeper level.

To further support English attainment at the end of secondary school, all students aged 16-19 on study

programmes of 150 hours or more who do not hold a GCSE grade 4 or above in English are required to continue to study, this is called the Condition of Funding and further information on this can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-funding-maths-and-english-condition-of-funding#:~:text=The%20qualifications%20that%20meet%20the,and%20'stepping%20stone'%20qualifications.&text=From%20academic%20year%202019%20to,GCSE%20grade%209%20to%204>. Students with a prior attainment of grade 2 or below can study a level 2 Functional Skills or a GCSE. Those with a grade 3 must study GCSEs only. Achievement in level 2 English is also an exit requirement in T Levels and apprenticeships.

To support the work of schools in delivering remote education, Oak National Academy was very quickly brought together by over 40 teachers, their schools and other education organisations. The Department has made £4.84 million available for Oak National Academy both for the summer term of the academic year 2019/20, and then for the 2020/21 academic year, to provide video lessons in a broad range of subjects, including English for 5- to 16-year-olds. Further details on Oak National Academy can be found here:

<https://www.thenational.academy/>.

Furthermore, the £1 billion catch-up funding announced in June 2020 included a new £350 million National Tutoring Programme (NTP) which provides additional, targeted support for those children and young people who have been hardest hit from disruption to their education as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. The NTP is an ambitious scheme that will increase access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged children and young people. NTP provision will continue for another academic year (2021/22) and we expect the programme to continue supporting those pupils that need the most help to catch up. Further details on the NTP can be found here:

<https://nationaltutoring.org.uk/>.

In addition, as part of a wider recovery package to support children and young people of all ages in catching up on missed learning and development due to the COVID-19 outbreak, £200 million will be made available to secondary schools to deliver face-to-face summer schools this year. Schools are free to identify the pupils most in need of a summer school, although we recommend a focus on incoming Year 7 pupils. Pupils leaving primary school this year may have missed a significant proportion of Key Stage 2 face-to-face teaching and therefore missed valuable preparation for secondary education. They are likely to need additional support with English, for example, to make it easier for them to access the secondary curriculum. A summer school gives an opportunity to offer that face-to-face support before they start a new school, but also offers an important opportunity to support pupils' wellbeing. Further details on summer schools can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/kick-start-for-summer-school-and-activities>.

Livestock: Dogs

Asked by *Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for requiring dogs to be on leads when near livestock on working farms. [HL14804]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: My department takes the issue of livestock worrying very seriously, recognising the distress this can cause farmers and animals, as well as the financial implications.

All reported crimes should be taken seriously, investigated and, where appropriate, taken through the courts and met with tough sentences. The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953 (the 1953 Act) provides a specific offence of allowing a dog to worry livestock on any agricultural land with a maximum fine of £1,000.

For the purposes of the 1953 Act, a dog can be said to be worrying livestock if it attacks or chases livestock, or if it is at large (that is to say not on a lead or otherwise under close control) in a field or enclosure in which there are sheep. In this Act, the definition of "livestock" covers sheep, goats, swine, horses, asses, mules, poultry (including domestic fowls, turkeys, geese or ducks), and cattle (including bulls, cows, oxen, heifers or calves).

In addition to the 1953 Act, the police can and do take action under the Dogs Act 1871 where there are dogs that are out of control and dangerous to other animals. Section 2 of the 1871 Act allows a complaint to be made to a Magistrate's court by any individual, the police or local authorities, where a dog is "dangerous and not kept under proper control". The court may make any Order it considers appropriate to require the owner to keep the dog under proper control, or if necessary, that it be destroyed. The court may specify measures to be taken for keeping the dog under proper control, such as muzzling and remaining on a lead when in public.

Guidance is available to educate owners about handling their dogs responsibly in the vicinity of livestock, in order to prevent the occurrence of attacks or chasing.

The statutory Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs clearly sets out that all dogs need to be trained to behave well, ideally from a very young age and should be introduced gradually and positively to different environments, people and animals. The Code asks owners to ensure that they prevent their dogs from chasing or attacking any other animals, including livestock and horses; for example, through use of a lead or avoidance of such situations.

Natural England has recently published a refreshed version of the Countryside Code: advice for countryside visitors, which is available online at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code/the-countryside-code-advice-for-countryside-visitors. A copy is also attached to this answer. Both the short and long versions of the Countryside Code make specific reference to keeping dogs under control and in sight to make sure they stay away from wildlife,

livestock, horses and other people unless invited. The Code helpfully sets out certain legal requirements, encouraging visitors to always check local signs as there are situations when you must keep your dog on a lead for all or part of the year. An associated campaign will run throughout 2021, which will include a broader conversation with stakeholders about what a 'post Covid' Code for the 21st century would look like and how to promote more awareness and positive behaviour.

In light of the relevant legislation and statutory guidance available, the Government does not consider it necessary to introduce any additional requirement for dogs to be on a lead when near livestock.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

The Countryside Code [The Countryside Code_ advice for countryside visitors - GOV.UK.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-04-12/HL14804>

Local Government: Audit

Asked by *Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Liverpool City Council: Best Value inspection report, published on 24 March, what plans they have to strengthen the audit arrangements in place for local authorities. [HL14944]

Lord Greenhalgh: Government is committed to strengthening the local audit system so that taxpayers and service users are better able to hold councils to account. Our response to the Redmond review, published on 17 December, set out how the Department, in partnership with key organisations, will act to strengthen and support the local audit market.

Action we are taking includes, subject to consultation, enabling audit firms, councils and Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) to agree fees that more closely match the actual costs of audit, and working with key stakeholders to review the entry requirements for Key Audit Partners and how best to improve auditor training, to strike an appropriate balance between ensuring audit quality and market sustainability.

We have also temporarily extended the deadline for the publication of auditor opinions on local authorities' accounts, and are providing £15 million to support affected local authorities to both meet the growing cost pressures in the audit market and deliver Sir Tony's recommendations, to be distributed later in the spring.

Local Government: Construction

Asked by *Lord Aberdare*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance they give to local authorities regarding the use of cash retentions in (1) construction, and (2) maintenance, projects. [HL14671]

Lord Callanan: Guidance is not provided to local authorities regarding the use of cash retentions in construction and maintenance. Local authorities are independent of government, and it is for them to decide whether or not to hold cash retentions in relation to the projects they fund.

Asked by Lord Aberdare

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the use of cash retentions by local authorities in (1) construction, and (2) maintenance, contracts; and what data they hold on the use of such retentions since 1 January 2018. [HL14672]

Lord Callanan: No assessment has been made of the use of cash retentions by local authorities in construction and maintenance contracts, and the Department does not hold this data.

Local Government: Cybercrime

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much has so far been spent of the £16 million to support the modernisation of local authorities' cyber security systems, as announced in the Spending Review 2020 on 15 December 2020. [HL15022]

Lord Greenhalgh: The £16 million to support the modernisation of local authorities' cyber security systems, as announced in the Spending Review 2020, has been made available for spend in this financial year commencing April 2021. Our work in this financial year has only just begun, and therefore there has not been significant expenditure to date.

Manure

Asked by Baroness Pinnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of restricting the spreading of slurry on fields that are adjacent to residential property. [HL14811]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Within England there are rules in place to ensure that slurry is applied responsibly with regard to the environment to minimise the risk of it affecting nearby ecosystems and other sites via runoff. These include:

- The Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations (2015), which control the application of nutrient rich material to land within designated areas vulnerable to the impact of excess nutrients. Further guidance can be found here on [Gov.uk](#).
- The Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) (England) Regulations (2010); also known as SSAFO which set minimum standards for storage of organic manures to protect the environment. Further guidance can be found here on [Gov.uk](#).

- The Farming Rules for Water (2018) which outlines a national baseline for how to use fertilisers effectively for crop need and avoid spreading in inappropriate places or conditions. Further guidance can be found here on [Gov.uk](#).

These regulations do include rules about where fertilisers, including slurry can be spread, however, there are no specific requirements on farmers not to spread next to houses, nor are there any plans to introduce this type of restriction.

Any proposal to include such a requirement would need to consider the effects on farmers, given that agricultural fields are business premises that farmers have to be able to grow crops on. Many farms rely on slurry application to fertilise their soil.

If there are any complaints about specific farms the local council should be informed. Local councils are responsible for investigating complaints about issues that could be a statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This includes any smell or other effluvia arising on industrial, trade or business premises and being prejudicial to health or a nuisance.

Local authority environmental health officers take into account a number of factors when assessing whether a statutory nuisance exists, including the reasonableness of the activity being carried out, the time of day of the occurrence, its duration, its frequency of occurrence and whether or not best practicable means were being employed. These principles are based on long established case law.

Meat: Labelling

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to (1) ban the "fake farm" labelling of meat, (2) bring forward legislation for consumers to be informed about the age and breed of animal meat, and (3) prevent the use of terms to market such meat as "natural", or (b) "traditional". [HL14690]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: It is already against the law for the label to mislead consumers and this overriding principle, set out clearly in food information legislation, applies to each of the noble Baroness's questions. Each label must be taken on its merits, including whether the origin declared for the food meets origin labelling rules, and if a label is found to be misleading then local enforcement authorities can issue improvement notices to the Food Business Operator to correct the misleading information.

It is completely unrealistic to require mandatory labelling as to the breed and age of an animal on meat, however if such information is provided on a voluntary basis for marketing reasons, as with any other information provided with food, it must not be misleading to consumers. There is already an age-based distinction between lamb and mutton, beef and veal and chicken and boiling fowl.

The use of the terms ‘natural’ and ‘traditional’ are not regulated but, again, when used, should not mislead consumers.

Members: Correspondence

Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will answer the letter that he wrote to the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs concerning vaccines and the Commonwealth, dated 3 March. [HL14725]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Regrettably we have no record of having received this correspondence.

FCDO officials have reached out via the House of Lords custodians for a copy of this correspondence. On receipt, we will expedite an urgent response to your letter.

Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will answer the letters that he wrote to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, dated 8 and 16 March. [HL14726]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: A reply was sent to the Noble Lord on 13 April 2021.

Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will answer the letter that he wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer concerning COVID-19 bonds on 8 March. [HL14727]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: HM Treasury responded to the Member on 29 March 2021 and a further copy has been sent by email.

Metropolitan Police: Religious Buildings

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether specific training is given to Metropolitan Police Officers on procedures to be followed (1) before, and (2) upon entering, public places of worship. [HL14805]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Metropolitan Police Service is responsible for the training of individual officers. The Home Office does not hold this information.

Migrants: Convictions

Asked by Lord Woolley of Woodford

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many highly skilled Tier 1 (general) migrants who have been refused indefinite leave to remain have been convicted of a criminal offence in the UK. [HL14859]

Lord Greenhalgh: Home Office Migration Statistics do not capture the number of highly skilled Tier 1 (general) migrants who have been refused indefinite leave

to remain and have been convicted of a criminal offence in the UK.

The Home Office does publish data on how many Tier 1 applications have been refused or granted. These can be found in our published statistics under ‘Extensions’ at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/managed-migration-datasets>

Migrants: Taxation

Asked by Lord Woolley of Woodford

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether highly skilled Tier 1 (general) migrants were notified of the sharing of their tax return data between Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and the Home Office for visa decisions; and if so, how. [HL14858]

Lord Greenhalgh: The following information is provided to potential applicants, before they chose to ‘apply now’. This outlines information may be shared with other public organisations in the UK:

How we use your data

The Home Office will use the personal information you provide to decide whether to grant your application. We may also share your information with other public and private sector organisations in the UK and overseas. For more detail please see the [Privacy Notice for the Border, Immigration and Citizenship system](#). This also sets out your rights under the Data Protection Act 2018 and explains how you can access your personal information and complain if you have concerns about how we are using it.

In addition to this, where highly skilled Tier 1 (general) applications had been refused, individuals were notified their information had been shared via their refusal notice.

Those applications we are considering post Balajigari (and others) v the Secretary of State of April 2019, also have concerns put to them in a minded to refuse letter.

Mozambique: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Suri

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Mozambique about reports that children are being beheaded in the Cabo Delgado province. [HL14843]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is deeply concerned by the deteriorating security situation in northern Mozambique and the recent attacks by groups with links to Islamic extremism. As the Minister for Africa set out publicly on 17 March, we are particularly appalled by reports of beheadings of children in the Cabo Delgado province.

I also spoke to Foreign Minister Macamo on 11 March to underline the importance of respect for human rights by all sides to the conflict. I also reaffirmed that we would continue to work with Mozambique on their counterterrorism efforts. When the Minister for Africa

spoke to Foreign Minister Macamo on 4 February he also raised the need for Mozambique to follow through on investigations of human rights abuses by all sides involved in the conflict.

NHS: Prescription Drugs

Asked by *Lord Lucas*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to require NHS doctors, when prescribing a treatment off-label, to encourage patients to allow their data to be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment; what plans they have to provide mechanisms whereby (1) consent and refusal may be easily recorded, and (2) relevant data may be made available for academic evaluation; and what plans they have to review such evaluations in order to reduce the percentage of off-label prescribing. [HL14783]

Lord Bethell: The Government has no plans to do so. However, the Department with NHS England and NHS Improvement, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence, the National Institute of Health Research recently launched a repurposing medicines programme which aims to strengthen the evidence base, licensing, supply and cost effectiveness of medicines being used outside their original medical indication. The aim is to improve clinical outcomes and patient experience by taking action to enable more equitable access to those medicines prioritised for adoption into the programme.

NHS: Research

Asked by *Baroness Masham of Ilton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that greater numbers of clinical staff are able to undertake research within the NHS. [HL14786]

Lord Bethell: On 23 March 2021 the Government published *Saving and improving lives - the future of UK clinical research delivery*. This includes the aim to create a research positive culture in which all health and care staff feel empowered and supported to participate in clinical research as part of their job. To support this vision, we have identified five key themes which underpin the improvements as follows:

- Clinical research embedded in the National Health Service;
- Patient-centred research;
- Streamlined, efficient and innovative research;
- Research enabled by data and digital tools; and
- A sustainable and supported research workforce.

An implementation plan and strategy setting out how the Government will begin to deliver the vision will be published later this year. A copy of *Saving and improving lives - the future of UK clinical research delivery* is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

The future of UK clinical research delivery [Saving and improving lives - the future of UK clinical research delivery (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-04-12/HL14786>

NHS: Waiting Lists

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the NHS referral to treatment (RTT) waiting times data January 2021, published on 11 March, how many patients in England have been waiting more than one year for treatment; and how many of those have been waiting for (1) 52 to 56, (2) 57 to 60, (3) 61 to 64, (4) 65 to 68, (5) 69 to 72, (6) 73 to 76, (7) 77 to 80, (8) 81 to 84, (9) 85 to 88, (10) 89 to 92, (11) 93 to 96, (12) 97 to 100, (13) 101 to 104, and (14) 105 and more, weeks. [HL14408]

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the NHS referral to treatment (RTT) waiting times data January 2021, published on 11 March, how many patients in each sustainability and transformation partnership and integrated care system area have been waiting more than one year for treatment; and how many of those have been waiting for (1) 52 to 56, (2) 57 to 60, (3) 61 to 64, (4) 65 to 68, (5) 69 to 72, (6) 73 to 76, (7) 77 to 80, (8) 81 to 84, (9) 85 to 88, (10) 89 to 92, (11) 93 to 96, (12) 97 to 100, (13) 101 to 104, and (14) 105 and more, weeks. [HL14409]

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the NHS referral to treatment (RTT) waiting times data January 2021, published on 11 March, how many patients in each acute trust in England have been waiting more than one year for treatment; and how many of those have been waiting for (1) 52 to 56, (2) 57 to 60, (3) 61 to 64, (4) 65 to 68, (5) 69 to 72, (6) 73 to 76, (7) 77 to 80, (8) 81 to 84, (9) 85 to 88, (10) 89 to 92, (11) 93 to 96, (12) 97 to 100, (13) 101 to 104, and (14) 105 and more, weeks. [HL14410]

Lord Bethell: Official statistics on National Health Service referral to treatment (RTT) waiting times published by NHS England and NHS Improvement show there were 304,044 patients waiting one year or more for treatment in England in January 2021. Tables showing the number of patients in each sustainability and transformation partnership and acute trust who have waited in excess of 52 weeks is attached due to the size of the data. Information for integrated care system areas is not held in the format requested. The information relating to other time periods is not held in the format requested.

NHS England and NHS Improvement will be including this data as part of their official published RTT monthly

data collection for 2021-22. This will show the number of patients waiting for over a year into weekly time bands, from 52-53 weeks to more than 104 weeks. This information will become available from June 2021.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Number of patient waiting in excess of 52 weeks [HL14408 TABLE .xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-03-19/HL14408>

Northern Ireland Government

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made on the New Decade, New Approach commitments, announced in January 2020. [HL14889]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The New Decade, New Approach deal reached in January 2020 includes a balanced package of commitments to deliver more transparent and sustainable institutions in Northern Ireland. The UK Government has already delivered a number of our key commitments including:

- The release of £556 million of the £2 billion of funding agreed in the deal;
- The appointment of a Veteran's Commissioner in September 2020;
- The launch of the programme for the Centenary of Northern Ireland in 2021 and including 39 successful bids from the £1million Shared History Fund; and
- The establishment of the governance structures that underpin New Decade, New Approach, namely the Joint Board and the Implementation Review Meetings.

The UK Government works closely with Northern Ireland's political leaders to support them in making the devolved institutions work and where appropriate, in delivering their commitments within NDNA.

Offshore Industry: Tax Havens

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reports of the financial trading of oil and gas companies being routed through tax havens, what assessment they have made of the loss of tax revenue. [HL14691]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: HMRC estimate that the tax gap across Large Businesses – which is the difference between the amount of tax that should, in theory, be paid to HMRC, and what is actually paid by the UK's largest businesses across all sectors – has continued to fall over the last five years and was under 1% for 2018-19 (reported by the NAO in 'Tackling the Tax Gap' in July 2020).

The UK has led international efforts to tackle avoidance by all multinationals through the OECD Base Erosion and Profit Shifting ("BEPS") Project which looks at

aggressive tax planning strategies that exploit tax rules to artificially shift profits to low tax jurisdictions where there is little or no economic activity.

This international collaboration has led to the introduction of:

- Hybrid mismatch rules that prevent multinationals exploiting differences in the tax systems of different countries;
- a requirement for UK-headed large businesses to provide HMRC with a country-by-country report, detailing their global profits, tax and assets to ensure they are paying the correct tax on all their UK activity; and
- a Corporate Interest Restriction that protects against companies using intra-group loans to shift profits overseas.

The introduction of robust UK domestic rules has reinforced these multilateral efforts.

In April 2015, the UK government introduced the Diverted Profits Tax ('DPT'). DPT was designed to counter contrived arrangements used by multinational corporations to shift their profits offshore and avoid paying tax in the UK on their economic activities here. The UK secured £6 billion in the five years following its introduction.

In January 2019, HMRC launched a new Profit Diversion Compliance Facility ('PDCF') to encourage businesses to stop diverting profits and pay what is due. About two-thirds of the large businesses targeted so far have decided to use the facility to bring their tax affairs up to date quickly and efficiently, enabling HMRC to focus even more resources on investigating businesses which continue to divert profits.

Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Turkey about the reported arrest and mistreatment of Dr Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu. [HL14760]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of reports of the arrest of Mr Gergerlioğlu, MP for the People's Democratic Party (HDP). We have made it clear to Turkey that we expect the government to undertake any legal processes or actions against opposition parties, MPs, party officials and elected mayors, as well as human rights defenders and journalists, fairly, transparently and with full respect for the rule of law. Our Embassy meets regularly with the HDP leadership, as it does with other opposition parties, to discuss their concerns, including the arrest of HDP MPs. We will continue to engage closely with Turkey to encourage the full protection of fundamental rights of all peoples, regardless of their legitimate political affiliations, particularly in the areas of freedom of expression and assembly, press freedom and the treatment of detainees. We expect Turkey to treat

detainees in accordance with International standards, including access to lawyers and medical care.

OneWeb

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether OneWeb will use large or small launchers to create Low Earth Orbit satellite constellations. [HL14697]

Lord Callanan: OneWeb currently utilises heavy launch via their ArianeSpace contract executed through the Soyuz launcher. This is currently the most economical option for launching multiple Low Earth Orbit satellites at a single time.

The UK aims to develop domestic small satellite launch capabilities from Cornwall and Scotland by 2022, which OneWeb will be able to utilise as applicable to their business operations.

Overseas Aid: Research

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on 8 April (HL14532), what assessment they have made of the impact of cuts to Official Development Assistance (ODA) on contracts both in the UK and abroad entered into by universities as part of research projects funded via the Research Councils; and which authority will be legally responsible for any such contracts broken in the event that the reduction in ODA funding leads to research projects being terminated early or reduced in scope. [HL14814]

Lord Callanan: As outlined by my Rt. Hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in his previous answer, we are presented with a challenging financial situation due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which has resulted in a temporary reduction in the UK's aid spending target from 0.7% of GNI to 0.5%. This means making difficult decisions when it comes to prioritising how we spend aid money to deliver the most impactful outcomes.

BEIS delivers R&D ODA funding through a range of Executive Agencies, Research Councils, National Academies, Royal Societies and more. As a result, the Department has several distinct legal agreements with our ODA Delivery Partners; and each of these also has a range of legal relationships with their individual grant holders. We are working with each Delivery Partner to ensure that contractual terms, including relevant notice periods, are respected.

Palestinians: Arrests

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement by the Palestinian Returns Centre to the UNHRC on 9 March about

reports that Palestinians in East Jerusalem and the West Bank have been arrested by Israeli authorities under the pretext of illegal communication with foreign enemies when contacting friends and family abroad. [HL14762]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not made such an assessment. However we remain concerned about Israel's extensive use of administrative detention which, according to international law, should be used only when security makes this absolutely necessary rather than as routine practice and as a preventive rather than a punitive measure. We continue to call on the Israeli authorities to comply with their obligations under international law and either charge or release detainees.

Palestinians: Children

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect children in the Palestinian Occupied Territories following reports that a child lost an eye after being hit by a rubber tipped steel bullet fired by Israeli Defence Forces on 9 April. [HL14761]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Whilst we have not made representations on this particular case, in instances where there have been accusations of excessive use of force, we continue to seek information from the Israeli authorities. We call on the Israeli security forces to provide appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population and urge restraint in the use of live fire. We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation, including the treatment of Palestinian children.

Palestinians: Elections

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reported decision by the government of Israel not to grant visas to EU delegates to monitor the forthcoming Palestinian elections because of restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL14763]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Independent election monitoring is vital for free and fair elections. We understand Covid-19 has prevented largescale international observation missions like those seen in 2006. However, we are also clear that the presence of international observers remains important to ensure elections are credible. We expect international observers to be granted visas where appropriate.

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the Palestinian National Authority to ensure that Palestinian elections take place to the existing timetable. [HL14800]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have welcomed President Abbas' announcement of legislative and Presidential elections in the Occupied Palestinian Territories for the first time since 2006. We encourage the Palestinian leadership to work toward strong, inclusive, accountable and democratic institutions, based on respect for the rule of law and human rights. Free and fair elections are an important and necessary step to this.

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel to ensure that Palestinian voters in occupied East Jerusalem are able to take part in elections to the Palestinian National Authority. [HL14801]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Minister James Cleverly spoke to the Israeli Ambassador to the UK on 19 April to reiterate the importance of Palestinians living in East Jerusalem being permitted to vote in Palestinian Legislative Council elections. The UK continues to work closely with the Palestinian Authority and international partners to support Palestinian elections.

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what (1) technical, and (2) financial, support they are providing to the Palestinian Central Elections Commission to help ensure free and fair elections are able to take place in the Occupied Palestinian territories. [HL14802]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK does not financially support the Palestinian Central Elections Commission. However, UK officials at the British Consulate General in Jerusalem will continue to work closely with the parties involved, including the Central Elections Commission and the UN.

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel to ensure free access to Gaza for campaigning in Palestinian elections. [HL14803]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We continue to encourage all parties to respect and facilitate the democratic process fully, including during the campaigning period.

Parish Councils: Meetings

Asked by Baroness Pinnoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the size of the room that will be required to enable annual meetings of local and parish councils, where social distancing is fully observed. [HL14810]

Lord Greenhalgh: Any physical meetings will need to be held in line with the Government's Covid-19 Guidance for the safe use of council buildings and we have updated this guidance to highlight ways in which local authorities

can, if necessary, minimise the risk of face-to-face meetings. It is for councils to apply the Covid-19 guidance to ensure meetings take place safely.

This Guidance may be found (attached) at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-council-buildings>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Guidance for the safe use of council buildings [COVID-19_Guidance for the safe use of council buildings - GOV.UK - HL14810.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-04-12/HL14810>

Politics and Government: Northern Ireland

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the current political stability in Northern Ireland. [HL14886]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Covid pandemic has undeniably put new and difficult demands on the Northern Ireland Executive, as it has on political leaders everywhere. The UK Government commend those leaders working every day through very challenging circumstances, who continue to deliver for the people of Northern Ireland.

The UK Government works closely with Northern Ireland's political leaders to support them in making the devolved institutions work, and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has regularly been engaging with these political leaders over recent weeks during the period of unrest in Northern Ireland.

The UK Government encourage the Northern Ireland Executive to continue to demonstrate their collaborative leadership in supporting law and order and policing. It is also vital that further engagement with all sides of the community continues to help prevent further disorder. The only way to resolve differences is through dialogue.

Post Office: Prosecutions

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of who was originally responsible for the prosecution of Post Office subpostmasters. [HL14807]

Lord Callanan: The Government understands the serious impact that issues arising from faults with the Horizon IT system, and the Post Office's management of these issues, have had on affected postmasters' lives and livelihoods.

Justice Fraser has considered what happened over this period and has set out his findings in considerable detail. The findings outlined an extensive insight as to what went wrong at the Post Office, including an independent

judicial view of the facts that all sides have been looking for.

The Government has also launched the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry on 29 September 2020. The purpose of the Inquiry is to understand and acknowledge what went wrong in relation to Horizon, establish a clear account of the implementation and failings of Horizon over its lifecycle and identify what key lessons must be learned for the future. The Inquiry is chaired by Sir Wyn Williams FLSW. Sir Wyn Williams is independent of both the Post Office and the Government, so he can draw conclusions based on the evidence submitted and produce recommendations and actions that may, in his view, be appropriate as a result of his findings. It would not be appropriate to draw conclusions on responsibility before the work of the Inquiry is complete.

Prescriptions: Fees and Charges

Asked by Baroness Rawlings

To ask Her Majesty's Government in what circumstances patients are charged for the first two months of the prescription of new drugs; whether decisions on charging for new drugs are determined by (1) the NHS, or (2) the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence; whether the circumstances in which patients are charged for new drugs has changed in the last five years; and if so, (a) when, and (b) for what reasons. [HL15182]

Lord Bethell: Decisions on whether medicines are funded by the National Health Service are taken by clinical commissioning groups and there is a requirement to fund drugs recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

Where a drug is funded by the NHS there is no charge to the patient other than the prescription charge, from 1 April 2021 £9.35 per prescription item in England, that applies to medicines dispensed in the community. Around 89% of prescriptions are dispensed free of charge due to the extensive list of prescription charge exemptions. Since 1968, the only change to the list of medical exemption criteria was the introduction of the exemption for people undergoing cancer treatment in 2009, including the effects of cancer, or the effects of current or previous cancer treatment.

Radioactive Waste: Transport

Asked by Baroness Clark of Kilwinning

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with the Office for Nuclear Regulation regarding the transportation of spent fuel rods recently discovered at the Hunterston nuclear power plant to the Sellafield nuclear power plant; and whether the spent fuel rods will now be transported to the Sellafield nuclear power plant. [HL14708]

Lord Callanan: The discovery of spent fuel at Hunterston A forms part of the Office for Nuclear

Regulation (ONR) approved safety case and operating procedure for the retrieval activities associated with waste at the site. The discovered spent fuel remains in a safe and controlled environment at Hunterston A until a decision has been made, in conjunction with the ONR, about how they should be processed, packaged and stored prior to final disposal.

Remand in Custody

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people are in custody in England and Wales awaiting trial; and what is the average time taken from imprisonment to trial for those in custody. [HL14700]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The latest published data by the Ministry of Justice shows that on 31 December 2020 there were 8,222 prisoners in custody awaiting trial in England & Wales (Table 1.1, "Prison Population: 31 December 2020" <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-july-to-september-2020>).

Prison receptions data has enabled an approximation of the average time taken from imprisonment to trial for those in custody. Table 2 sets out (for those held on pre-trial remand) the average amount of time that prisoners were remanded in custody pre-trial up to the point that they were admitted to prison between conviction and sentencing in each of the last five years. In 2019 the average (mean) number of days that prisoners were remanded in custody pre-trial was 67. Published figures for the whole calendar year 2020 are not yet available.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table 2 [20210415 Copy of PQ HL14700_Table 2.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-04-12/HL14700>

Reoffenders

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Prison Reform Trust *No Life, No Freedom, No Future: The experiences of prisoners recalled under the sentence of Imprisonment*, published on 3 December 2020; and what plans they have published a response to that report. [HL14758]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The Government values the work of the Prison Reform Trust and, specifically, the ongoing dialogue with the Trust as to how best to support those serving the sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP), whether in prison or in the community.

The Government and officials acknowledge that recalling any offender to custody involves some disruption. However, we have not identified cases of "unnecessary" recalls of offenders subject to IPP licences.

HM Chief Inspector of Probation found in a thematic review of the Probation Service's culture and practice on recall, published on 10 November last year, that offender managers are considering, properly, public protection when deciding how to respond to evidence that offenders have breached their licence conditions in such a way as to indicate escalating risk. Thus, where an offender on an IPP licence is recalled to custody, it is because the Probation Service has concluded that the offender's risk is now too high for it to be managed effectively in the community, even with the imposition of additional licence conditions.

However, offender managers must always consider whether there are safe alternatives to recall when responding to breaches of licence conditions and evidence of increased risk. Additionally, HM Prison and Probation Service is working to improve the quality and timeliness of its risk assessments following recall, so that the Parole Board may in some cases safely direct the re-release of recalled offenders on an IPP licence earlier than is currently the case.

Roads: Litter

Asked by Lord Mawson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the amount of litter at the side of main roads in England has changed over the last three years; and what plans they have to reduce litter on roads in England. [HL15106]

Asked by Lord Mawson

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have commissioned any research to compare the levels of littering on roads in England and the rest of Europe; and if so, what the findings were. [HL15109]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: No specific assessment has been undertaken into changes in the amount of litter at the side of main roads in England, or research commissioned to compare levels of littering with the rest of Europe. On the Strategic Road Network (SRN), the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) monitors Highways England's performance and delivery of its investment plan. The ORR's most recent Annual Assessment of Highways England across Road Period 1 (2015-2020) acknowledged its efforts to address litter on the SRN but highlighted that there is more to do to achieve the vision set out in its own Litter Strategy.

As part of the second Road Investment Strategy (RIS2), which launched in April 2020, Highways England will report a litter performance indicator. This will measure what percentage of the SRN is predominantly free of litter, in line with the Code of Practice on litter and refuse. It will be published annually within Highways England's Delivery Plan Update due in the Summer. This will ensure there is increased transparency on litter levels for the Department, ORR and road users and that Highways England's performance can be held to account.

The Government's Litter Strategy outlines a variety of measures to reduce littering within a generation and sits alongside Highways England's Litter Strategy for combatting litter on the SRN.

Street cleaning and litter picking on the local road network is covered by revenue funding provided by the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG).

School Exclusions Review

Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Timpson review of school exclusion published in May 2019, how many of the 30 recommendations made in the report they have implemented. [HL14856]

Baroness Berridge: Good behaviour and discipline in schools is crucial if children are to reach their full potential. We will always back headteachers to use suspensions and expulsions when required as part of creating calm and disciplined classrooms that bring out the best in every pupil. We are also clear that expulsion should only be used as a last resort and expulsion from school should not mean expulsion from education.

Since the publication of the Timpson Review and agreeing the recommendations in principle, this government has been pursuing an ambitious programme of work on school behaviour across the school system. Earlier this month, we commenced the Behaviour Hubs programme, investing £10 million that will help schools to develop and sustain a culture where good behaviour is the norm. We have also reformed training as part of the Early Career Framework, so that all new teachers will be shown how to effectively manage behaviour in their first two years in the profession from September 2021. The department continues to work with Ofsted to tackle the practice of 'off-rolling' which the government is clear is unacceptable. We will be consulting on how we can help headteachers remove phones from the school day, and other revisions to the department's behaviour and discipline, and expulsions guidance, later in the year. We intend to go further and are committed to focusing on reforms needed to deliver significantly improved outcomes for children and young people in alternative provision who are most at risk of expulsion and disengaging from education. Working with key stakeholders, we will set out plans in the forthcoming SEND review.

Small Businesses: Billing

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of research by Pennyfreedom, published 14 March; and what steps they are taking to ensure that small businesses receive prompt payments of invoices. [HL14844]

Lord Callanan: Late payments damage the cashflow of small businesses, which can hold back investment or job creation and, in the worst cases, lead to job losses and business closures.

Action to stop the damaging practice of late payments remains a key priority for Government.

On 16 March, we announced the appointment of Liz Barclay as Small Business Commissioner, who will continue the excellent work of interim Commissioner Philip King in helping small businesses secure the payments owed to them and to galvanise UK businesses behind a new culture of prompt payment.

In October last year, we consulted on new powers for the Commissioner, including the power to order payments, levy fines and open investigations based on third-party information. The responses to the consultation and further proposals will be published in due course.

In January this year, we also announced reforms to the Prompt Payment Code to help build a culture of prompt payment between companies and challenge UK businesses to change their practices and stand by small partners at a critical time for the UK's economic recovery.

Social Rented Housing: Construction

Asked by Lord Beecham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase the building of homes for social rent from the 7,000 built in 2019 to help address the waiting list of more than 1.1 million households. [HL15035]

Lord Greenhalgh: Local authorities have freedom to set their own criteria determining who qualifies for social housing in their district, through changes introduced in the Localism Act 2011. However, they must ensure that reasonable preference (overall priority) for social housing is given to certain categories of people in housing need, including homeless households, people living in overcrowded housing, and those who have medical and welfare needs.

The Government is committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing and are investing over £12 billion in affordable housing over 5 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, should economic conditions allow. The new programme will deliver more than double the social rent than the current programme, with around 32,000 social rent homes due to be delivered.

Social Security Benefits

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many claimants are in receipt of (1) income-related Employment and Support Allowance, (2) income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, (3) Income Support, and

(4) Housing Benefit; and how many claimants of each of those awards receive a Severe Disability Premium. [HL14878]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The statistics are shown in the following table:

Number of people in receipt of income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Income Support and Housing Benefit, and estimates of the number of those receiving Severe Disability Premium (SDP), February 2020, Great Britain

| | <i>Recipients¹</i> | <i>SDP recipients²</i> |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| All income-related ESA | 1,445,400 | 515,000 |
| All income-based JSA | 119,300 | 7,000 |
| Income Support | 319,600 | 16,000 |
| Housing Benefit | 3,218,600 | .. |

Sources: Stat-Xplore, DWP Work and Pensions 5 per cent Sample, DWP 100 per cent Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) data, and 100 per cent Jobseekers Allowance Payment System Atomic Data Store

Notes:

- i) Benefit Caseloads have been rounded to the nearest hundred.
- ii) SDP estimates have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
- iii) “..” indicates that an SDP estimate for Housing Benefit is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.
- iv) The SDP estimates supplied are derived from unpublished management information, which was collected for internal Departmental use only and has not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. The data should therefore be treated with caution.

Sports: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Faulkner of Worcester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the decision by the World Snooker Championship to refuse entry to fans that are considered clinically vulnerable to the event at the Crucible Theatre in May, and (2) the consistency of the decision with (a) government guidelines, and (b) equality legislation. [HL14721]

Asked by Lord Faulkner of Worcester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they had with the World Snooker Championship, prior to its decision to exclude clinically vulnerable people from attending the event at the Crucible Theatre in May [HL14722]

Asked by Lord Faulkner of Worcester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that disabled people will be allowed to attend sporting competitions, including events that are part of the pilot programme enabling the safe return of mass gatherings, as COVID-19 regulations ease in England. [HL14723]

Baroness Barran: The Events Research Programme (ERP) is running its first phase of 10-15 pilots in April and May to inform decisions around the safe removal of social distancing at Step 4 of the Roadmap. The pilots will be run across a range of settings, venues, and activities so that findings will support the full reopening of similar settings across multiple sectors.

We fully recognise the importance of these inclusion concerns and are reflecting on issues of diversity, inclusion and equality in the Events Research Programme, ensuring the pilot events cover a range of age groups, ethnicities, geographic location and accessibility.

The pilot events are the first steps to helping all members of the public safely back to mass events and these have been developed under a SAGE framework in line with the latest PHE and DHSC guidance.

Our Science Board has reviewed the Events Research Programme's approach to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals attending the pilot events.

They strongly urge caution for the clinically extremely vulnerable attending the events on public health grounds, however these groups are not excluded from involvement in the pilots.

All attendees are required to fill out a consent form as part of the sign up process for the research programme, given the increased risk of COVID 19 transmission on account of the relaxation of some risk mitigation factors (social distancing and numbers attending).

For each pilot event, a Public Sector Equality Duty impact assessment is being carried out before each event which considers the impact of this scientific study on groups with protected characteristics, including those with disabilities.

St Vincent and the Grenadines: Volcanoes*Asked by Lord Empey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assistance they have offered to the government of St Vincent and the Grenadines in response to the ongoing eruption of the La Soufrière volcano. [HL14720]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are monitoring the situation in St Vincent and the Grenadines closely and our thoughts are with those affected by the eruption.

The UK has pledged an initial £200,000 to help address the immediate humanitarian impact of the volcano eruption, which will be used for emergency supplies and other immediate needs.

Urgently needed technical experts will support relief efforts on the ground, support emergency telecommunications, and restore critical lifeline facilities, like transport links.

We will continue to work with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency to provide further support.

Sudan: Ethiopia*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) dispute between the governments of Sudan and Ethiopia over the al-Fashaga territory, and (2) involvement of the government of (a) Eritrea, and (b) Egypt, in that dispute. [HL14679]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are concerned about the increase of tensions on the Sudanese Ethiopian border in the al-Fashaga territory and have stressed the need for de-escalation on both sides. We are also concerned by the numbers of people displaced and the impact this will have in the region.

We have been in discussions with Eritrea and Sudan regarding their shared border, along with a range of partners who also have shared interests in stability in Ethiopia and the wider Horn of Africa. We are encouraging all parties to de-escalate and engage in a political process. Neither party to the dispute has raised concerns with us about the involvement of third countries.

Surgery*Asked by The Lord Bishop of London*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the breakdown by (1) protected characteristic, and (2) socio-economic background, of the patients who choose to opt out of surgery following the waiting list validation process. [HL14781]

Lord Bethell: No formal assessment has been made. Data on protected characteristics and socio-economic background is not collected centrally.

Sustainable Farming Incentive*Asked by Baroness Rock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why questions about land occupation were not asked of farmers submitting an expression of interest to take part in the pilot Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme; and whether they will now consider asking those farmers to provide information about their land occupation status. [HL14827]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: To keep the expressions of interest for the Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme pilot as simple as possible for farmers, we decided to ask only for information that was not already known to us. The Rural Payments Agency, our delivery body for this

pilot, already holds the relevant information regarding land occupation (use and tenure) for those farmers who are eligible to take part. Any gaps in our information will be picked up and addressed through this pilot and any future piloting of this scheme.

Syria: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they (1) have taken, or (2) plan to take, to achieve the re-opening of former crossing points into Syria for humanitarian supplies at (a) Bab al-Salam, (b) Yarubiyah, and (c) al-Ramtha. [HL14756]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Securing aid cross-border aid access into Syria is a top priority for the UK. The UK regularly raises the issue of UN-mandated cross-border access, and we are using our position at the UN Security Council, and in bilateral discussions, to push for greater aid access into Syria and to urge renewal of Resolution 2533. Russia, backed by China, has reduced cross-border aid access into Syria, placing political support for the Assad regime above lifesaving support for the Syrian people.

The UK is clear that assistance via Damascus alone will not sufficiently meet the needs across the whole of Syria and so remains committed to the delivery of aid to those most in need in Syria, through all mechanisms. After a decade of conflict, it is essential to renew the resolution to avoid further humanitarian disaster.

Syria: Overseas Aid

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the extent to which the government of Syria has (1) restricted aid (a) supplies, and (b) personnel, seeking to enter Syria, and (2) manipulated these to serve its purposes, since the beginning of the Syrian civil war. [HL14755]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Over the last ten years, the Assad regime has consistently and deliberately undermined the pursuit of peace and caused untold suffering for Syria. The UN's 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview has reflected a sharp increase in requirements, with over 13 million people in need of aid; 5.9 million are in need of shelter, 12.4 million are food insecure and 2.4 million children are out of school.

Delivering results in Syria, in a wide range of geographic areas and sectors, with a constantly evolving situation on the ground, is extremely complex and challenging. In regime-held areas, regime officials regularly limit or delay issuing visas to humanitarian workers inhibiting their ability to effectively deliver aid, and also restrict some operations such as the transport of medical supplies.

It is unacceptable that the Assad regime continues to deny aid access to millions of people in Syria. The UK

continues to call upon all parties to the conflict to engage constructively, increase aid access, uphold International Humanitarian Law and protect civilians.

Telephone Services: Remote Working

Asked by Lord Lucas

To ask Her Majesty's Government what minimum standards they require from providers in the procurement of call centre operations regarding (1) the surveillance, and (2) other working conditions, for remote-working staff. [HL14782]

Lord True: The Contact Centre Services framework agreement (RM3815) has minimum security standards for technology and people vetting, as well as standards in place for data protection (GDPR) within the framework agreement terms and conditions that all suppliers must adhere to.

Customer authorities may put in place call-off contracts with Service Level Agreements where suppliers will need to report on staff's availability to answer/handle calls.

However, specific call off clauses agreed between suppliers and customers concerning surveillance and working conditions of remote workers are not reported back centrally to the Crown Commercial Service.

Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Dodds of Duncairn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the Northern Ireland Executive about the financing of the victims' pension scheme. [HL14867]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland regularly meets with NI Executive Ministers about a range of issues, including funding for the Troubles Permanent Disablement Scheme. He met with Executive Ministers on 23 February and on 7 April about this specific issue, and he has written to the NI Executive offering access to NDNA funds that will help the Executive manage the cost of the scheme.

The UK Government welcomes the undertaking given to the Court on 12 April that the Executive will make the necessary funding available to ensure eligible victims receive the payments to which they are legally entitled.

There is nothing now standing in the way of the Executive delivering the scheme as set out in legislation, and we will continue to prioritise supporting the Executive's delivery of this scheme.

Tigray

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the current situation in Tigray; and what reports they have received about (1) human rights atrocities, (2) levels of starvation, (3) the number of

displaced people and refugees, and (4) fighting, in that region. [HL14675]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The humanitarian situation in Tigray is dire, basic services have collapsed and the humanitarian response is hampered by poor security and access. There are credible reports of atrocities committed by all parties to the conflict, including harrowing reports of mass killings and rape. A joint humanitarian and political team from the British Embassy in Addis Ababa visited Tigray on 4-5 March and 4-7 April. They met with the provisional administration of Tigray, the Mayor of Mekelle, the Interim Head of Administration in Shire and with humanitarian agencies working in the region. They spoke directly to people displaced by violence and heard harrowing accounts of human rights violations. The team also saw UKAid work in action and learned of the challenges across Tigray.

We will hold Prime Minister Abiy to his statement on 23 March that the perpetrators of human rights atrocities should face justice - whoever they are. Further atrocities including sexual and gender-based violence must stop and an independent investigation of those that have occurred must take place. The UK will support the UN Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights' planned investigations.

Since the conflict started, the UK has consistently called for an end to fighting, and for all parties to the conflict to prioritise the protection of civilians. The conflict in Tigray has had significant consequences and displaced hundreds of thousands of people, over 70,000 moving into Sudan, as well as impacting those that were already in need of humanitarian assistance. Currently 4.5 million are in need of food aid. I made clear the dire humanitarian situation in the UNSC Open Debate on Conflict and Food Security on 11 March. To date the UK has provided £19 million of badly needed support to people in Tigray - to deliver critical food aid, safe drinking water, sanitation and nutritional supplies and medical care. We continue to call for a de-escalation and a long-term political solution. A sustainable political solution is required to resolve the crisis.

Tigray: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to monitor the withdrawal of Eritrean forces from the Trigray region following the announcement by the prime minister of Ethiopia in March. [HL14676]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Eritrea's role in the conflict is particularly concerning; there are numerous reports of atrocities involving Eritrean forces, and the presence of Eritrean forces is fuelling insecurity. These forces must leave Ethiopia immediately, in line with the

commitment made by Prime Minister Abiy in his announcement on 26 March of their withdrawal. We are clear that their withdrawal must be swift, unconditional and verifiable. We have yet to see any evidence that Eritrean forces are leaving Tigray.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the influence and role of the governments of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (1) in the Horn of Africa, and (2) in brokering a peace agreement between the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea; and what discussions they have with the government of (a) Saudi Arabia, and (b) the United Arab Emirates, about the conflict in Tigray. [HL14678]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Governments of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have a clear interest in the security and prosperity of the Horn of Africa, and were prominent in brokering the 2018 peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea. We have regular discussions, with both the governments of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, on our shared interests in stability in Ethiopia and ending the conflict in Tigray. Most recently my Rt Hon. Friend the Minister of State for Middle East and North Africa discussed the situation in Ethiopia, including efforts to resolve the border dispute with Sudan, with Emirati counterparts on his visit to the region of 28-29 March. Last month I also spoke with the UAE Minister of State Sheikh Shakhbout bin Nahyan Al Nahyan about stability in the Horn of Africa, an issue we will discuss again in the coming weeks.

Tigray: Crimes against Humanity

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of mass killings in Tigray on 5 January; and what steps they are taking to ensure that evidence of human rights atrocities are systematically collected and used to identify and prosecute those responsible for such crimes. [HL14680]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are deeply concerned at the mounting evidence of human rights abuses and violations in Ethiopia's Tigray region. Since the conflict started the UK has consistently called for independent, international investigations into atrocities reported in Tigray, and for the Government of Ethiopia to ensure full access for human rights organisations. We will hold Prime Minister Abiy to his statement on 23 March that the perpetrators of human rights atrocities should face justice - whoever they are. Further atrocities including sexual and gender-based violence must stop and an independent investigation of those that have occurred must take place. The UK will support the UN Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights' planned investigations.

Tourism: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Ravensdale

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for Visit England to encourage tourism in England; and what steps they intend to take to support the visitor economy after the restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic have ended. [HL15069]

Baroness Barran: The Government is taking a number of steps to encourage tourism once restrictions are eased. We are working with VisitBritain, VisitEngland and local partners to champion the UK's diverse tourism offer through the Enjoy Summer Safely campaign.

We will continue to work with industry to provide assurance regarding when people can safely visit attractions - as demonstrated through the We're Good to Go industry standard, which has been used by over 45,000 businesses. In addition, the £56 million Welcome Back Fund will help councils boost tourism, improve green spaces and provide more outdoor seating areas.

The Government is taking a number of steps to support the visitor economy's recovery. The Global Travel Taskforce last year committed the Government to publish a Tourism Recovery Plan in support of the sector. The Government intends to set out proposals in the spring, including plans for a marketing campaign to welcome visitors back to the UK as soon as it is safe to do so.

Budget 2021 included £700m of extra funding to support our world-leading arts, culture and sporting institutions - protecting the venues which make London and the UK an attractive destination to visit.

In total, over £25bn has been provided to the tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors in the form of grants, loans and tax breaks.

Travel Restrictions: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Wasserman

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether children under the age of 11 are permitted (1) to move between households to visit their parents, and (2) to attend school, within 10 days of arriving in England from any country not included among the COVID-19 'red list' countries from which entry to the UK is banned. [HL14242]

Lord Bethell: Children are not permitted to move between households to visit parents or attend school within the quarantine period. When someone arrives in England, they must travel directly to the place they are staying and not leave until 10 days have passed. It is the responsibility of the person who has custody or charge of the child to ensure they comply with the regulations.

Travel: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government which countries are refusing to accept COVID-19 polymerase chain reaction tests taken in the UK for the purposes of travel and entry into their jurisdiction; and what steps they are taking to establish reciprocal arrangements for testing (1) prior to, and (2) at the conclusion of, travel into the UK. [HL14956]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: It is a matter for each country to decide on appropriate health measures and some countries require different tests in line with their requirements. As international travel re-opens, where safe to do so, it is important for travellers to check the relevant travel advice for their destination country.

As set out in the recommendations of the Global Travel Taskforce, we are engaging bilaterally with international partners to explore how we can open international travel safely, including the potential piloting of digital and non-digital COVID-19 certification.

Travel: Quarantine

Asked by Lord Lee of Trafford

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of visitors to the UK who are currently quarantined in a managed quarantine hotel. [HL13676]

Lord Bethell: We currently have capacity in United Kingdom quarantine hotels for 4,778 guests and this will be kept under review. From 15 February to 7 April 2021, the number people who have been in Government-approved hotel quarantine is 12,372. This figure is subject to daily fluctuations.

Trials: Young Offenders

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people aged 17 are awaiting trial in England and Wales. [HL14701]

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people over the age of 18 are awaiting trial for alleged offences committed while they were 17 years old. [HL14702]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: As at 31 December 2020, there were 18 outstanding cases in the Crown Court where the defendant was aged 17, had entered a not-guilty plea to one or more counts and for whom a trial date had been set. There were 38 outstanding cases in the Crown Court where the defendant was aged 17 at the time of the

earliest offence on the case, and on 31 December 2020, the defendant was aged 18 or more, had entered a not-guilty plea to one or more counts and for whom a trial date had been set.¹ To provide this data for Magistrates Courts would require examination of individual file records and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

HMCTS prioritises and regularly reviews youth cases to clear outstanding cases and reduce the number of children awaiting trial. In 2020 outstanding youth cases at the magistrates' court reached an annual peak of 12,138 in June, then consistently fell to 9,930 cases by December. In the same period, outstanding youth cases at the Crown Court remained stable, peaking at 665 in October then falling to 629 by December. HMCTS prioritises cases where there is a possibility that the defendant may turn 18 before conviction. The judiciary has re-published a note about listing in magistrates' courts highlighting the impact on the remand status of youth defendants and the need to list cases expeditiously where a child is about to turn 18.

¹. Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that the data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when data are used.

UK Research and Innovation: Overseas Aid

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish a cost-benefit financial assessment of the impact of reduced Official Development Assistance funding for research and development over the next five years. [HL14687]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: In the context of unprecedented economic and fiscal circumstances, the Government decided at the 2020 Spending Review that sticking rigidly to spending 0.7% of gross national income as Official Development Assistance (ODA) was not an appropriate prioritisation of resources.

The 2020 Spending Review and subsequent review of departmental ODA allocations conducted by the Foreign Secretary confirmed departmental ODA allocations for the financial year 2020-21. This has ensured that UK ODA is focused on our strategic priorities, spent where it will have the maximum impact, has greater coherence and delivers most value for money.

As a consequence of this prioritisation, ODA funding for research and development (R&D) over 2021-22 has been reduced from previous years. However, the Government invested nearly £15 billion in overall R&D in 2021-22 at the 2020 Spending Review. This follows four years of significant growth in government R&D funding and boost of more than £1.5bn in 2020-21 alone.

Decisions have not yet been made on the ODA budget over the following years. The Government remains committed to international development and intends to return to the 0.7% target when the fiscal situation allows.

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of reduced Official Development Assistance funding for research and development on (1) the UK's skills base, and (2) levels of employment, in research and development. [HL14688]

Lord Callanan: The challenging financial situation we face due to the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a temporary reduction in the UK's aid spending target from 0.7% of GNI to 0.5%. This means making difficult decisions when it comes to prioritising how we spend aid money to deliver the most impactful outcomes.

The Government recognises the importance of supporting international research partnerships, and supporting the UK research sector. Our commitment to research and innovation has been clearly demonstrated by my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget announcement of increasing investment in R&D across government to £14.6bn in 2021/22; and as has been set out in our Integrated Review ambitions, international collaboration is central to a healthy and productive R&D sector.

On 1st April, the Department set out an additional £250m of funding for the R&D sector. As a result, UK scientists will have access to more public funding than ever before. This takes total Government investment in R&D to £14.9 billion in 2021/22 and follows four years of significant growth in R&D funding, including a boost of more than £1.5 billion in 2020/21.

We are currently working with UKRI, and all our Global Challenges Research Fund and Newton Fund Delivery Partners, to manage the financial year 2021/22 ODA allocations. Our Delivery Partners have communicated with award holders setting out the next stage of the review of ODA funding next year, and to explore options for individual programmes. Full details have been published on the UKRI website.

UK Trade with EU: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government at which ports in Northern Ireland will EU officials be stationed to conduct checks on trade between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. [HL14772]

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, whether EU officials will check trade arriving by air from Great Britain to Northern Ireland at (1) Belfast City Airport, (2) Belfast International Airport, or (3) Derry City Airport. [HL14773]

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, whether EU officials at Derry City Airport will check (1) goods arriving from Great Britain, and (2) goods arriving from the Republic of Ireland. [HL14774]

Lord Frost: There will be no port or airport at which EU officials will be conducting checks on goods moved between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Under Article 12(2) of the Northern Ireland Protocol, the role of EU officials' is limited to the right to be present during the activity of UK authorities relating to the implementation and application of EU law under the Protocol, and activities relating to the implementation and application of Article 5 of the Protocol, relating to the movement of goods. All procedures under the Protocol will be carried out by UK authorities. The 17 December 2020 Joint Committee Decision on Article 12 reflects these arrangements.

In practice, this could include EU officials being present at any ports or airports in Northern Ireland where UK authorities are undertaking activities within the scope of Article 12. This would include, for example, Belfast Port, Larne Harbour, Warrenpoint Port, Foyle Port and Belfast International Airport, all of which have been designated as Points of Entry for SPS goods. However, it will be for the EU to decide upon how they propose to allocate those officials present in Northern Ireland, in line with the relevant requirements of the December Joint Committee Decision.

Veterans: Homelessness

Asked by Lord Hay of Ballyore

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of homeless veterans in England in each year since 2018. [HL14738]

Lord True: Homelessness data relating to veterans is currently available through H-CLIC (Homelessness Case Level Information Collection). In the financial years of 2018/19 and 2019/20, less than 1% of households who were owed a homelessness duty were assessed as having a support need as a result of serving in the Armed Forces (1,820 out of 269,510 and 1,920 out of 289,800 respectively).

The Government has taken a number of measures to ensure that veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness, are provided with appropriate support. In June 2020, the Government published new statutory guidance for local authorities to improve access to social housing for the Armed Forces and veterans community. The Homelessness Reduction Act includes a statutory duty for members of the Armed Forces, who it is believed may be at risk of homelessness after discharge, to be

referred to a local housing authority. The MOD, through Veterans UK, also delivers a Defence Transition Service which provides service leavers with enhanced support, and the Veterans Welfare Service.

Yemen: Overseas Aid

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to restore overseas aid to Yemen to at least the level of £164 million set in 2019–20. [HL14821]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: On 1 March, the Minister of State for Middle East and North Africa announced an extra £87 million in UK aid over the course of financial year 2021/22. We have committed over £1 billion in funding to the humanitarian crisis since the conflict began in 2015. The new UK aid pledge will feed an additional 240,000 of the most vulnerable Yemenis every month, support 400 healthcare clinics and provide clean water for 1.6 million people. We will also provide one-off cash support to 1.5 million of Yemen's poorest households to help them buy food and basic supplies.

Zimbabwe: Human Rights

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of human rights abuses against (1) women, and (2) political activists, in Zimbabwe. [HL14815]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain seriously concerned about the human rights situation in Zimbabwe. It is one of the UK's 30 Human Rights Priority Countries globally. On 1 February 2021, the UK announced new sanctions against four Zimbabwean security sector chiefs for serious human rights violations. We are concerned at the high rates of Gender-Based Violence which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 response, including reports of harassment by police officers enforcing lockdown laws. In an effort to safeguard women's rights, we spent £3,470,000 in 20/21 to support the work of civil society organisations working to tackle gender-based violence. We are concerned by the unacceptable pattern of arrests of prominent opposition and civil society figures. The Minister for Africa has regularly raised concern about the treatment of political opponents, most recently on 29 March in response to the harassment of opposition members Ms Mamombe, Ms Chimбири, and Ms Marowa. We remain clear that the Government of Zimbabwe must meet its international and domestic obligations by respecting the rule of law, safeguarding human rights, and committing to genuine political and economic reform for the benefit of all Zimbabweans.

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