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**Monday
7 June 2021**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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

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

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Written Statements

Monday, 7 June 2021

Compliance Improvement Review: Independent Verification

[HLWS66]

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

In 2019, my predecessor notified Parliament of compliance risks that MI5 had identified and reported to the Home Office and the Investigatory Powers Commissioner. These risks were identified within certain technology environments used to store and analyse data, including material obtained under the Investigatory Powers Act. The compliance risks related to the particular safeguards set out in the Investigatory Powers Act that relate to the processing of material that has been obtained under a warrant (Section 53 of the Act and the corresponding provisions).

As part of the response to this, Sir Martin Donnelly, a former Permanent Secretary, conducted an independent review to consider how these risks arose and what could be done to reduce the likelihood of a similar situation arising again in the future. In June 2019, the Compliance Improvement Review's summary and recommendations were published on Gov.UK and work began immediately to address these recommendations. One of these recommendations was "the satisfactory delivery of this change programme should be independently verified by the end of June 2020."

On 6 July 2020, I made a Written Ministerial Statement to notify Parliament that due to the adverse impacts of Covid-19 the independent verification of the implementation of the recommendations would be delayed until the start of 2021. Despite the ongoing impact of Covid-19, the independent verification has now taken place.

The independent verification process was led by Mary Calam, a former Director-General in the Home Office. She considered whether the work undertaken since the summer of 2019 had addressed the concerns raised in Sir Martin Donnelly's report and delivered the outcomes he had intended. Mary had access to all relevant documentation and personnel, and conducted interviews with senior members of the relevant organisations as well as with focus groups of staff. I would like to place on record my thanks to Mary and the review team, who have produced a comprehensive report in a difficult working environment due to Covid-19.

I was provided with a copy of the verification report earlier this year and have since had the opportunity to discuss it with Mary. The Investigatory Powers Commissioner and the Intelligence and Security

Committee of Parliament have both received copies of the full report.

The verification report concludes that significant and measurable progress has been made and that the new operating model is an excellent start to ensure any future compliance risks are identified and addressed early. The report finds that "MI5 have used the Compliance Improvement Review to make fundamental changes across the whole organisation" and that "there is new governance to oversee compliance and security risks and resourcing for compliance work has been significantly increased." The report further notes that "the broader changes that MI5 has made to strengthen its legal compliance risk management processes, instil a culture of individual accountability for legal compliance risk and ensure that compliance is built in to new products should give Ministers greater confidence that new risks will be identified early and addressed promptly."

The report does acknowledge that, in places, work remains to be done and that maintaining high levels of compliance is – by definition – an ongoing effort. MI5 have already put in place a successor programme to take forward further work and the Director-General of MI5 and I are fully committed to ensuring this work remains a priority. I will continue to monitor progress through the quarterly MI5 Ministerial Assurance Group which I chair.

I am very grateful to the Director-General of MI5 and his staff, as well as my own officials, for the immense progress that has been made since Sir Martin Donnelly completed his Compliance Improvement Review in June 2019.

A copy of the verification summary document will be made available on Gov.UK and will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Downstream Oil Resilience Bill: Draft Publication Draft

[HLWS61]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend the UK International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience for the COP26 Presidency and Minister of State (Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth) (Anne-Marie Trevelyan) has today made the following statement:

I will this morning lay before Parliament a draft Downstream Oil Resilience Bill which introduces measures that will enable Government to support industry in ensuring the resilience of the fuel supply sector, prevent supply disruptions and maintain the security of fuel supply to consumers.

The sector is currently efficient, flexible and effective in ensuring the continuity of fuel supply and we do not currently expect any disruption to this. We need to ensure that we protect the continuity of fuel supply and that we are prepared and resilient to disruptions when they do occur. The measures set out in the draft Bill will help ensure that critical services and consumers will continue to receive the fuel on which they rely on and will reduce

the risk of disruption to economic activities from the loss of fuel supplies.

This draft Bill follows a public consultation in 2017, where Government explored options to address sector resilience and concluded that due to high levels of global competition, the sector has gone through a process of restructuring to remain internationally competitive which has reduced their spare capacity. This means that there is an increased risk of market disruption in the downstream oil sector, given the lower capacity to react to sudden supply and demand shocks.

The fuel supply system faces a number of inherent risks, including accidents, severe weather, malicious threats, industrial action, and financial failure. The Government works with fuel suppliers to mitigate such risks and, while individual companies have a good record of managing their own risks, they do not see a commercial return in managing low probability, higher impact risks.

The publication also marks the first step towards the commitment made in the Energy White Paper ‘Powering our Net Zero Future’ to take powers to ensure we maintain a secure and resilient supply of fossil fuels during the transition to net zero emissions. As set out in the Energy White paper and in line with the recommendation from the independent Climate Change Committee, we will decarbonise our energy system, boosting the production of clean energy. The Sixth Carbon Budget will ensure Britain remains on track to end its contribution to climate change. Ensuring a reliable and secure fuel supply to essential services in coming years will be critical and therefore primary legislation is required to build adequate resilience across the whole supply system.

The Integrated Review 2021 sets out our goals to build a more robust position on national security and resilience in order to reduce the impact of shocks and long-term challenges on the life and livelihoods of UK citizens. The Bill is aligned with the Integrated Review’s objectives and outlines solutions to address the current and future risks to the downstream oil sector because we need to ensure that there is a supply of secure, affordable and clean energy which is essential to the UK’s national interests.

The Bill will help the Government identify risks of disruption to the UK fuel supply market in advance and ensure that Government and industry together can implement effective and proportionate contingency plans as early as possible. This includes mandating the provision of information to Government to allow better risk assessment and design appropriate mitigating measures, and direction powers that will allow the Government to intervene where supply resilience is compromised, or there is a significant risk that it will be, and the industry has not taken any action. The Bill also introduces new powers that allow the Government to ensure that anyone taking control of critical infrastructure

in this sector has appropriate financial and operational measures in place, and a new spending power to allow Government to provide financial assistance to support sector resilience and ensure continuity of supply, where such support is deemed necessary and value for money.

The Bill will apply to all operators and infrastructure in the Downstream Oil Sector with a supply handling capacity above the thresholds which are outlined in the Bill. My department will continue to work with industry to refine the proposed measures, so that the disruption to market functioning is minimal.

The Bill will also ensure that there is a reliable energy supply and increased resilience which means that the Downstream Oil sector is able to protect against, react to and recover from any disruption.

The draft Bill will be published with accompanying explanatory notes and an assessment of the potential impacts. The draft Bill will undergo pre-legislative scrutiny by the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee to ensure that it is robust and workable.

Motoring Services Agencies Business Plans 2021-22

[HLWS62]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: I am pleased to announce the publication of the 2021-22 business plans for the Department for Transport’s Motoring Agencies - the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA).

The business plans set out:

- 1) the key business priorities that each agency will deliver and any significant changes they plan to make to their services, and;
- 2) the key performance indicators, by which their performance will be assessed.

These plans allow service users and members of the public to understand the agencies’ plans for delivering their key services, progressing their transformation programmes, and managing their finances.

The business plans will be available electronically on GOV.UK and copies will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

DVLA [DVLA Business Plan 2021-22.pdf]

DVSA [DVSA business plan 2021-22.pdf]

VCA [VCA Business Plan 2021-22.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2021-06-07/HLWS62/>

Regulation of BetIndex Ltd: Update on Review

[HLWS60]

Baroness Barran: My Right Honourable Friend the Minister of State for Media and Data, John Whittingdale MP, has made the following Statement:

Further to the statement of 20th April outlining plans for an independent expert review of the regulation of the Football Index gambling product, we are today announcing the full terms of reference for the review and further details.

The Secretary of State has appointed Malcolm Sheehan QC to lead the review. He will provide an independent expert account of the actions taken by the Gambling Commission and other relevant regulatory bodies, and consider the lessons to be learnt for the future. He will have access to all the necessary information held by government and regulatory bodies to conduct the review.

As outlined in the Terms of Reference which we have also released in full on gov.uk, the Review will cover the period from the granting of BetIndex's gambling licence in September 2015 to the Gambling Commission's suspension of that licence on 11th March this year. It will principally report on the actions of the Gambling Commission in assessing, licensing, and monitoring the operator, responding to concerns and delivering its objectives. The review will also consider how the Financial Conduct Authority responded to questions from the Gambling Commission and how it considered whether the product amounted to a regulated activity under the Financial Services and Markets Act.

It is important that former customers continue to have a voice. The administrators should have already contacted every former customer so they can submit a claim if they think they are owed money or compensation from the company. Customers will be kept informed through the administration process, including on any opportunities they may have to vote on next steps. The Gambling Commission will also continue to consider information it receives from individuals about the actions of Football Index where it pertains to its ongoing regulatory investigation into BetIndex's licence. While the Call for Evidence closed on 31 March, former customers can also continue to provide information to DCMS about the Football Index case to inform the Gambling Act Review. Hundreds of individuals have already done so, and where relevant to the Terms of Reference for the independent review we will pass those to Malcolm Sheehan QC.

This independent review is expected to provide a report for publication in the summer, and will include recommendations as needed across the full range of questions set out in the Terms of Reference. Its findings will form part of the evidence informing the government's ongoing Review of the Gambling Act 2005, which was announced in December 2020. This independent review is entirely separate from the Gambling Commission's ongoing regulatory investigation and the administration proceedings, and will be done in such a way as to avoid

prejudicing either of those processes. A copy of the Terms of Reference will be placed in the Library of the House.

Trade and Cooperation Agreement Partnership Council: First Meeting

[HLWS64]

Lord Frost: The first meeting of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement Partnership Council will take place on 9 June 2021, in person and by video conference, hosted by the UK.

The meeting will be co-chaired by the Minister of State at the Cabinet Office, Rt Hon Lord Frost CMG, and Vice President of the European Commission, Maroš Šefčovič.

The agenda will include nine items:

1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome, opening remarks from the co-chairs

1.2 Formal adoption of the agenda

2. Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and Customs and Trade Facilitation

3. Fisheries

4. Law Enforcement

5. Long-term visa fees

6. Participation in Union Programmes

7. Update on institutional framework

7.1 Tentative timetable of meetings of Committees under the TCA

7.2 Parliamentary Partnership Assembly

7.3 Civil Society Forum

8. AOB

9. Concluding remarks

The UK delegation will include:

- Minister of State at the Cabinet Office, Rt Hon Lord Frost CMG
- Paymaster General, Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP
- Ministers from the devolved administrations

Transport for London Funding Deal

[HLWS63]

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

The Government and Mayor of London have agreed a third extraordinary Transport for London funding deal of £1.08bn for the period up until 11 December 2021. The deal will replace the agreement signed in October 2020, which, following extensions agreed in March 2021 and in May 2021, expired on 28 May 2021.

The funding settlement is further proof of our commitment to supporting the capital and the transport network on which it depends, whilst ensuring that our support is fair to the national taxpayer. The government

will continue to review passenger demand in line with the Prime Minister's roadmap and will continue to support the fare revenues lost as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The funding settlement sets out further measures to sustainably support London's transport network. Within the next deal period, the Mayor has agreed to; deliver £300m of savings or new income sources in 2021/2022; deliver £0.5 - £1bn of new or increased income sources each year by 2023; prepare a revised medium-term capital investment programme; carry out a review of TfL's pension scheme; set aside at least £100m to continue the delivery of active travel programmes; and review options for long term funding reform in partnership with the Government. To help TfL achieve financial sustainability, the Mayor has agreed to prepare a plan to accelerate TfL's existing modernisation programme of £730m by April 2023.

The Mayor has agreed to work collaboratively with DfT on a joint programme for implementing higher levels of automatic train operation on the London Underground, as is the case on many metro systems worldwide. Over the course of this funding period, the Mayor and TfL will make progress towards the conversion of at least one London Underground line to full automation but with an on-board attendant. This technology has the potential to offer a more punctual, reliable, customer-responsive and safer service that is less susceptible to human error. TfL will also lead market engagement into technology for protecting passengers at station platforms.

The London Underground is the world's oldest underground railway and the Government is committed to supporting the capital's transport network, ensuring that it meets the needs of Londoners as we recover from the pandemic and that it is modernised for the 21st century.

TfL and the London Boroughs are responsible for local road maintenance, including bridge repairs. London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham is responsible for the safety and maintenance of Hammersmith Bridge. However, given the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic, during the period of this agreement, we expect to draw up a memorandum of understanding between HMG, TfL and the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham to fund the reopening of Hammersmith Bridge – initially to pedestrians, cyclists and river traffic and, depending on cost, to motorists. Funding will be conditional on the following:

- All parties must scrutinise and agree the cost of the project.
- Each party agrees to pay a share of the cost. Repair costs are to be led by the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham and TfL; HMG will not directly contribute more than 1/3 of the costs.

- That the independent Board responsible for the Case for Continued Safe Operation, reporting to London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, will conduct a new assessment for controlled and limited reopening of Hammersmith Bridge to pedestrians, cyclists and river traffic once further investigations and report validations are completed at the end of June. London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham shares the assessment with the government and TfL.

The Government has repeatedly shown that it is committed to supporting the running of essential services across the capital whilst we recover from this pandemic, while ensuring fairness and value for money for the taxpayer. The Government continue to work with TfL and the Mayor so TfL can be financially sustainable as soon as possible.

This deal takes Government support to TfL since March 2020 to over £4bn, whilst continuing to spend money on vital infrastructure projects to level up the national transport network outside of London.

Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee: Eighth Meeting

[HLWS65]

Lord Frost: The next meeting of the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee will take place in London on 9 June 2021, with delegations attending in person and by video conference.

The meeting will be co-chaired by the Minister of State at the Cabinet Office, Rt Hon Lord Frost CMG, and Vice President of the European Commission, Maroš Šefčovič.

The agenda will include five items:

1. Welcome and opening remarks from the co-chairs
 - 1.1 Formal adoption of the agenda
 - 1.2 Stocktake of Specialised Committee activity 24 February - [9 June] 2021
2. Withdrawal Agreement Annual Report
3. Update on Withdrawal Agreement Implementation
 - 3.1 Citizens' Rights
 - 3.2 Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol
4. AOB
5. Concluding remarks

The UK delegation will include:

- Minister of State at the Cabinet Office, Rt Hon Lord Frost CMG
- Paymaster General, Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP

Representatives from the Northern Ireland Executive have been invited to form part of the UK delegation.

Written Answers

Monday, 7 June 2021

Abdullah al-Huwaiti

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will call for clemency for Abdullah al Howaiti in Saudi Arabia. [\[HL349\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The United Kingdom strongly opposes the death penalty in all countries and in all circumstances, as a matter of principle. The Saudi authorities are well aware of the UK's opposition to the use of the death penalty. We reiterated our opposition to the death penalty in Saudi Arabia in a joint statement at the UN Human Rights Council on 15 September.

We regularly raise our concerns about the use of the death penalty, including individual cases with the Saudi Arabian authorities and we will continue to do so. The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa raised the use of the death penalty with the Human Rights Commission during his visit to Saudi Arabia on 24 May 2021.

Abune Antonios

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to discuss with the government of Eritrea the case for releasing Abune Antonios from house arrest. [\[HL350\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain concerned about the human rights situation in Eritrea, including the arrests of religious figures such as Patriarch Abune Antonios of the Eritrean Orthodox Tewadho Church who has been detained for over 15 years. The Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief raised Patriarch Abune Antonios' case with the Eritrean Ambassador on 20 May, and our Ambassador in Asmara tweeted to call for the Patriarch and others detained for their faith to be released.

The UK Government takes every opportunity to voice our concern about arbitrary arrests and detentions in Eritrea on the basis of religion or belief, and have called for release of such worshippers. We have done so directly with the Government of Eritrea and publicly - through our annual reporting on human rights and at the UN Human Rights Council. The UK raised Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in Eritrea in a statement by the UK's International Ambassador for Human Rights, Rita French, at the 46th Session of the Human Rights Council. We also encouraged Eritrea to make progress on their commitment to the Universal Periodic Review process including the promotion of FoRB. Eritrea remains a priority country under our annual human rights reporting, and we will

continue to monitor the situation there. I raised human rights when I met the Eritrean Ambassador to the UK on 16 March.

Adoption: Social Media

Asked by **The Marquess of Lothian**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reform the adoption process to safely manage potential early contact between adopted children and their birth families, in view of the increased opportunities for such contact created by social media. [\[HL447\]](#)

Baroness Berridge: Local authorities have a legal duty to provide a comprehensive adoption service.

This specifically includes "Assistance, including mediation services, in relation to arrangements for contact between an adoptive child and a natural parent, natural sibling, former guardian or a related person of the adoptive child".

We will be working with local authorities and regional adoption agencies to improve support around contact with birth relatives, including that which has started via social media.

Adult Education

Asked by **Lord Blunkett**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase participation in adult education below level three. [\[HL330\]](#)

Baroness Berridge: Through the adult education budget (AEB), we fully fund or co-fund skills provision for eligible adults aged 19 and above from pre-entry to level 3, to support adults to gain the skills they need for work, an apprenticeship or further learning. This includes fully funded first full level 2 and/or level 3 for learners aged 19 to 23.

Learners in receipt of low wage (£17,374.50 annual gross salary or less) who would previously have been co-funded, are eligible for full funding following the earlier low wage trial that operated in the 2018/19 and the 2019/20 academic years. This directly supports social mobility by enabling those that have been motivated to move out of unemployment and are low paid or skilled, to further progress.

We specifically recognise the importance of English, mathematics and digital skills, both in work and everyday life. That is why we are continuing to support participation in these areas to meet employers' needs and support people to progress in employment or further study.

We provide full funding for learners who need English and mathematics skills to undertake a range of courses in GCSEs, Functional Skills and other relevant qualifications from entry level to level 2. We also fully or co-fund adults to take English for Speakers of Other

Languages as part of our wider effort to improve adult literacy in England.

Adults with no or low digital skills are fully funded to undertake new Essential Digital Skills Qualifications at entry level and level 1, based on new national standards for essential digital skills, which equip learners with the digital skills needed for life, work and further study.

We also support training for adults in community settings through the AEB. Prioritised for disadvantaged learners, community learning can provide a 'stepping stone' for those adults who are not ready for formal accredited learning, or who would benefit from learning in a more informal way.

The department is reviewing post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below, to ensure that every qualification approved for public funding has a distinct purpose, is high quality and supports progression to positive outcomes. We recognise that level 2 and below study serves students with a diverse range of needs, and that some young people and adults studying at these levels may require additional support to help realise their ambitions.

One of the first steps to realise our ambitions for level 2 and below study is a government call for evidence, which launched on 12 November 2020. It gives the education sector, industry, and others with an interest in study at these levels the opportunity to share their views on how the level 2 and below system can best work in the context of our proposed reforms to level 3 qualifications. The level 2 and below call for evidence closed on 14 February. We will set out further proposals later this year. The call for evidence is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/post-16-study-at-level-2-and-below-call-for-evidence>.

Adult Education: Finance

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that all adult education funding that is clawed back from grant fund providers is re-invested in adult learning opportunities. [HL329]

Baroness Berridge: As we address the challenges presented by COVID-19, it is vital that we support adults, including those working in sectors directly affected by COVID-19, to attain the skills that will be needed in the economy of the future.

Starting this year, the government is investing £2.5 billion in the National Skills Fund. Investment in skills through the National Skills Fund is vital as it ensures that adults have the opportunity to retrain at different points throughout their lives and can progress into higher wage employment.

From 1 April 2021, the government is supporting any adult who does not have A levels or equivalent qualifications, to access almost 400 fully funded level 3 courses, with Free Courses for Jobs.

Complementing this support for adults, we have introduced Skills Bootcamps which offer free, flexible

courses of up to 16 weeks, giving people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills and fast-track to an interview with a local employer.

We have already introduced Skills Bootcamps in 6 areas (West Midlands, Greater Manchester and Lancashire, Liverpool City Region, Leeds City Region, Heart of South West, and Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire) and we are investing a further £43 million from the National Skills Fund to expand them across England.

Funding that is clawed back from grant fund providers will be reinvested in departmental priorities, including to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on providers and learners, enabling us to allocate resources effectively across the department and live within our Parliamentary control totals.

Air Pollution

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the research by Mark Ashworth et al 'Spatio-temporal associations of air pollutant concentrations, GP respiratory consultations and respiratory inhaler prescriptions: a 5-year study of primary care in the borough of Lambeth, South London', published in Environmental Health on 7 May. [HL631]

Lord Bethell: Epidemiological studies have shown that long-term exposure to air pollution (over years or lifetimes) reduces life expectancy, mainly due to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and lung cancer. Short-term exposure (over hours or days) to elevated levels of air pollution can also cause a range of health impacts, including effects on lung function, exacerbation of asthma, increases in respiratory and cardiovascular hospital admissions and mortality.

The Ashworth et al (2021) study adds to the existing evidence base that exposure to air pollution can cause adverse respiratory effects, concluding that short- and long-term exposure to nitrogen dioxide, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} particles are associated with an increase in the daily number of General Practitioner respiratory consultations and inhaler prescriptions.

Aircraft: Exhaust Emissions

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the study in the journal Environmental Science & Technology Mitigating the Climate Forcing of Aircraft Contrails by Small-Scale Diversions and Technology Adoption, published on 12 February 2020, which found a beneficial impact of altering the altitudes of some aircraft to reduce the impact of contrails on solar radiation; and whether this will affect their approach to airspace management. [HL529]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government has made no specific assessment of the particular study referred to but takes all relevant information into account in its policy decisions.

We will be shortly consulting on a Net Zero Aviation Strategy which will set out the steps to reach net zero carbon emissions from aviation by 2050. The consultation will also consider non-CO₂ emissions and highlight the uncertainty that currently exists regarding the impact that non-CO₂ emissions, and contrails specifically, could have on the climate. We recognise that more work will need to be done to address this uncertainty and will continue to ensure that the latest scientific understanding of aviation non-CO₂ effects is used to inform our policy.

Airports: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will issue instructions to UK airports regarding separate immigration controls for flights arriving from 'red list' countries. [HL331]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government has issued clear guidance for both passengers and operators, with airports encouraged to introduce clear signage and one-way passenger flows where appropriate. Arrangements may vary depending on the airport and guidance is available to support operators to manage flows in a COVID-secure way.

We continue to improve processes which maintain the checks we need to carry out to keep the public safe, while minimising disruption, and passengers can support this process by ensuring they have completed the necessary requirements to enter the UK. The Government continues to engage with the aviation sector to ensure it is supported in implementing best practices.

Apprentices

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to limit the entry requirements for level two apprenticeships. [HL411]

Baroness Berridge: High-quality apprenticeships at level 2 are an important part of our programme, supporting people from all backgrounds to gain the skills they need to begin or progress in their career. To help employers offer new apprenticeships at all levels, employers can claim £3,000 for each apprentice they take on as a new employee until 30 September 2021, as part of the government's Plan for Jobs.

Although it is for employers to decide which apprenticeships they offer and when, and any specific entry requirements, we encourage employers to open up apprenticeship opportunities to a wide group of potential applicants. To remove barriers to entry for prospective apprentices, we are clear to employers that we will fund

apprentices without English and maths to achieve Functional Skills qualifications during their apprenticeship.

Our Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network of over 85 employers promotes best practice in recruiting and supporting apprentices from less advantaged backgrounds to diversify their workforce. In addition, our Apprenticeships Support and Knowledge programme supports schools across England to provide students with information on apprenticeships.

Through our Plan for Jobs, we are also providing a range of support to help young people access high-quality training to develop the skills, experience, and confidence to obtain an apprenticeship. We are supporting the largest-ever expansion of traineeships to help young people who are not yet ready for an apprenticeship, providing funding for an additional 30,000 places in the 2020/21 academic year. We are also working with the Department for Work and Pensions to enable Kickstart placements to turn into apprenticeships where that is the right thing for the employer and the young person. We have made a special provision to allow employers taking on 'Kickstarters' as apprentices to be eligible for the incentive payment, supporting a pathway between the schemes.

Asked by Lord Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many apprentices were in training in (1) 2015–16, and (2) 2020–21. [HL502]

Asked by Lord Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many current apprentices are (1) female, and (2) male. [HL503]

Baroness Berridge: In the first two quarters of the 2020/21 academic year, reported to date, there were a total of 575,900 apprentices participating.

In the first two quarters of the 2015/16 academic year, there were 708,900 participating apprentices reported at the equivalent point that year. Finalised full year figures show there were 899,400 participating on an apprenticeship in the 2015/16 academic year.

In the first two quarters of the 2020/21 academic year, reported to date, there has been 269,200 female and 306,700 male apprentices participating.

Apprentices: Manufacturing Industries

Asked by Lord Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase the number of female apprentices in the manufacturing sector. [HL504]

Baroness Berridge: In the 2019/20 academic year, women accounted for 49% of all apprenticeship starts.

The representation of women in science, technology, engineering, construction, digital and maths (STEM) is increasing, in the 2019/20 academic year, women

accounted for 11.4% of STEM apprenticeship starts, up from 10.1% in 2018/19 and 8.8% in 2017/18.

We are working with some of the country's most influential employers in the manufacturing sector through the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network, including Siemens, Bombardier and Rolls-Royce, who are actively increasing female representation in STEM roles. The Network is also seeking to share examples of employer best practice in bringing women onto STEM apprenticeships and successfully retaining them. The Network will report during National Apprenticeship Week 2022 on how to better reach out to target underrepresented groups and improve retention.

Our Apprenticeship Support & Knowledge programme is raising awareness of apprenticeships in schools, encouraging female students to consider apprenticeships in traditionally male dominated fields. This free service provides schools and teachers with resources and interventions to help better educate young people about apprenticeships. We have seen involvement from large employers such as Toyota who delivered interactive live broadcasts to promote careers in STEM to students, increasing their awareness of the available opportunities in the manufacturing industry.

Asked by Lord Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what annual financial allowances they provide to apprentices in the manufacturing sector. [HL505]

Baroness Berridge: In the 2021-22 financial year funding available for investment in apprenticeships in England is almost £2.5 billion, double what was spent in the 2010-11 financial year. Employers of all sizes can access funding for apprenticeship training and assessment. There is no ring-fenced annual apprenticeship budget for any individual sector, such as the manufacturing sector.

Employers in all sectors are able to choose which apprenticeships they offer, and when, in order to meet their skills needs. There are over 140 high-quality employer-designed apprenticeship standards in the engineering and manufacturing sector available for employers to use, including the level 3 print technician standard and the level 5 food and drink engineer standard. In the 2019/20 academic year, there were 52,000 apprenticeship starts in the engineering and manufacturing technologies sector.

To help employers in all sectors to offer new apprenticeships, employers can claim a £3,000 incentive payment for each apprentice they take on as a new employee until 30 September, as part of the government's Plan for Jobs. This is paid in addition to the funding available to employers for training and assessing apprentices, and the extra payments we already make to support employers and providers meet the needs of the youngest apprentices and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan. Individual employers can choose how to spend the incentive payment to support their apprentices,

including meeting any of the costs associated with supporting a new apprentice in the workplace, such as uniforms or travel costs.

Armenia: Azerbaijan

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Leeds

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of comments made by the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia on 12 May about encroachments by the Azerbaijani army into the territory of Armenia. [HL364]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government is closely monitoring the situation on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border following an increase in tensions. We welcome the ongoing communication between the parties and urge them to use this opportunity to de-escalate the situation peacefully.

Armenia: Genocide

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they consider that declaring acts as genocide should be a determination made by (1) the Government, (2) Parliament, or (3) the courts; and in particular, which of these bodies it considers should determine whether the events of 1915 in Armenia constituted genocide. [HL456]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The events of 1915-1916 were a tragic episode in the history of the Armenian people and they must never be forgotten. The UK Government of the day condemned the massacres and this Government fully endorses that view.

It is the long-standing policy of the British Government that determination of genocide should be made by a competent court, rather than by the UK government or a non-judicial body. It should be decided after consideration of all the evidence available in the context of a credible judicial process. Competent courts in respect of genocide include international courts and domestic criminal courts meeting international standards of due process.

Armenia: Prisoners of War

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Leeds

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of Armenian prisoners of war that have yet to be returned by the government of Azerbaijan. [HL363]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas urged both parties to work with the ICRC to expedite the return of all prisoners of war. Our Embassies in Baku and Yerevan continue to raise this with the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Arts: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the All Party Parliamentary Writers Group Supporting Writers through the COVID-19 Crisis, published on 11 May, what plans they have to engage with writers' organisations to discuss the recommendations relating to maintaining diversity of talent in the creative industries following the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL510]

Baroness Barran: Literature contributes greatly to the richness and diversity of our cultural environment, and we welcome the report by the All Party Parliamentary Writers Group.

The government is clear that it expects the cultural sectors to represent our diverse society in their artistic talent, workforce and audiences. As the national development agency for art and culture, Arts Council England (ACE) has a responsibility to ensure that public money benefits all of the public.

ACE supports a network of Writer Development Agents, which between them cover every one of the five regions in which ACE operates, all of which have an explicit remit to support writers that represent the diversity of our country. ACE has also focused additional funding on organisations whose work promotes diversity, most prominently via an Ambition for Excellence award to The Good Literary Agency, based in Bristol, which develops and then markets authors from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds, and via our support of a pair of reports (by BookTrust and the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education) into the diversity and inclusivity of the children's literature sector.

We hope that this ongoing support and engagement will help to nurture the next generation of writers to build on the success of today's sector.

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to regularly engage with representatives of the creative workforce to discuss the best route to recovery for the creative sector. [HL511]

Baroness Barran: Throughout the pandemic, DCMS ministers and officials have been regularly engaging with stakeholders representing the workforce across the creative industries to ensure their concerns are understood.

Regular forums for engagement include quarterly meetings with the Creative Industries Council, which includes representatives from across the creative sector and is co-chaired by the Secretaries of State for DCMS and Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. At the outset of the Covid pandemic, the Council developed a plan on transition and recovery that has been useful for helping shape our policy response. We are now looking to the future, and continue to work with the Council to

consider further recovery and growth opportunities for the sector.

DCMS officials are also in regular contact with other stakeholders including ScreenSkills, Arts Council England, the Creative Industries Federation and the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre.

Arts: EU Countries

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to negotiate a new arrangement with the EU for those involved in the creative industries sector, particularly in relation to arrangements for touring musicians. [HL576]

Baroness Barran: The Government recognises the world-leading position of the UK performing arts sectors and the rich breadth of artistic talent across the UK.

UK performers and artists are of course still able to tour and perform in the EU, and vice versa. However, we understand the concerns about the new arrangements and we are committed to supporting the sectors as they get to grips with the changes to systems and processes.

As the Prime Minister has said, we're working flat out with the industry, including through the DCMS-led working group, on plans to support the creative sectors to tour in Europe. Through our bilateral discussions with EU Member States, we have established that in at least 17 out of 27 Member States some touring activities are possible without visas or work-permits. The UK has significantly more generous arrangements for touring professionals than many Member States, and should they be willing to change their rules to match ours we will have those discussions and encourage them to do so.

Arts: UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received from touring creative service companies regarding the arrangements in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement; and what assessment they have made of those representations. [HL621]

Baroness Barran: UK performers and artists are of course still able to tour and perform in the EU, and vice versa. However, we understand the concerns about the new arrangements and we are working with the creative and cultural sectors to help them get to grips with the changes to systems and processes.

As the Secretary of State has said, we have moved at pace and with urgency on plans to support the creative sectors to tour in Europe. We have engaged with touring creative service companies, including through the DCMS-led working group. Sector representatives on the working group are encouraged to reach out to others to ensure the

working group hears and understands the views and concerns of organisations and individuals right across the cultural and creative sectors. Engagement with the sector has been extremely helpful and we are grateful for the cooperation of numerous organisations.

Through our bilateral discussions with EU Member States, we have established that in at least 17 out of 27 Member States some touring activities are possible without visas or work-permits. The UK has significantly more generous arrangements for touring professionals than many Member States, and should they be willing to change their rules to match ours we will have those discussions and encourage them to do so.

Asthma: Dupilumab

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

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decision by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence not to recommend dupilumab for the treatment of severe asthma with Type 2 inflammation in their appraisal constitution document; and what assessment they have made of its recent approval by the Scottish Medicines Consortium for use in Scotland. [\[HL366\]](#)

Lord Bethell: The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is an independent body and is responsible for assessing new medicines and treatments in accordance with its existing methods and processes. NICE's draft guidance on dupilumab for consultation of 7 May 2021 states that it is not recommended for the treatment of severe asthma. NICE has not yet published its final recommendations on dupilumab and the draft guidance is now open for consultation until 28 May 2021. There will be a further meeting of NICE's independent appraisal committee in September to consider all comments received during the consultation.

The Government has not made any assessment of the decision of the Scottish Medicines Consortium on dupilumab, as this is a devolved matter.

Asthma: Health Services

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

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by Asthma UK Asthma Care in a Crisis, published on 5 May, what plans they have to improve the percentage of people with asthma who are receiving all elements of basic asthma care. [\[HL367\]](#)

Lord Bethell: The content of the Quality Outcomes Framework (QOF) asthma review, which ensures all general practitioner practices establish and maintain a register of patients with an asthma diagnosis, has been amended to incorporate the key elements of basic asthma care positively associated with better patient outcomes and self-management, including:

- An assessment of asthma control;
- A recording of the number of exacerbations;
- An assessment of inhaler technique; and
- A written personalised asthma action plan.

The QOF for 2021/22 has been implemented from April 2021 with these updated indicators for asthma.

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

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by Asthma UK Asthma Care in a Crisis, published on 5 May, what plans they have to ensure that people who are most at risk of having an asthma attack are (1) prioritised, and (2) seen face-to-face, when clinically necessary. [\[HL368\]](#)

Lord Bethell: The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's rapid guidance, on severe asthma during the pandemic recommends using technology to reduce in-person appointments. However, guidance on face-to-face appointments throughout the pandemic has been in line with clinical need.

Work is continuing to recover primary care services, including services for asthma patients, to an appropriate level balance between phone/online and face to face appointments. NHS England and NHS Improvement's updated practice on standard operating procedures for patient consultations states that although the use of video and remote consultations may be suitable for some people, face to face appointments will be offered.

Aviation: Coronavirus

*Asked by **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what restrictions they have imposed on flights arriving from 'red list' countries. [\[HL332\]](#)

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Direct flight bans apply to most countries on the 'Red List', and operators must only deliver passengers who have travelled indirectly from a 'Red List' country in the previous 10 days to a designated port.

Passengers who have been in a country or territory on the red list in the 10 days prior to their arrival will only be allowed to enter the UK if they are a British or Irish National, or have residence rights in the UK. Alongside the requirements to take a pre-departure test and complete the Passenger Locator Form, most people who are allowed to enter England from a country on the red list will be required to quarantine for 10 days in a government-approved managed quarantine hotel with Covid-19 tests on days 2 and 8.

Direct flight bans were not introduced for countries added to the 'Red List' on 9 and 23 April, which had regular scheduled services to England (Pakistan, Bangladesh and India), on a trial basis. Passengers on direct flights were still subject to measures such as quarantine in a government-approved managed quarantine hotel.

We continually assess the data to understand the efficacy of measures such as managed hotel quarantine, entry bans and testing to ensure public health is protected.

Asked by Lord Bowness

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the social, and (2) the economic, impact of the restrictions on international travel introduced to address the COVID-19 pandemic on communities (1) directly dependant on aviation, and (2) dependant on manufacturing and supplies associated with the aviation industry. [HL426]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government recognises the challenging circumstances facing the aviation industry because of Covid-19 and firms experiencing difficulties can draw upon the unprecedented package of measures announced by the Chancellor.

The Global Travel Taskforce report, published in April 2021, was created following extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders from the international travel and tourism industries to develop a risk-based framework that can facilitate the return of international travel while managing Variants of Concern.

The taskforce considered a full range of views from industry stakeholders to inform the final recommendations and we are grateful for their valuable contributions to the development of the report's recommendations. We will continue to draw on the latest and most robust evidence and analysis about the impact of Covid-19 as we look to facilitate the safe return of international travel whilst protecting public health.

Asked by Lord Bowness

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of unemployment rates in (1) aviation communities, and (2) communities dependant on industries associated with aviation, since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic; and what specific support they have made available to such communities. [HL427]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department for Transport is committed to addressing the ongoing impact COVID-19 has had on the aviation sector. Aviation supported around half a million jobs across all regions of the UK before COVID-19, and since the start of the pandemic there have been tens of thousands of job cuts, mainly concentrated in the South East.

Businesses across the industry have drawn on economy wide measures including the Covid Job Retention Scheme and Covid Corporate Finance Facility, and sector specific support such as the Airport and Ground Operators Support Scheme. We estimate that by the end of September 2021 the air transport sector will have benefited from around £7bn of Government support since the start of the pandemic, with an estimated 50% of air transport sector employees currently furloughed.

Over £25bn has also been provided to the tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors in the form of grants, loans

and tax breaks. The Government has extended business rates relief, introduced new Restart grants of up to £18,000, and has extended the cut in VAT for tourism and hospitality activities to 5% until the end of September.

Bahrain: Prisons

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the statement by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights on 30 April, which described the "unnecessary and disproportionate use of force by police special forces" against inmates in Jau prison in Bahrain on 17 April, and following decisions by the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, published in May 2020, that at least 32 inmates of Jau prison were arbitrarily detained in violation of international law and in what may constitute "crimes against humanity", what assessment they have made of the statement made by the UK Ambassador to Bahrain on 6 May that Jau prison is a "well-run facility, with good medical provision"; and what representations they intend to make to the government of Bahrain to allow the United Nations Special Rapporteur urgent access to (a) Bahrain, and (b) Jau prison. [HL310]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The FCDO considers a range of information regarding human rights in Bahrain. The visit to Jau prison on 3 May enabled the UK Ambassador and other international representatives to see the facilities at Jau prison first hand, understand the Covid-19 measures implemented, and raise human rights matters directly. We continue to raise specific cases as and when we have concerns and encourage the Government of Bahrain to engage with appropriate interested parties, including the UN.

Asked by Lord Collins of Highbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on conditions in Bahrain's Jau prison; and whether they have verified the reports contained in the statement. [HL428]

Asked by Lord Collins of Highbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement by Her Majesty's British ambassador to Bahrain in relation to Bahrain's Jai prison; and whether they have verified the reports contained in the statement. [HL429]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The FCDO considers a range of information regarding human rights in Bahrain, including statements by the spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The visit to Jau prison on 3 May enabled the UK Ambassador and other international representatives to see the facilities at Jau prison first hand, understand the Covid-19 measures implemented, and raise human rights matters directly.

Bangladesh: Rohingya

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the likely impact of their cuts to financial support for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh; and by what percentage has the amount been cut from the support given in the previous two years. [HL390]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains a leading donor to the Rohingya response in Bangladesh despite the financial pressures. At the launch of the Joint Response Plan on 18 May, we announced £27.6 million in new funding to the Rohingya response in Bangladesh, bringing our total contribution over £320 million since the crisis started in 2017. This financial contribution will continue to deliver lifesaving aid, including food assistance, health services, water and sanitation, camp management, shelter, cooking gas, and protection for survivors of gender-based violence. We have prioritised this assistance and the consolidation of the provision of services to achieve better effectiveness, impact, and value for taxpayers' money. In addition to bilateral funding, the UK is providing support to the Rohingya refugee response through global funds such as the Global Partnership for Education, Education Cannot Wait, Central Emergency Response Fund and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. UK funds also support the Rohingya through the UN agencies and the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

Bank Services: New Businesses

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of high street banks refusing new business account applications; and what steps they plan to take as a result. [HL691]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been unprecedented demand for banking services, this accompanied with working restrictions due to social distancing has meant banks have faced significant capacity pressures which has limited their ability to meet demand for their services. Banks are doing all they can to meet this demand in these difficult circumstances.

Decisions about what products are offered to individual businesses remain commercial decisions for banks and building societies. It would be inappropriate for the Government to intervene in these decisions. But the Government has always been clear that lenders should open to new customers where it is operationally possible for them to do so.

BBC Monitoring: Television Licences

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the significance of BBC Monitoring to (1) UK, and (2) global, security will be a factor when they make

decisions about the future funding level of the licence fee at the next spending review. [HL546]

Baroness Barran: The BBC is responsible for the funding, staffing and administration of Monitoring, which is provided under a specific agreement between the BBC and government. The monitoring service is funded through the licence fee and there are no plans to change this arrangement.

It is the Licence Fee Settlement, not the spending review, which will determine the BBC's public funding for at least 5 years from April 2022. On 10 November the government announced the formal opening of the process and subsequently the Secretary of State has received evidence from the BBC about its financial needs.

Negotiations for the 2022 Licence Fee Settlement are ongoing and the Secretary of State will update the house in due course.

BBC: Royal Charters

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the mid-term review of the BBC Charter not being conducted before the Ofcom review of public service broadcasting; and how will the review by Ofcom be used to inform the mid-term review of the BBC Charter. [HL556]

Baroness Barran: Ofcom is required to conduct a review into public service broadcasting at least every five years and went out for consultation in December 2020. The report of its third review, "Public Service Broadcasting in the Internet Age", was published on 2 July 2015.

The concept and principles for the Mid-Term Review are set out in the BBC Royal Charter of 2016. The Royal Charter is clear that "the (mid-term) review must not be undertaken before 2022 and must be completed by 2024."

Government officials shall be undertaking preparatory work ahead of the mid-term review starting formally next year, and will consult Ofcom on the scope, timing, and terms of reference in due course, as is required by the BBC Charter.

Further, the Charter requires that Ofcom conduct a periodic review of the BBC which looks at the extent to which the BBC is fulfilling its Mission and promoting each of the Public Purposes and addressing any specific issues of concern. This must be concluded in time to inform the Mid-Term Review.

Bees: Conservation

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase the population of native bees; and what assessment they have made of the extent to which any such plans will (1) improve pollination, and (2) boost production of UK farming crops. [HL405]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Pollinators are a priority for this Government. The National Pollinator Strategy sets out actions we are taking, with our many partners, to improve the status of bees and other pollinators in England on farmland and other areas.

Our actions include restoring and creating habitat for bees and other wild and managed pollinators to thrive; acting on the pressures that impact on pollinators, including by supporting Integrated Pest Management (IPM); providing advice and raising awareness across society so that they can take action themselves; and supporting new monitoring and research. The Healthy Bees Plan 2030 sets out further action to improve honeybee health, alongside beekeeping associations and other stakeholders.

In 2019 we published a synthesis of the evidence on the status of UK pollinators and pollination services. This assessment found evidence of declines or range contractions in wild bees and other insects but trends in the pollination service are less well understood. For this reason, it is also difficult to make predictions about changes in crop yield.

We do know however that insect pollination directly increases the quantity and quality of yield in many crops in the UK. We also know that impacts of sub-optimal pollination have been identified in UK fruit crops. Boosting pollinator numbers therefore increases resilience and protects against risks to yield and maintains their crucial role in wild plant pollination.

Research in this area is ongoing. For example, the publicly-funded Global Food Security programme's 'Resilient Pollinators' project is looking at the implications of future land use change for the resilience of pollination services to UK agriculture.

Bills: Parliamentary Scrutiny

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government which bills they intend to subject to pre-legislative scrutiny in the present Session of Parliament. [HL491]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: The Government intends to subject three draft bills to pre-legislative scrutiny in the present Session of Parliament: Downstream Oil Resilience, Victims, and Online Safety, and is in discussion with the Liaison Committees in both Houses regarding how the draft bills will be scrutinised. As in previous years, it is possible that additional draft bills will be added to the list and therefore this list is not exhaustive.

Biometric Residence Permits

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Biometric Residence Permit cards confirming that the holder has been granted indefinite leave to remain have been sent to an address other than the latest address on

the successful applicant's record; and what plans they have to ensure that such Permits go to the correct addresses in future. [HL404]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Based on the most recent data available, lost or mis-delivered Biometric Residence Permits account for less than 0.04% of Biometric Residence Permits produced for all applications granted further leave of greater than 6 months or indefinite leave to remain within the UK between 1st July 2020 and end December 2020. We are not able to break this figure down by leave type.

It should be noted this data may be subject to minor change as we were actively working with FedEx to reconcile lost and mis-delivered Biometric Residence Permit deliveries between 1 July 2020 and end December 2020 by the end of May 2021.

Where a customer reports a Biometric Residence Permit has been mis-delivered to either our delivery partner FedEx, or directly to UKVI, it is investigated. Where possible FedEx will attempt to recover the package and re-deliver to the correct address. Where it is not possible to recover, the BRP will be cancelled and re-issued at no cost to the customer where the mis-delivery was down to a UKVI or a FedEx error.

British Nationals Abroad: Electoral Register

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many overseas electors are (1) on electoral rolls in the United Kingdom, (2) apply for a postal vote, and (3) voted in the 2019 general election. [HL659]

Lord True: There were 233,000 overseas electors registered in Great Britain for the 2019 general election. The Government does not hold data on the number of overseas electors who submitted a postal vote application or how many voted.

The Office for National Statistics also publishes electoral statistic bulletins with some information on overseas electors. This can be found here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/elections/electoralregistration/bulletins/electoralstatisticsforuk/previousReleases>.

British Nationals Abroad: France

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether UK citizens who are exempt from the requirement for a Schengen visa are also exempt from the requirement for an attestation d'accueil to stay in France with friends or family; and if not, what steps they intend to take to negotiate a waiver with the government of France for any such requirement. [HL291]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The EU has legislated such that British Citizens can travel visa-free in the Schengen area for short-stays, such as for tourism, for up

to 90 days in any 180-day period. The EU's Schengen Borders Code governs the rules for entry and exit in the Schengen area. EU Member State authorities are responsible for the implementation of these rules. At border control, British Citizens visiting the Schengen area will need to meet the third-country national requirements under the Schengen Borders Code. They should be prepared to show proof of their return or onward travel and proof of accommodation, which is defined in law by the relevant Member State. In France this is the 'attestation d'accueil' certificate if staying with friends or family, or a booking confirmation. In the absence of this, they should be prepared to show they have enough money for their stay. Such a requirement is in line with the treatment of third-country nationals under the Schengen Borders Code. Information, including on entry requirements, for British Citizens planning to travel to EU Member States is available on the country-specific Travel Advice pages published on gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france>.

Children: Countryside

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that all children, not only those at a crisis point, have access to nature. [HL342]

Lord Benyon: Defra recognises the crucial importance of having good access to green spaces for health and well-being. The 25 Year Environment Plan sets out our comprehensive and long-term approach to protecting and enhancing our natural landscapes in England for the next generation, and to helping people improve their health and wellbeing by connecting with nature.

There are a wide range of initiatives within Defra which will help to increase access to green spaces across the whole of England. These include, but are not limited to:

- Trees for Climate programme.
- Green Recovery Challenge Fund.
- Green Social Prescribing Project.
- Engagement with Protected Landscapes to improve access.
- Nature for Climate Fund.
- National Framework of Green Infrastructure Standards.
- Development of the England Coast Path and a new coast to coast National Trail in the north of England.

On access to nature for children specifically:

- The Children and Nature Programme, managed jointly by Defra, Natural England, and Department for Education, aims to support children from disadvantaged backgrounds to have better access to natural environments.
- Generation Green, a project funded through the first round of the Green Recovery Challenge Fund. It is a 16-month project, in partnership with the 10 English National Parks, that aims to provide more than 100,000

progressive opportunities to connect young people to nature, prioritising young people from BAME groups, disadvantaged backgrounds and coastal communities. It also aims to create and save jobs and build an aspirant workforce for a green recovery.

Children: Poverty

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the latest Households Below Average Income release, published on 25 March, what steps they are taking to address the rising number of children in relative poverty. [HL343]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the latest Households Below Average Income release, published on 25 March, what steps they are taking to support larger families living in poverty. [HL344]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the latest Households Below Average Income release, published on 25 March, how they plan to address the rise in child poverty in the North East of England. [HL345]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: This Government has long championed the principle of work as the most effective way of reducing poverty. This approach is based on clear evidence about the importance of parental employment, particularly where it is full-time, in significantly reducing the risk of poverty and in improving long-term outcomes for all families and children, including families with three or more children. Such families are two and a half times less likely to be in absolute poverty (after housing costs) if all of the adults in their household are working compared to if none of the adults are working.

Our Plan for Jobs is already delivering for people of all ages right across the country and includes investing over £7 billion on new schemes such as the £2 billion Kickstart Scheme, the Restart Scheme and our Job Entry Targeted Support Scheme. We want everyone to be able to get into decent jobs and progress in work.

We are also putting more money into the pockets of the low-paid, including by increasing the national living wage and by spending an estimated £112 billion on welfare support for people of working age in 2020/2, including around £7.4 billion of Covid-related welfare policy measures.

As a Government, we have always believed that absolute poverty is a better measure of living standards than relative poverty. Relative poverty tends to fall when median income shrinks, something that is particularly relevant in the current economic circumstances.

The latest statistics for 2019/20 show that, before the pandemic, household incomes had seen the strongest annual growth for almost 20 years across the entire

income distribution, with 1.3 million fewer people, including 300,000 children, in absolute poverty (after housing costs) compared with 2010. And, in the three years to 2019/20, the proportion of children in absolute poverty (after housing costs) in the North East region fell by 2 percentage points compared with the three years to 2009/10.

Choirs: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord German

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their COVID-19 guidance for rehearsals by non-professional choirs; when they plan to review this guidance; and whether the guidance has a statutory basis. [HL396]

Baroness Barran: Non-professional groups of up to six people can now sing indoors, and can perform or rehearse in groups of up to 30 outdoors. In addition, multiple groups of 30 can now sing outdoors, provided the groups are kept separate throughout the activity, in line with other large events that follow the organised events guidance for local authorities.

We know that the restrictions on singing are frustrating to large numbers of amateur choirs and performance groups across the country and that many people have made sacrifices in order to drive down infections and protect the NHS over the last year.

The Performing Arts Guidance makes reference to the relevant regulations and provides recommendations for performing arts venues and operators. We expect everyone to comply with the law and the underlying guidance when arranging events or carrying out performing arts related activities.

We will continue to keep guidance and restrictions under review, in line with the changing situation. Further detail on step 4 will be set out as soon as possible.

Asked by Baroness Royall of Blaisdon

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what basis there is a limit on non-professional singers of six people singing indoors in the context of restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic; and why this limit is more restrictive than the one that was in place in autumn 2020. [HL534]

Baroness Barran: We know that the restrictions on singing are frustrating to large numbers of amateur choirs and performance groups across the country and that many people have made sacrifices in order to drive down infections and protect the NHS over the last year.

However, it is important that we take a cautious approach in easing restrictions. We have followed the views of public health experts on singing. We are aware, through the [NERVTAG](#) and [PERFORM studies](#) that singing can increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission through the spread of aerosol droplets. This was backed up by a [consensus statement from SAGE](#), resulting in the [suggested principles of safer singing](#) being published.

We will continue to keep guidance and restrictions under review, in line with the changing situation. Further detail on step 4 will be set out as soon as possible.

Asked by Baroness Walmsley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the (1) evidential, and (2) statutory, basis for the recent guidance that amateur choirs should be restricted to six socially-distanced singers indoors. [HL542]

Baroness Barran: We know that the restrictions on singing are frustrating to large numbers of amateur choirs and performance groups across the country and that many people have made sacrifices in order to drive down infections and protect the NHS over the last year.

It is important that we take a cautious approach in easing restrictions. We have followed the views of public health experts on singing. We are aware, through the [NERVTAG](#) and [PERFORM studies](#) that singing can increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission through the spread of aerosol droplets. This was backed up by a [consensus statement from SAGE](#), resulting in the [suggested principles of safer singing](#) being published.

We will continue to keep guidance and restrictions under review, in line with the changing situation. Further detail on step 4 will be set out as soon as possible.

Civil Proceedings: Sanctions

Asked by Lord Wallace of Saltaire

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether (1) companies, or (2) persons, subject to UK sanctions are also banned from initiating actions in UK courts. [HL418]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The measures that may be imposed within the UK's independent sanctions framework include financial sanctions, immigration sanctions (travel bans), trade sanctions, and aircraft and shipping sanctions. Persons or entities designated under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018 are not banned from initiating action in UK courts. Designated persons may seek an administrative review of their designation as set out in Chapter 2 of Part 1 of the Act and apply for judicial reviews of decisions in accordance with Chapter 4 of Part 1 of the Act. Guidance on how to challenge UK sanctions is on GOV.UK.

Climate Change: Urban Areas

Asked by Baroness Parminter

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many UK cities have adaptation plans to respond to the impacts of climate change. [HL371]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: This information is not available. Quantifying adaptation plans in UK cities to respond to climate change impacts is a complicated and time-consuming process, and information can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

COE Countries

Asked by The Earl of Dundee

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the contribution of international partnerships between different cities and regions towards (1) regional stability, and (2) local democracy, within regions and communities of Council of Europe member states. [HL430]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK places great value on the role of the Council of Europe (CoE) in advancing work on human rights, democracy and the rule of law across Europe. International partnerships provide a significant contribution towards regional stability and local democracy and the UK Government welcomes such activity between communities. For example, since 2018, we have worked with local authorities to build partnerships between the UK and Italy focussed on sharing best practice on integration and supporting newly arrived migrants. In March 2019, the UK and French Governments brought together elected Leaders and Mayors from cities, towns and regions across our countries at the inaugural UK-France Mayors' summit in London. This initiative strengthened existing partnerships between towns and cities in France and the UK, and provided a platform for local leaders to share solutions to modern day challenges.

Asked by The Earl of Dundee

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their policy as chair of the Council of Europe to seek to boost grass roots democracy and political stability at local levels, what plans they have to encourage their international partners to establish partnerships with different communities and areas within Council of Europe member states. [HL431]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK places great value on the role of the Council of Europe (CoE) in advancing work on human rights, democracy and the rule of law across Europe. As set out in the Integrated Review our plans to encourage our international partners to establish partnerships with different communities and areas go much wider than the CoE member states. The UK will work with allies, including CoE member states and civil society worldwide, to protect democratic values as part of our force for good agenda. In many instances, this will involve working bilaterally with countries to strengthen their domestic governance. In doing so, the UK government will focus its efforts primarily in the wider European neighbourhood, East Africa and the Indo-Pacific, tailoring our approach to meet local needs and combining our diplomacy, development, trade, security and other tools accordingly. To promote robust democratic institutions, the UK will support strong, transparent and accountable political processes and institutions overseas (including parliaments and political parties) through the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and other institutions. This work will be bolstered by a new UK capability to support election

observation and activity to strengthen existing multilateral efforts.

Compost: Peat

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the relative cost of (1) peat free compost, and (2) compost incorporating peat; and what steps they are taking to reduce the cost of peat free materials to gardeners. [HL391]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: In the recently published England Peat Action Plan we have committed to undertake a full consultation in 2021 on banning the sale of peat and peat containing products in the amateur sector by the end of this Parliament. As part of that consultation, we will be considering opportunities to reduce both the costs and availability of alternatives to peat in growing media.

As outlined in the Action Plan, the Government is committed to working with the industry to understand the implications of our proposals, identify blockages and to working with the private sector to develop and enact solutions, thus making the transition to peat alternatives as seamless as possible.

The England Peat Action Plan is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

England Peat Action Plan [england-peat-action-plan.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-05-19/HL391>

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership

Asked by Lord Smith of Finsbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish (1) their outline approach, (2) a scoping analysis, (3) their response to public consultation, and (4) a timetable for negotiations, on the UK's accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. [HL317]

Asked by Lord Smith of Finsbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect formal negotiations on the UK's accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership to begin. [HL318]

Asked by Lord Smith of Finsbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish their analysis of the economic impact of joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. [HL319]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: On Monday 1st February, the Government submitted its notification of intent to begin the Comprehensive and Progressive

Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) accession process. This was the first formal step towards accession before the launch of formal negotiations.

The Government will publish the negotiation objectives, scoping analysis, and consultation response in advance of the start of formal negotiations. In accordance with the guidelines set out by the CPTPP membership, negotiations will begin once the CPTPP membership formally invite the UK to proceed. The Government expects this decision will be taken soon.

Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will publish the latest evidence base which has led to the B.1.351 COVID-19 variant being categorised as a variant of concern, particularly in regard to its transmissibility. [HL580]

Lord Bethell: The B.1.351 COVID-19 variant was categorised as a variant of concern (VOC) on 23 December 2020 by the New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group. The decision to raise this lineage to a VOC was taken on the basis of reports indicating that the strain had replaced pre-existing strains in parts of South Africa and that there were two cases of B.1.351 identified in the United Kingdom with links to travel from South Africa. The genetic variations identified in the spike protein of B.1.351 were also cause for concern.

The three substitutions in the receptor binding domain, and in particular the E484K substitution, were thought to result in weaker neutralisation by some monoclonal antibodies and polyclonal neutralising sera. Although at the time there was no formal modelling from South Africa, the rapid spread of the variant could be consistent with increased transmissibility, which was also biologically plausible. More recent data has shown that B.1.351 has greater transmissibility than the original Wuhan strains of the virus. Evaluation was at an early stage when the recommendation to escalate this lineage was taken. A copy of PHE Risk assessment for SARS-CoV-2 variant: VOC-202012/02 (origin: South Africa) of 23 December is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

PHE Risk assessment for SARS-CoV-2 variant [HL580]
20201223_VOC-202012_02_SARS-COV-2 variant risk assessment
tool_v2.0.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-05-25/HL580>

Coronavirus: Aviation

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are putting in place to ensure that individuals

arriving from non-'red list' countries have not been in 'red list' countries in the previous 28 days. [HL333]

Lord Greenhalgh: All passengers who have been in a red list country in the 10 days before travel to the UK must take a pre-departure test (PDT), complete a passenger locator form (PLF), book tests to be taken on days 2 & 8 after arrival and quarantine for 10 days in an approved hotel. Passengers who have declared travel from or through red list countries, and who do not qualify for a work-related exemption, cannot complete a PLF without providing confirmation of a booking in managed quarantine.

Carriers are required to check passengers travelling to the UK have completed a PLF and taken a PDT.

Border Force continue to work with DfT and DHSC to identify passengers who are attempting to circumvent the MQS requirements, but it would not be appropriate to comment publicly on the detail of the operations concerned.

Coronavirus: Death

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish statistics on the number of people who died from COVID-19, as opposed to the number who died from other causes but had a positive COVID-19 test within 28 days of their death. [HL258]

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of excess deaths recorded in the COVID-19 death statistics of people who did not die from COVID-19, but who are listed in the statistics because they had a positive COVID-19 test within 28 days of their death. [HL259]

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 Blencathra

House of Lords

London

SW1A 0PW

25 May 2021

Dear Lord Blencathra,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am replying to your Parliamentary Questions asking what plans there are to publish statistics on the number of people who died from COVID-19, as opposed to the number who died from other causes but had a positive COVID-19 test within 28 days of their death (HL258); and the number of excess deaths recorded in the COVID-19 deaths statistics of people who did not die from COVID-19, but who are listed in the statistics

because they had a positive COVID-19 test within 28 days of their death (HL259).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for statistics on deaths registered in England and Wales and publishes a weekly bulletin[1] based on provisional mortality data. Cause of death is defined using the International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th edition (ICD-10). The ICD-10 codes used are: U07.1 (COVID-19, virus identified), U07.2 (COVID-19, virus not identified), U10.9 (Multisystem inflammatory syndrome associated with COVID-19), U09.9 (Post-COVID condition, where the acute COVID had ended before the condition immediately causing death occurred).

Mortality statistics are compiled from information supplied when deaths are certified and registered as part of civil registration. The death certificate is completed by a doctor (or coroner), who can certify the involvement of COVID-19 based on symptoms and clinical findings – a positive test result is not required. Diseases and health conditions are recorded on the death certificate only if the certifying doctor or coroner believed they made some contribution to the death, direct or indirect; the death certificate does not include all health conditions the deceased might have suffered from if they were not considered relevant. Therefore, ONS statistics on deaths involving COVID-19 do not include deaths from causes other than COVID-19 but where the deceased had a positive COVID-19 test result. A death is not counted as involving COVID-19 on the basis of a test result only.

ONS data are different from the figures on COVID-19 deaths published on the *GOV.UK Coronavirus in the UK* dashboard[2] which shows ‘deaths within 28 days of a positive test’. Section 7 of the ONS weekly deaths bulletin[3] compares these numbers. You can read a blog by Professor John Newton of Public Health England[4] which explains the different methods for counting COVID-19 deaths.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

[1]

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

[2] <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>

[3]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsregistere dweeklyinenglandandwalesprovisional/weekending7may2021#comparison-of-weekly-deaths-occurrences-in-england-and-wales>

[4]

<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/08/12/behind-the-headlines-counting-covid-19-deaths/>

Coronavirus: Disease Control

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 19 May (HL236), why they consider the list of companies that were placed on the “VIP” fast-track for potential contracts related to the COVID-19 pandemic to be commercially sensitive, given that the question put sought no contractual or payment information; and whether they will now answer the question put. [HL409]

Lord Bethell: The Department has to consider the position of suppliers which were referred to the high priority channel in terms of the likely publicity and attention releasing a list would attract. The impact on a supplier's reputation, unrelated to the terms of their particular contract with the Department or ability to deliver the contracted outcomes, can affect a supplier's competitive position in their respective market and confidence that its customers and investors may have in its commercial operations.

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to publish a list of all the actions that have been made lawful under changes to COVID-19 regulations, but which have been described by Ministers of the Crown as “dangerous” within 24 hours of those changes taking effect. [HL410]

Lord Bethell: We have no current plans to do so.

Coronavirus: Greater London

Asked by Lord Lipsey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were tested for COVID-19 during the surge testing in Lambeth and Wandsworth in April. [HL284]

Lord Bethell: During the surge testing in April, 77,481 people were tested.

Asked by Lord Lipsey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of those tested during the surge testing for COVID-19 in Lambeth and Wandsworth in April returned a positive result. [HL285]

Lord Bethell: Of those tested, 128 returned a positive result.

Asked by Lord Lipsey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of false positive results for COVID-19 among those tested during the surge testing in Lambeth and Wandsworth in April. [HL286]

Lord Bethell: We have made no estimate.

Asked by Lord Lipsey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many cases of the South African variant of COVID-19 were identified as a result of surge testing in Lambeth and Wandsworth in April. [HL287]

Lord Bethell: No samples were identified as containing the South African variant.

Coronavirus: Immunotherapy

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government when treatments for immunocompromised groups, including monoclonal antibody therapies, will be available as an alternative to COVID-19 vaccines; and which groups will be able to access those treatments. [HL524]

Lord Bethell: Immunocompromised individuals are a priority cohort for research into therapeutic and prophylaxis treatments such as monoclonal antibody therapies, novel antivirals and repurposed compounds.

A wide range of treatments in all three of these groups are currently in clinical trials in the United Kingdom and the Government is monitoring trials worldwide. It is not yet possible to determine the exact patient groups who may be able to benefit from these treatments, as this will depend on results released by the ongoing trials when they conclude, licensing approval from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and deployment planning between the Department, NHS England and expert clinicians. The Government is taking steps to ensure supply of treatments in the event that they are found to be effective at treating COVID-19, including for immunocompromised individuals.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to order monoclonal antibody therapies as an alternative to COVID-19 vaccines; and if so, whether they plan to do so before AstraZeneca reports the findings of its PROVENT study. [HL525]

Lord Bethell: The Therapeutics Taskforce continues to monitor a range of COVID-19 therapeutics, including monoclonal antibodies, aimed at different stages of the treatment pathway. There has been a collaboration with the Vaccines Taskforce to assess the potential of neutralising monoclonal antibodies to provide passive immunity as an alternative to COVID-19 vaccines. We continue to work closely with the cross-agency group RAPID C-19, to assess evidence from clinical trials and delivery to patients, following regulatory approval.

We are in contact with a number of manufacturers to ensure that United Kingdom patients have access to COVID-19 therapeutics as evidence continues to emerge. Clinical trials, such as AstraZeneca's PROVENT study, will be crucial in providing evidence as to which treatments are most effective.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Rogan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they are having with (1) the devolved administrations, and (2) travel companies, to ensure that the costs of COVID-19 test kits are not a prohibitive factor to families on limited incomes having a summer holiday. [HL372]

Lord Bethell: Government officials attend regular meetings with their counterparts from the devolved administrations to share updates and coordinate and align on testing efforts where possible. The Government also recognises that the devolved administrations have their own testing systems and individual discussions with the travel industry on international travel.

Since requirements were introduced for international travel testing, the costs of testing have fallen significantly. The Government is committed to working with the travel industry and private testing providers to reduce the cost of travel testing whilst also ensuring travel is as safe as possible.

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to cooperate with the scientific community of South Africa on genomic sequencing relating to COVID-19. [HL582]

Lord Bethell: The United Kingdom has large-scale sequencing capacity and extensive specialist expertise and is uniquely positioned to help address global sequencing capability gaps. Through the New Variant Assessment Platform (NVAP) programme, Public Health England (PHE) will work to support global partners to strengthen their genomic sequencing capability, either by building on existing infrastructure or by conducting sequencing and analysis of samples in the UK if there is no in-country capability.

The NVAP will also enable the biological assessment of emerging variants, strengthening horizon scanning and public health decision-making, both in this country and abroad. This includes a risk assessment from the point when a mutation is first identified, to ongoing assessment as more information becomes available. The platform will also agree pathways for biological analysis, diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics as appropriate. PHE is working with the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention to deploy a Technical Advisor for regional level support.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the response of patients with (1) asthma, and (2) chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, to the COVID-19 vaccination programme; and what

assessment they have made of that programme's prioritisation of such patients. [HL173]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England (PHE) is actively monitoring effectiveness of vaccination in accordance with the COVID-19 vaccine surveillance strategy. This includes monitoring of clinical risk groups which will include those with chronic respiratory disease as defined in “Immunisation against infectious disease” (the Green Book). PHE has made no assessment of the response to the COVID-19 vaccination programme in people with asthma and/or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

PHE supports the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation which has prioritised people with severe asthma and/or COPD into cohort six together with other people in an at-risk group: “Individuals with a severe lung condition, including those with asthma that requires continuous or repeated use of systemic steroids or with previous exacerbations requiring hospital admission, and COPD including chronic bronchitis and emphysema”. The examples are not exhaustive, and, within these groups, the prescriber should apply 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 COVID-19 itself.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 27 April (HL14926), whether they have worked with specialists to ascertain the appropriate level of support for clinical extremely vulnerable people after having their COVID-19 vaccine. [HL177]

Lord Bethell: The Department continues to engage with specialists, including senior clinicians, to assess vaccine efficacy and ensure that the guidance and support provided to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals is appropriate.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines in individuals who are immunocompromised because of a health condition or who need to take immunosuppressants due to transplantation. [HL288]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England (PHE) is monitoring effectiveness of vaccination in clinical risk groups including those with immunosuppression.

Based on early data from PHE's monitoring and increasing evidence indicating the potential for a reduction in transmission in those vaccinated, on 24 March 2021 the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) stated that early vaccination data indicate lower protection in vaccinated adults who are immunosuppressed. Those with severe immunosuppression are therefore more likely to suffer

poor outcomes following infection and are less likely to benefit from the vaccines offered. The JCVI advised that adult household contacts of adults with severe immunosuppression, aged 16 years old and over, should be offered COVID-19 vaccination alongside priority group six. This will help reduce the risk of infection in those who may not be able to fully benefit from being vaccinated themselves.

The JCVI will continue to review evidence on the use of vaccines in those with immunosuppression and will update its advice as necessary.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to allow immunocompromised people to be prioritised for a third dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. [HL290]

Lord Bethell: To ensure ongoing protection for the United Kingdom population, particularly the most vulnerable, we are preparing for a potential booster vaccination programme. While we are planning for several potential scenarios, final decisions on the timing and scope of the booster programme in terms of when to give boosters to which groups and with which vaccines will not be taken until later this year, in line with results from key clinical studies.

Any decision on a booster vaccination programme will be informed by independent advice from the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to protect groups for whom the COVID-19 vaccine is less effective, and (2) to communicate their remaining risk to the general public. [HL522]

Lord Bethell: The Government continues to monitor vaccine efficacy amongst different clinical groups, including studies such as OCTAVE, looking at COVID-19 in people with and without cancer and SOAP, measuring vaccine efficacy in blood cancer patients.

We have been working on finding treatments to reduce mortality, hospitalisations and disease severity. Immunocompromised individuals are a priority cohort for the research treatments such as monoclonal antibody therapies, antivirals, and repurposed compounds.

Although the shielding advice was paused on 1 April, the clinically extremely vulnerable are advised to continue to take extra precautions to keep themselves safe, particularly when meeting with people from outside their household. All clinically extremely vulnerable people will have been offered a COVID-19 vaccination and are strongly encouraged to take up their second dose when it is offered.

If an individual has concerns about the impacts of COVID-19 on their own health condition then they should speak to their general practitioner or specialist clinician.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of people hospitalised with COVID-19 and who have had both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, who are (1) blood cancer patients, and (2) immunocompromised. [HL672]

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

Cotton: Xinjiang

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the estimate by US Customs and Border Protection that 85 per cent of China's manufactured cotton comes from the Xinjiang region; and what plans they have to introduce restrictions on imports of cotton to prevent the import of goods sent from Uighur internment camps in the Xinjiang region. [HL555]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: HM Government has serious concerns about the situation in Xinjiang, with reports of the use of forced labour. It has always been the case that where we have concerns, we raise them – as we did on this issue at the UN Human Rights Council, most recently in February.

We advise businesses with supply chain links in Xinjiang to conduct appropriate due diligence to satisfy themselves that their activities do not support, and are not seen to support, any violations or abuses of rights and responsibilities.

My Rt Hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary announced a review of export controls on 12th January, but import controls were not included at this time.

Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

Asked by Baroness Gale

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. [HL347]

Lord Greenhalgh: The UK signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) in 2012, signalling its strong commitment to tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG), and this Government remains committed to ratifying it.

The Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Ratification of Convention) Act 2017 requires Ministers to publish annual reports on their progress towards being able to ratify the Convention. The most recent report was published on 22 October 2020 and can be found here:

Ratification of the Council of Europe convention on combating violence against women and domestic violence - progress report 2020 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Crops: Waste

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to ensure that this year's agricultural crops do not go to waste. [HL277]

Lord Benyon: Defra is working closely with industry and other Government departments to understand labour supply and demand, and to help our world-leading growers access the labour they need to ensure our crops are picked and not wasted.

The Seasonal Workers Pilot has been expanded for one year, with 30,000 visas granted for workers to come to the UK, from EU or non-EU countries, for a period of up to six months to pick and package fruit and vegetables on our farms.

In 2021 and beyond, food and farming businesses will continue to be able to rely on EU nationals living in the UK with settled or pre-settled status. Over 4.9 million EU citizens and their families have been granted settled or pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme and the application deadline is 30 June 2021. EU nationals who have settled status can continue to travel to the UK to do seasonal work in 2021.

The Government is encouraging the horticulture sector to make employment more attractive to UK domestic workers through offering training, careers options, wage increases and to invest in automation technology.

To help with these efforts, Defra will build on the success of last year's domestic recruitment campaign, working with industry and the DWP to raise awareness of career opportunities within the horticulture sector among UK workers. We will also explore the potential for automation to meet future labour demands of the sector.

Defra is leading a Government review of automation in horticulture to understand what is required to accelerate the development and uptake of automation technologies in both the edible and ornamental sectors, in England, with the view to reducing the sector's long-term dependency on seasonal migrant labour. The review's final report will be published in the summer of 2021 and inform a range of policy decisions regarding automation and seasonal labour from 2022 onwards.

Cybercrime

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are planning any legislation to ensure that laws relating to cyber-insecure products are aligned with product safety laws; and what steps they are taking to (1) warn customers about cyber-insecure products, or (2) remove cyber-insecure products from circulation. [HL543]

Baroness Barran: As announced in the Queen's Speech, the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill will make sure all consumer connected products sold in the UK, adhere to minimum cyber security standards. This legislation will align with existing product safety laws.

The government has published advice on how to use smart devices safely in the home (<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/smart-devices-in-the-home>) and has regularly highlighted the issue of insecure devices, for example with the National Cyber Security Centre's guidance on how to secure internet-connected cameras in the home. In addition, the Cyber Aware campaign offers consumers advice on how to keep their devices secure.

Deep Sea Mining

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to supporting the call by the European Commission and others for a moratorium on deep sea mining. [HL252]

Lord Callanan: There is no deep sea mining currently happening in areas beyond national jurisdictions, there are no exploitation licences for deep sea mining, and no exploitation regulations have yet been agreed. Any mining licenced under future regulations is unlikely to begin for several years. In addition, the UK has committed not to sponsor or support the issuing of any exploitation licences for deep sea mining projects unless and until there is sufficient scientific evidence about the potential impact on deep sea ecosystems and strong and enforceable environmental regulations and standards have been developed by the International Seabed Authority (ISA) and are in place.

Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), it is the role of the ISA to regulate and control all mineral-related activities in the international seabed area for the benefit of mankind as a whole. In so doing, the ISA has the duty to ensure the effective protection of the marine environment from harmful effects that may arise from deep seabed activities.

The UK has a strong and respected voice in these international negotiations and the UK position emphasises the need to ensure that the highest possible environmental standards are met in the development of this new industry. We judge that engaging fully with these negotiations is the most effective way for the UK to work with others so that no deep sea mining takes place in the absence of strong and enforceable environmental regulations and standards. This includes requiring that Regional Environmental Management Plans are adopted for each region before any exploitation licence can even be considered, as well as the adoption of strong and enforceable environmental Standards as well as Guidelines.

Finally, on terminology, we note that the European Commission, in its recent sustainable blue economy strategy, has not made reference to a moratorium, but has set out that "In international negotiations, the EU should advocate that marine minerals in the international seabed area cannot be exploited before the effects of deep-sea mining on the marine environment, biodiversity and human activities have been sufficiently researched, the risks are understood and the technologies and operational practices are able to demonstrate no serious harm to the environment." We understand from the statement that the outcomes we and the Commission are arguing for are essentially the same, that no deep sea mining should take place in the absence of strong and enforceable environmental regulations and standards.

Diabetes

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the benefits of protecting funding to Clinical Commissioning Groups for diabetes technology. [HL603]

Lord Bethell: No assessment has been made on the benefits of protecting funding to Clinical Commissioning Groups for diabetes technology. Clinical Commissioning Groups are responsible for commissioning diabetes services for their local populations and are best placed as clinically-led organisations that have both the local knowledge and accountability, to make commissioning decisions in the best interests of their patients. This includes prescribing technologies for people living with diabetes, for example glucose monitoring devices.

Commissioning decisions for the adoption of technology products in diabetes are always guided by clinical and cost effective assessments, delivered by NICE and other regulatory bodies.

Diamorphine

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 29 April (HL15336), what assessment they have made of the supply of diamorphine; what steps they are taking to ensure that any shortage in the availability of diamorphine to NHS patients is addressed; and when they expect any such shortage to end. [HL528]

Lord Bethell: The Department is aware of ongoing supply issues resulting in intermittent availability of diamorphine injections, due to manufacturing issues. Further supplies of diamorphine injections are expected to be available in June. The Department continues to work closely with all suppliers and the National Health Service to maintain supply to patients who require it. The Department has communicated this issue to the NHS, advising the need to move to alternative opioids where diamorphine is currently used.

Dogs: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Morrow

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to raise the minimum age at which a dog bred in Northern Ireland can enter Great Britain. [HL370]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Now the Transition Period has ended, the Government has the opportunity to manage our own pet travel and commercial importation rules. The Government has listened to the concerns of stakeholders and the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) select committee and has developed proposals to strengthen our efforts to tackle puppy smuggling.

We will legislate to bring in powers which enable us to bring in new restrictions on the commercial import and non-commercial movement of pets on welfare grounds in the future. This could include increasing the minimum age that dogs can be non-commercially moved or commercially imported into Great Britain.

We are not currently proposing to apply these rules on pets travelling from Northern Ireland to GB, via the commercial or the non-commercial route.

Driving: Disqualification

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in each of the last 10 years, how many drivers have successfully claimed 'exceptional hardship' when they have reached 12 penalty points and have therefore carried on driving. [HL423]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: HMCTS records case management information about circumstances where there are grounds for mitigating the normal consequences of a driving conviction, but does not categorise specific data under 'exceptional hardship'. In the Crown and magistrates' courts there were 83,581 cases with no disqualification due to mitigating circumstances for the period 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2020.

Examples of exceptional hardship are loss of employment; impact of employment on others; impact on the health and safety of others; caring for elderly or disabled relatives; mortgage default or other financial loss.

Drugs: Northern Ireland

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether all over-the-counter medicines licensed for use by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency are authorised to be placed on the market in Northern Ireland. [HL85]

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions (1) they have had, and (2) they are planning

to have, with the government of the Republic of Ireland on the supply of over-the-counter medicines to Northern Ireland. [HL86]

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk to supply of over-the-counter medicines to Northern Ireland as a result of the requirements of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland. [HL87]

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they have given to manufacturers of over-the-counter medicines on how their supply to Northern Ireland can be maintained given the requirements of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland. [HL88]

Lord Bethell: The Government is considering all possible steps to help ensure the continuity of medicine supply to Northern Ireland, including over-the-counter (OTC) medicines. All OTC medicines can be licensed by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) as the regulator for Northern Ireland, in line with the European Union's rules.

The Department is working with the European Commission, as the representative of all EU Member States including Ireland, to resolve any outstanding issues relating to implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocol, including supply of OTC medicines. This includes discussions on medicines supply at recent meetings of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Specialised Committee attended by representatives from the EU Member States including Ireland.

The Government is working closely with industry to assess the impact of the Northern Ireland Protocol on the availability of medicines, including OTC medicines and we are committed to helping ensure the continuity of supply for patients in Northern Ireland.

We have provided guidance for manufacturers at the end of the transition period on how to maintain supply of medicines to Northern Ireland. We continue to work closely with industry partners, through our engagement channels and ad hoc queries and will continue to work alongside colleagues in the Border and Protocol Delivery Group and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to help ensure sector readiness for all implementation steps. We will set out the requirements for manufacturers to supply OTC medicines to Northern Ireland from 1 January 2022 in due course.

Dungeness B Power Station: Closures

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they expect Dungeness B to close this year. [HL381]

Lord Callanan: The decision to close a nuclear power station is a matter for the operator (EDF) and the regulator

(Office for Nuclear Regulation). The current scheduled closure date for Dungeness B is 2028.

Currently EDF forecast the station's reactors to return to service in July and August 2021.

Economic Growth: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Covid Recovery Commission *Ambition 2030: A Partnership for Growth*, published on 27 April; and what plans they have to implement its recommendations. [HL245]

Lord Greenhalgh: We welcome the good work done by the Covid Recovery Commission in considering how a long-term national prosperity plan can deliver growth and increase living standards in the UK.

As we emerge from the pandemic, we need a plan which ensures we Build Back Better from COVID-19. That is why we have published *Building Back Better: our Plan for Growth*. Building on this, we will publish a *Levelling Up White Paper* later this year setting out how bold new policy interventions will improve livelihoods across the country as we recover from the pandemic.

We will continue to review and consider recommendations made by the Covid Recovery Commission in future policy.

Economic Situation: Biodiversity

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report commissioned by the Treasury *The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review*, published on 2 February, what steps they are taking to ensure that all children understand how nature contributes to the UK economy. [HL340]

Baroness Berridge: The department is currently working with Her Majesty's Treasury to contribute to a full response to the Dasgupta Review.

The National Curriculum is a framework which sets out the content that the department expects schools to cover in each subject, but teachers have the flexibility and freedom to determine how they deliver the content in the way that best meets the needs of their pupils. This includes choosing to cover particular topics in greater depth if they wish. Although academies and free schools are not required to teach the National Curriculum, they are expected to teach a curriculum that is similar in breadth and ambition, and this is reflected in the Ofsted school inspection handbook. This can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif>.

Subject content related to the environment is included within the science and geography National Curriculum. At primary level (key stages 1 and 2), pupils are taught how environments can change, including positive and

negative impacts of human action, weather, and climate zones. In secondary science (key stages 3 and 4), pupils are taught about the production of carbon dioxide by human activity and the effect that this has on the climate. At GCSE, pupils consider the evidence for anthropogenic causes of climate change. They also study the impact of increased levels of carbon dioxide and methane and how this can be mitigated.

Under the key stage 2 non-statutory guidance for citizenship, pupils are taught about the wider world and the interdependence of communities within it. Pupils are taught that resources can be allocated in different ways and that these economic choices affect individuals, communities and the sustainability of the environment.

In geography, at key stage 2 and 3 pupils should be taught human geography. In key stage 2, pupils are taught about types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water. In key stage 3 pupils are taught about population and urbanisation, international development, economic activity in the primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary sectors, and the use of natural resources. These topics can be built upon in more depth at GCSE.

In 2017, the department introduced a new environmental science A level. This enables pupils to study topics that will support their understanding of climate change and how it can be tackled.

Education: Climate Change

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to how the education system might be used to broaden public awareness about actions that individual members of the general public are able to make in line with the target to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. [HL341]

Baroness Berridge: The department recognises the contribution it can make to help create a sustainable future through education, developing the skills needed for a green economy, and supporting sectors to reach net zero targets.

Topics relating to climate change are included throughout both the science and geography curricula and in GCSEs. Through the citizenship programmes of study, pupils are taught how to explore political and social issues critically through evidence, debate, and reasoned argument. Pupils are taught that resources can be allocated in different ways and that these economic choices affect individuals, communities, and the sustainability of the environment. A new environmental science A Level was introduced in 2017, which will enable pupils to study topics that will support their understanding of climate change and how it will be tackled.

In further and technical education, the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education has convened a

Green Apprenticeships Advisory Panel to encourage trailblazers to align apprenticeships to net zero and wider sustainability objectives.

The Department for Education and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy launched the Green Jobs Taskforce in November 2020 to help the UK deliver the skilled workforce needed to reach net zero emissions by 2050. The taskforce, working in partnership with business, skills providers, and unions will develop an action plan to support 2 million good quality, green jobs and the skills needed by 2030, and so support the UK to transition to a net zero economy.

Electoral Register

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord True on 14 December 2020 (HL10908), what progress has been made on discussions between the Cabinet Office and HMRC about how to better inform people about how to register to vote; and in particular on providing (1) an electronic link, or (2) specific written reference, to the electoral registration website in the National Insurance number letters that they issue. [HL681]

Lord True: National Insurance Number letters issued by HMRC state that you need your National Insurance Number to register to vote. Cabinet Office officials continue to engage with colleagues in HMRC regarding what further information could be included in the letters to help inform individuals about the registration process, and whether there is scope to include reference to the Register to Vote website in the National Insurance number letters. The Government is committed to making registration as easy as possible and we encourage everyone who is eligible to register to vote.

Electoral Register: Young People

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many attainers are currently registered to vote in (1) England, (2) Northern Ireland, (3) Scotland, and (4) Wales; and how many were registered each year from 2015 to 2020. [HL676]

Lord True: The number of attainers registered to vote can be found on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) website:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/elections/electoralregistration/datasets/electoralstatisticsforuk>.

The number of attainers included in the local government register, by year, are:

	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
2020	196,346	14,640	29,599	490

	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
2019	265,624	13,170	14,577	319
2018	268,396	13,172	20,232	574
2017	279,388	13,001	20,788	608
2016	293,430	13,810	22,035	5,000
2015	244,781	12,462	21,343	5,350

An elector must be 18 years old to be included on the UK Parliamentary register. As such, attainers are not included in UK Parliamentary registers.

Electricity Interconnectors

Asked by Lord Grantchester

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further the answer by Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist on 18 May (HL Deb, cols 434–5), whether the Planning Inspectorate's report on the AQUIND interconnector will be published before the Secretary of State makes his decision. [HL397]

Lord Callanan: The Planning Inspectorate's report and my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State's decision to grant or refuse development consent for the proposed Aquind Interconnector will be published at the same time on the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website.

Electronic Funds Transfer: Fraud

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the finance industry regarding the adoption of the voluntary Contingent Reimbursement Model Code; and what steps they are taking to persuade retail banks to sign up to the Contingent Reimbursement Model Code. [HL587]

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of implementing a requirement for banks to regularly publish data on the reimbursement rates of bank transfer scam victims. [HL588]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government is committed to tackling fraud and ensuring that victims of Authorised Push Payment (APP) scams are protected.

The Government recognises the work industry has undertaken to date, including the introduction of a voluntary reimbursement Code, which has demonstrably had a beneficial impact. However, the Code, whilst improving matters, comes with limitations, including disparity in how different payment service providers are interpreting their obligations under it, as well as its lack of comprehensive cover across providers.

The Government therefore welcomed the publication of the Payment Systems Regulator's (PSR) call for views on APP scams in February 2021, which set out various potential measures for reducing APP scams and improving customer outcomes, including new requirements on payment service providers to reimburse APP scam victims and publishing APP scam data. The Government is of the view that the introduction of Faster Payments Service rules setting reimbursement requirements on all scheme participants is the best possible solution to the issue of APP scams; this will ensure the rules underpinning Faster Payments are fit for purpose.

The PSR's call for views has now closed and the Government is engaging with the PSR and industry on next steps, including considering what further actions may be necessary to make progress on this issue.

English Language: Education

Asked by Lord Gilbert of Panteg

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Integrated Communities Strategy green paper, published on 14 March 2018, when they plan to publish an English language strategy. [HL434]

Baroness Berridge: This government remains committed to English language as demonstrated by the manifesto commitment to boost English language teaching.

We know that language skills are crucial to help people integrate into life in England, as well as to break down barriers to work and career progression. This is why we want to support all adults in England to secure the English language skills they need.

The department funds English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision through the Adult Education Budget (AEB). Currently, approximately 50% of the AEB is devolved to 7 Mayoral Combined Authorities and the Mayor of London, acting where appropriate through the Greater London Authority. These authorities are now responsible for the provision of AEB-funded adult education, including ESOL, for their residents and allocation of the AEB to providers. The Education and Skills Funding Agency is responsible for the remaining AEB in non-devolved areas.

In 2019/20, 116,100 adult learners were supported through the AEB, across devolved and non-devolved areas to improve their levels of English through fully and part funded ESOL courses.

Our response to the COVID-19 outbreak is our priority at present. We will provide an update on ESOL in due course.

Essex University: Freedom of Expression

Asked by Baroness Noakes

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Akua Reindorf for the

University of Essex, published on 17 May; and what plans they have to prohibit departments seeking advice from Stonewall on diversity policies. [HL673]

Baroness Berridge: My department has noted the report by Akua Reindorf for the University of Essex. Currently, decisions on engaging with external service providers on diversity and inclusion are delegated to individual departments.

Ethiopia: Sudan

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking with international partners to support a resolution of the al-Fashaga border dispute between Ethiopia and Sudan. [HL445]

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 are working with our international partners to encourage all parties to de-escalate and engage in a political process. The Foreign Secretary has discussed the issue with both Prime Minister Abiy of Ethiopia and Prime Minister Hamdok of Sudan, and our Embassies in Addis Ababa and Khartoum have raised with host governments.

European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities

Asked by The Earl of Dundee

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ratify Protocol No. 3 to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities concerning Euroregional Co-operation Groupings to promote cooperation among local authorities. [HL432]

Lord Greenhalgh: The UK has a long tradition of welcoming partnerships and cooperation among local authorities, and recognises that effective partnerships can enrich the economic, social and environmental success of communities.

For example, in 2019, the UK and French Governments hosted a Summit in London to bring together over 100 local authority leaders and mayors from across the UK and France. Following the Summit, the British Embassy in Paris launched a 'call for projects' from partnerships between the UK and France. Through this initiative, UK Government provided seed funding for 3 projects between UK/France partners, including Glasgow and Marseille, Manchester and Montpellier, and Kent and Pas de Calais.

To date, HMG has not considered the particular provisions of the European Outline Convention on

Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities and its Protocols, as necessary considering our existing legal framework, but this is something we will keep under review.

Events Industry: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Garden of Frognal

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to a Government-backed indemnity for live events after the Stage 4 lifting of restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL488]

Baroness Barran: This Government recognises the importance of the UK's live events sector and has provided significant financial support to cultural organisations, particularly through the Culture Recovery Fund.

As the Secretary of State made clear at the DCMS Select Committee on Thursday 13th May, the government is aware of the wider concerns around securing indemnity for live events and we continue to assess options to provide further support to the sector within the public health context, engaging with relevant stakeholders as necessary.

We need to be confident that any intervention would lead to an increase in activity, and that insurance represents the last barrier to events reopening. The government's first priority is to remove remaining barriers (such as social distancing) by reaching Stage 4 of the Roadmap.

Asked by Baroness Garden of Frognal

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish the (1) results of, (2) guidance arising from, the Events Research Programme. [HL489]

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish (1) the results, and (2) any arising guidance, from the Events Research Programme. [HL564]

Baroness Barran: Research findings from the Events Research Programme's first phase of pilots will be published on GOV.UK shortly.

The Government has committed to taking a cautious approach to easing restrictions, guided by data instead of dates, to avoid another surge in infections that could put unsustainable pressure on the NHS. The roadmap sets out indicative, "no earlier than" dates for each step which are five weeks apart. Each full step of our roadmap will be informed by the latest available science and data and will be five weeks apart in order to provide time to assess the data, providing one week's notice to businesses and individuals.

Females: Employment

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Vodafone Lost Connections, published in May; and what steps they are taking to ensure that women do not face increased barriers when returning to work. [HL591]

Baroness Berridge: I welcome the Vodafone report and the work of others to highlight the barriers some carers and parents face when balancing their care and work responsibilities. I met with female employees from Vodafone in May to hear about which initiatives have worked to support them, especially through the pandemic, and what challenges remain.

The Government recognises the vital role unpaid carers and parents play and has put a range of measures in place to help. In our manifesto we committed to extending the entitlement to leave for unpaid carers to one week. The Government has also funded 25 'returner programmes' to support those with caring responsibilities back to work.

As we look to Build Back Better, increasing the take up of remote and flexible working will give more freedom and opportunity to people with caring responsibilities. In April the Government reconvened the Flexible Working Taskforce, tasking them to help employers build on the lessons we have learned through the pandemic to embed more flexible ways of working.

Strong digital connectivity is crucial in supporting more flexible working. This Government's delivery of national gigabit connectivity means that today, over two in five premises can access gigabit-capable networks, up from just one in ten in November 2019. By the end of the year, 60% will have access, and by 2025 the Government is targeting a minimum of 85% gigabit-capable coverage. In rural areas we are investing £5bn to ensure those living in hard-to-reach areas get the gigabit connectivity they deserve.

Fishing Vessels: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether fishing boats based in Northern Ireland have received licences to fish in Irish waters since January 2021; and whether the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland has caused any delay to such licences being issued. [HL361]

Lord Benyon: The Marine Management Organisation have shared data with the Commission on Northern Ireland vessels wishing to fish in Republic of Ireland waters and is currently waiting for their response. As yet, no Northern Ireland vessels have received licences to fish in the Irish 0-6nm zone.

We do not have any reason to believe that the Northern Ireland Protocol has had an effect on the issuing of licences.

Football: Finance

Asked by Lord Pendry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review financial support provided to lower tier football clubs following the COVID-19 pandemic, including support to football club community projects. [HL585]

Baroness Barran: Football clubs form a vital part of their local communities, which is why the Government has provided significant support to lower tier clubs throughout the pandemic.

Many football clubs have benefited from the Government's multi-billion pound package of cross-sector business support whilst Sport England has provided £220 million directly to support community sport clubs and exercise centres through this pandemic, via a range of funds including their £35 million Community Emergency Fund. The Government has also provided over £24 million of support to non-league clubs from the Sport Survival Package.

The Government will continue to support local football clubs through its £18 million annual investment via the Football Foundation, alongside The Football Association and the Premier League, into football facilities. This three-way partnership sees £70 million of investment into community facilities every year.

At Budget, the Chancellor also announced that the Government will provide an additional £25 million to support the growth of grassroots football, which will be enough to build up to 700 new pitches across the UK.

The Government will continue to examine ways to support lower tier clubs as we emerge from the pandemic.

Football: Gambling

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the benefits of suspending advertisements by gambling operators during the 2021 UEFA European Championship. [HL651]

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of advertisements by gambling operators that will be aired before 9pm during the 2021 UEFA European Championship. [HL652]

Baroness Barran: The Government has not made an estimate of the number of advertisements by gambling operators that will be aired before 9pm during the 2021 UEFA European Championship. Broadcasters have discretion over how advertising breaks are set and what adverts are broadcast, in line with Ofcom and ASA

standards. In addition, the Gambling Industry Code for Socially Responsible Advertising includes a whistle to whistle ban that also prohibits adverts for betting being shown during live sports broadcast before the 9pm watershed. Subject to these rules, the volume of adverts depends on the commercial arrangements put in place between the gambling operators and the broadcasters. All gambling advertising, wherever it appears, is subject to strict controls on content and placement.

Gambling adverts must never be targeted at children or vulnerable people. The Advertising Standards Authority independently administers these standards through the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) which covers online and non-broadcast spaces and the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP) for TV. If an advert for gambling holds particular appeal to children and is freely accessible then it will break the rules.

The government launched the Review of the Gambling Act 2005 on 8 December with the publication of a Call for Evidence. This closed on 31 March and received approximately 16,000 submissions from a broad range of interested organisations and individuals. As part of the wide scope of that Review, we called for evidence on the benefits or harms of allowing gambling operators to advertise and we are considering the evidence carefully.

Freight: Driving

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of drivers available for the logistics industry; what steps they are taking to address any shortage of such drivers; and what plans they have to improve the supply of trained technicians and mechanics able to work on heavy goods vehicles. [HL630]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The labour shortages in the sector are longstanding.

We are working with the Department for Work and Pensions and Jobcentre Plus to ensure that jobseekers can find employment or training in the industry as quickly as possible.

We are also working with the Department for Education in supporting the logistics sector make the most of the opportunities provided through the apprenticeship levy.

There is a range of Government backed apprenticeships, delivered by training providers and manufacturers, encouraging training of technicians and mechanics to work on heavy goods vehicles.

Frigates

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they anticipate that the number of Royal Navy frigates will drop below 10 this decade. [HL544]

Baroness Goldie: Her Majesty's Government does not anticipate that the number of Royal Navy frigates will drop below ten this decade. Frigate numbers are forecast to grow from 2025, when the first Type 26 and Type 31 frigates are scheduled to be delivered.

Fuel Cells and Hydrogen: Finance

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what investments they are making which are specifically targeted at (1) the science, and (2) the skills base, underpinning hydrogen technologies; and what plans they have to introduce a new policy framework for the development of hydrogen and fuel cell technologies as part of their decarbonisation strategy. [HL449]

Lord Callanan: The £1 billion Net Zero Innovation Portfolio and its forerunner, the Energy Innovation Programme, seek to accelerate the commercialisation of low carbon technologies, systems and business models. These programmes include the new £60 million Low-Carbon Hydrogen Supply 2 competition which is aimed at accelerating the development of a wide range of innovative low-carbon hydrogen supply solutions; and the Hy4Heat Programme, which is working to establish if it is technically possible, safe and convenient to replace natural gas (methane) with hydrogen in residential and commercial buildings. Hy4Heat has worked with Energy & Utility Skills to develop a competency framework for skills accreditation for heating engineers working with hydrogen.

We have also delivered projects such as the £20 million Industrial Fuel Switching which includes the first demonstrations of firing hydrogen at commercial fuel supply scale for the manufacture of cement and lime. Furthermore, the £10 million Green Distilleries Competition is supporting nine feasibility studies for low-carbon hydrogen-related projects. BEIS has also let a contract to the University of Cambridge to explore the atmospheric impacts of hydrogen release.

My Rt.Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan was clear on our aim for 5GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030 for use across the economy. The forthcoming Hydrogen Strategy will set out what is required to build a hydrogen economy fit for 2030, Carbon Budget 6 and beyond, whilst maximising economic benefits and supporting job and skills. We will also consult on priority policies, including hydrogen business models, a low carbon hydrogen standard, and the £240m Net Zero Hydrogen Fund.

Gambling

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the amount of consumer data held by gambling operators, and (2) whether this data could be used to prevent gambling-related harm. [HL653]

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the data underpinning their Review of the Gambling Act 2005; and what additional data, if any, will be needed in order to effectively review that Act. [HL654]

Baroness Barran: The government announced the Review of the Gambling Act 2005 on 8 December 2020, starting with a wide ranging Call for Evidence. The Call for Evidence closed on 31 March 2021 and we received c.16,000 submissions which we are carefully considering. Part of this work will include considering where additional evidence may be required. We aim to publish a white paper outlining our conclusions and policy proposals by the end of the year.

The Commission requires all operators to monitor gambling activity across a range of indicators and to intervene where a customer may be at risk of harm. As part of our Review of the Gambling Act, we are looking at whether the data collected by operators, particularly remote operators, could be better deployed to support the government's objectives including the prevention of harm to children and vulnerable people.

Gambling: Coronavirus

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the study by Alan M Emond et al Gambling by young adults in the UK during COVID-19 lockdown, published on 18 April, what assessment they have made of the reported correlation between higher rates of gambling and COVID-19 lockdowns. [HL634]

Baroness Barran: Overall participation in gambling has declined over the period of COVID-19 lockdowns in Great Britain, largely due to the closure of land-based gambling for much of the past year. The Gambling Commission's latest official statistics show the proportion of respondents participating in any gambling in the past four weeks fell from 46.7% in the year to March 2020 to 40.0% in the year to March 2021. As in the study by Professor Emond et al., the Commission data indicates a small increase in online gambling participation. The government continues to monitor the situation and consider the evidence carefully.

General Elections

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the Electoral Commission's publication of electoral data from the 2019 United Kingdom Parliamentary general election, what assessment they have made of (1) the reasons for tendered ballot papers having to be issued, and (2) how the number of tendered ballots compares to the total votes cast; and what plans they have to work with the Electoral Commission and professional bodies

representing Returning Officers to assess the possible reasons for tendered ballot papers being issued. [HL677]

Lord True: A tendered ballot paper may be issued to a voter in a number of circumstances at an election; for example, if an elector goes to a polling station and finds that the register has been marked to show that somebody has already voted for them, and the elector believes this is an error. As noted in the question, the Electoral Commission included information on the number of tendered ballot papers issued in the electoral data it compiled from the 2019 General Election. The Government will continue to work with the Electoral Commission and other relevant bodies to support the delivery of elections and will consider a wide range of issues as part of this work.

General Elections: Costs

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the cost of printing and distributing polling cards to voters in the 2019 general election. [HL679]

Lord True: The cost of printing and distributing polling cards to voters at the 2019 general election will not be known until all of the Returning Officers' expenses claims for those polls have been reviewed, agreed and settled.

Genetics: Research

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take to ensure that palaeographic genetic data is kept in the public domain. [HL328]

Lord Callanan: Her Majesty's Government supports the management of and access to research data, so that it can be widely used for research and innovation. The [UK Research and Development Roadmap](#) (copy attached) published last year emphasised the importance of data and open research.

The UK enjoys a well-established infrastructure and policy framework for good research data management and access, covering multiple disciplines, including national data centres such as the [National Geosciences Data Centre](#). UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), the UK's largest public research funder, [requires](#) those in receipt of funding from Research Councils to ensure "that all parties engaged in the research make every reasonable effort to ensure that intellectual assets obtained in the course of the research, whether protected by intellectual property rights or not, are used for the benefit of society and the economy".

UKRI and its Research Councils have policies that set out expectations and guidance on sharing and managing research data. It has a [common set of principles](#) on research data, including that publicly funded research data are a public good, produced in the public interest, which should be made openly available with as few restrictions

as possible in a responsible manner. UKRI in partnership with research organisations developed the [Concordat on Open Research Data](#) to ensure that the research data gathered and generated by members of the UK research community is made available for use by others wherever possible.

UKRI work closely with international bodies to enable global sharing and access to data in the interest of the economy and society. Recently the [OECD's Recommendation on Access to Research Data from Public Funding](#) was updated and this will guide further policy and support in the UK as well as across all OECD members.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UK Research and Development Roadmap
[UK_Research_and_Development_Roadmap.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-05-18/HL328>

Gurkhas: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Swinfen

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assistance they are giving to serving and retired Gurkhas and their families in Nepal to deal with the COVID-19 crisis. [HL375]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We recognise the invaluable contribution Gurkhas make to our armed forces. Gurkhas serve with honour and distinction and are a vital part of our bilateral relationship. The UK-funded Gurkha Welfare Trust has ensured access to life-saving support and supplies to Gurkha veterans and their communities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We are also financing antigen kits for district hospitals across Nepal with distribution being done by the Gurkha Welfare Trust, and two districts have so far received these kits.

More broadly in Nepal, the UK has funded a new £180,000 duplex oxygen generation plant at the Nepal Police Hospital in Kathmandu to help address oxygen shortages to treat COVID19 patients. We are also one of the leading donors to COVAX, committing £548m to the scheme, which will provide more than a billion vaccines to developing countries including doses for almost a fifth of Nepal's population.

High Speed 2 Railway Line

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their latest estimate of the improvement in UK productivity that will result from building the HS2 railway. [HL407]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department for Transport published the Phase 1 HS2 business case in April 2020. Paragraph 2.85 and Figure 2.2 of this document set out the breakdown of the total GDP impacts (£82bn at 2015 prices) of the HS2 programme. Whilst

total productivity impact has not been formally estimated, the constituent parts of the GDP benefits provide estimated impacts which are important sources of productivity gains.

The £60bn of business user benefits could be translated as direct gains from productivity improvements to business users. Similarly, the impacts from agglomeration (£14bn) due to HS2 captures the impact from improved productivity through urbanisation, and some labour supply impacts (£2bn) through positive labour market dynamics.

HS2 is expected to be transformational, and the wider impacts are likely to be much more significant than currently estimated in the business case. Some of these impacts have been explained in the Strategic Case, regarding skills and employment impacts, innovation and technological changes etc. However, the wider economic impact has not been fully quantified in the economic case.

This lack quantification of important and significant wider benefits was reflected in Conclusion 49 of the Oakervee Review. Also, given that the significance of investments entailing HS2, it will likely have macro-economic impacts on labour and other markets, that may drive up productivity gains. Combining the change to economic geography, dynamic agglomeration and improving access to higher productivity jobs, with the wider macro-economic impacts of the scheme, the productivity impact is likely to be significant.

The Department is working with its arm's length bodies to develop the evidence on transformational impacts and will aim to incorporate some such evidence, when assured, in future business cases.

High Speed 2 Railway Line: Construction

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their latest estimate of the cost of building each stage of the HS2 railway. [HL406]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: As set out in the latest 6-monthly Parliamentary report published in March 2021, the total estimated cost ranges for each Phase is as follows:

Phase One: £35bn - £45bn.

Phase 2a: £5bn – £7bn.

Phase 2b: £32bn – £46bn*.

The numbers include contingency to accommodate unforeseeable cost pressures which may emerge during construction, as is to be expected with all major infrastructure projects.

*Validation of the Phase 2b cost range is ongoing and will be updated to support the bringing forward of separate legislation for the HS2 route into Manchester, in line with the conclusions of the Oakervee Review. The range provided excludes scope intended to be funded by other sources such as Northern Powerhouse Rail.

High Speed Two: Trees

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will require HS2 to publish (1) the number of trees they have removed, (2) the number of trees they have planted, and (3) the areas where these changes have been made. [HL278]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: (1) HS2 Ltd does not specifically record or count individual trees removed or required for clearance, as recording is undertaken on an area basis (measured by hectare).

(2) As part of Phase One alone, HS2 Ltd will plant up to seven million trees and shrubs. Over 700,000 of those trees have already been planted. The area of new woodland will be well in excess of that which is lost. HS2 is creating more than 3300 hectares (33 square kilometres) of new woodland, wildlife and river habitats alongside the line from the West Midlands to London.

(3) Woodland areas to be lost as a result of HS2's construction, and also those sites to be used for woodland creation, are described in the relevant Environmental Statement, published alongside the relevant legislation for each phase of the project.

Further updates on HS2 Ltd's environmental performance, including with respect to the loss of ancient woodland and associated compensation response, will be published in the autumn.

Hinkley Point B Power Station and Hunterston B Power Station: Closures

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they expect EDF to close (1) Hinkley Point B, and (2) Hunterston B, permanently by next year; and if so, on what grounds they would be closed. [HL380]

Lord Callanan: The decision to close a nuclear power station is a matter for the operator (EDF) and the regulator (Office for Nuclear Regulation). On 27 August 2020 EDF announced that Hunterston B power station would end generation by January 2022. On 19 November 2020 EDF announced that Hinkley Point B would end generation by July 2022. The grounds for closure are because of end-of-life of components which cannot be replaced, which is expected as a station ages.

Horticulture: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland has affected the sale of horticultural autumn bulbs from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. [HL362]

Lord Benyon: Following the end of the transition period on 1 January 2021, EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) rules continue to apply in Northern Ireland under

the Northern Ireland Protocol. This upholds the longstanding status of the island of Ireland as a single epidemiological unit, and means that all regulated plants and plant products moving from GB to NI are required to meet the EU's third country import requirements, including the requirement for regulated goods to be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate.

As announced in the updated operational guidance for the movement of horticultural goods from Great Britain (GB) to Northern Ireland (NI), bulbs or vegetables that have been grown in soil can be sent from GB to NI even if they still have soil attached, while respecting any pest free area requirements.

Under the Government's successful Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS), businesses moving plants and plant products from GB to NI do not need to pay for the fees associated with inspections and issuance of phytosanitary certificates (PC). The Government announced on 6 April 2021 that MAS will continue to provide traders with advice and guidance via the dedicated MAS helpline and financial support for certain certification costs. The Government will continue to monitor the performance of the scheme and will review it again in three months' time, to determine how best to provide ongoing support to traders.

Prior to 1 January, data was not collected on the movement of horticultural autumnal bulbs from GB to NI. Although the Plant Health and Seed Inspectorate (PHSI) collect data on the number of bulb phytosanitary applications, comparisons with exports prior to the Northern Ireland Protocol's implementation cannot be drawn, as consignments of bulbs were not inspected before 1 January 2021.

The Government recognises the importance of this issue and is recording data on the number of PCs issued for regulated plants and plant products, including bulbs, exported to all third countries and for those moved from GB to NI. This enables us to monitor the trade in these goods over time.

Hospitality Industry and Leisure: Minimum Wage

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of companies' compliance with minimum wage requirements in the (1) hospitality, and (2) leisure, industries; and what steps they are taking to ensure such compliance. [[HL376](#)]

Lord Callanan: The ONS' Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) is the most detailed and comprehensive source of earnings information available in the UK. ASHE provides a proxy measure of both the scale and nature of non-compliance with the relevant statutory minimum wage. In April 2020, we estimate that there were around 38,000 jobs paid below the applicable minimum wage rate and non-compliant with minimum wage legislation in the hospitality sector, and 3,000 in the

leisure sector. This excludes individuals who were furloughed, as they would not have been working at that time.

The Government is committed to cracking down on employers who fail to pay the NMW. We are clear that everyone entitled to be paid the minimum wage should receive it. As well as investigating every worker complaint, HMRC also undertake proactive investigations (referred to as targeted enforcement) based on the identification of the risk of non-compliance, and deliver a programme of upstream 'Promote' work designed to promote understanding and encourage employer compliance.

We have more than doubled the budget for minimum wage enforcement and compliance, which is now over £27 million annually, up from £13.2 million in 2015/16. There are now over 400 HMRC staff involved in the enforcement of the minimum wage. In 2020/21 HMRC concluded over 2,700 minimum wage investigations, returning more than £16.7m in arrears to over 155,000 workers. Since 2015, the Government has ordered employers to repay £100 million to 1 million workers.

Hospitals: Debts

Asked by Lord Mann

To ask Her Majesty's Government which 10 UK hospitals have the highest financial deficit, including debts carried over from previous years. [[HL516](#)]

Lord Bethell: During the last year, the government agreed a number of measures to improve the finances in the NHS provider sector in England. These included writing off £13.4 billion of NHS debt, as part of a major financial reset for NHS providers; temporary arrangements that saw trusts receive block payments to fund their spending through the pandemic, supported by c£18bn of additional funding to support the NHS response to COVID. As a result, the amount and levels of deficits across in the NHS provider sector fell significantly.

Work is ongoing to support the minority of trusts who ended 2020/21 in a deficit position and to develop solutions to secure future financial sustainability.

Final deficit figures for 2020-21 will be published as part of the NHS's final accounts in due course.

Housing: Construction

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the analysis by the Local Government Association, published on 20 February 2020, which found that more than a million homes granted planning permission in the past decade have not yet been built; and what plans they have empower local authorities to incentivise developers to expedite the building of housing already granted planning permission. [[HL248](#)]

Lord Greenhalgh: As the Local Government Association have themselves stated, in some cases there are legitimate reasons as to why development stalls. Perhaps, for example, the landowner cannot get the price for the site they want, or the development approved is not viable, or supply chain constraints hinder starting. Sir Oliver Letwin highlighted in his 2018 review on the topic, building on the work of Dame Kate Barker and many others before them, that, as such, the often-repeated idea of housebuilders 'sitting on' land is overstated.

Nevertheless, this Government is clear that new homes should be built out as soon as possible. Where build-out is delayed, it is for councils and developers to work closely together to overcome any barriers. To ensure this happens, we are exploring further options to support faster build-out as part of our proposed planning reforms.

Human Rights and International Law: Sanctions

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the criteria for economic sanctions to be imposed on a nation that is found to have broken (1) international law, and (2) human rights law. [HL352]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: There are no specific criteria which determine when the Government will or will not impose sanctions, but an appropriate Minister may make sanctions regulations for the purposes set out in Section 1 of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act. We seek to achieve what have come to be known as 'smart' sanctions: sanctions that are carefully targeted to achieve their goals, while minimising potentially negative wider impacts.

Immigration Controls: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what lessons they are learning from other countries about effective border controls in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic; and what they are doing to put those lessons into effect. [HL334]

Lord True: Governments around the world have had to strike the correct balance between border restrictions and ensuring that essential travel remains possible.

The UK has one of the toughest border regimes in the world. We are taking a cautious approach to open up international travel to protect the UK from variants of concern and new infections while the vaccine roll-out is ongoing.

Given the challenge we see with the spread of new variants and the situation in many countries around the world, we must make sure that the countries we reconnect with are safe.

The recently introduced traffic light framework aims to protect public health whilst facilitating international

travel, allowing families and friends to reunite and our businesses to start thriving again.

This analysis of border measures is one of many policies that are continuously inspected as an international comparison, alongside an array of other non-pharmaceutical interventions that are taken by countries in their response to COVID-19.

Immigration: EEA Nationals

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that British citizens who are also EU/EEA citizens do not receive communications asking them to apply for settled status; and what estimate they have made of the number of such citizens who have been contacted to apply for settled status. [HL254]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government is using every possible channel to encourage everyone who may be eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) to apply. The Home Office has worked extensively to promote awareness of the EUSS. Since 2019, we have delivered a major EUSS paid advertising campaign, and worked closely with employers, local authorities, stakeholders and charities to raise awareness and support applications.

The Home Office is currently working with HMRC and DWP to send letters to EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who receive benefits, but it appears are yet to apply to the EUSS. These letters seek to encourage recipients to apply to the EUSS to protect their existing rights in the UK before the deadline of 30 June 2021.

In trying to reach as many people as possible, there may be a small number of instances where these letters are sent to recipients who are naturalised as a British citizen. The letter may also be received by a small number of individuals who have already applied to the EUSS, for example because they applied after the initial exercise with DWP or HMRC was completed, but before the letter was sent out. The letter makes clear anyone who is a British citizen or already has EUSS status does not need to take any action.

As of 30 April 2021, 4.9m grants of status had been made. The Home Office urges anyone eligible for the EUSS to apply before the 30 June deadline to ensure their rights are protected following the end of the grace period.

Asked by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government how EEA nationals with settled or pre-settled status will be covered by the Right to Rent scheme checks after 30 June; and what the position will be for EEA nationals who are (1) tenants, or (2) prospective tenants, but fail to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme by 30 June. [HL272]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: EEA citizens with settled or pre-settled status granted through the EU Settlement Scheme will evidence their right to rent

digitally using the Home Office online service on GOV.UK, 'prove your right to rent in England'. <https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-rent> Where the landlord has carried out checks, in the prescribed manner, on or before 30 June, there is no requirement to carry out retrospective checks or evict a tenant, as they have a continuous statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty. Where an EEA citizen has reasonable grounds for missing the EUSS application deadline, they will be given an opportunity to make a late application. Any EEA citizen encountered by Immigration Enforcement after 30 June 2021, who may be eligible to apply to the EUSS, will be issued with a notice which provides a further 28 days for the individual to submit their application.

Immigration: EU Nationals

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of writing to individuals born in the EU but naturalised as British citizens, stating that they require UK Immigration Status after 30 June in order to carry on living in the UK. [HL360]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government is using every possible channel to encourage everyone who is eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) to apply. The Home Office is currently working with HMRC and DWP to send letters to EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who receive benefits, but it appears are yet to apply to the EUSS. These letters seek to encourage recipients to apply to the EUSS to protect their existing rights in the UK before the deadline of 30 June 2021.

In trying to reach as many people as possible, there may be a small number of instances where these letters are sent to recipients who are naturalised as a British citizen. The letter may also be received by a small number of individuals who have already applied to the EUSS, for example because they applied after the initial exercise with DWP or HMRC was completed, but before the letter was sent out. The letter makes clear anyone who is a British citizen or already has EUSS status does not need to take any action.

As of 30 April 2021, 4.9m grants of status had been made. The Home Office urges anyone eligible for the EUSS to apply before the 30 June deadline to ensure their rights are protected following the end of the grace period.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the article in the Guardian Home Office letter wrongly tells British citizens to apply for settled status, published on 17 May, what assessment they have made of the accuracy of their databases regarding citizenship status; and what remedial action they are taking in relation to this matter. [HL374]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government is using every possible channel to encourage everyone who is eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) to apply. The

Home Office is currently working with HMRC and DWP to encourage EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who receive benefits to apply to the EUSS if they have yet to do so. Letters are being sent out to encourage recipients to apply to the EUSS to protect their existing rights in the UK before the deadline of 30 June 2021.

In trying to reach as many people as possible, there may be a small number of instances where these letters are sent to recipients who are naturalised as a British citizen. The letter may also be received by a small number of individuals who have already applied to the EUSS, for example because they applied after the initial exercise with DWP or HMRC was completed, but before the letter was sent out. The letter makes clear anyone who is a British citizen or already has EUSS status does not need to take any action.

As of 30 April 2021, 4.9m grants of EUSS status have been made. The Home Office urges anyone eligible for the EUSS to apply before the 30 June deadline to ensure their rights are protected following the end of the grace period.

The Home Office recognises the importance of maintaining high standards of data quality within our systems and frameworks are in place to manage data quality, both proactively and in response to issues when they are identified.

Immigration: Hong Kong

Asked by Lord Mann

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the annual budget for reception centres for Hong Kong residents seeking to live in the UK; where they plan to locate any such reception centres; and how many, if any, are currently operational. [HL517]

Lord Greenhalgh: MHCLG is providing over £5 million to fund 12 new Welcome Hubs across the UK – nine in England, mapped to the nine English regions, and one each in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. By utilising existing Strategic Migration Partnerships and other important local connections, these hubs will help to ensure a warm welcome for all Hong Kong BN(O) status holders by providing practical advice and assistance to all BN(O)s who require it.

Infrastructure: Carbon Emissions

Asked by Lord Newby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that the proposed Planning Bill contains provisions to require the impact of any new infrastructure proposal to be assessed against the ability to achieve the UK's net-zero carbon emissions target. [HL294]

Lord Greenhalgh: National planning policies already recognise the importance of sustainable development, and make clear that reducing carbon emissions should be considered in plan and decision making. The Government

is considering how the planning system can further support our commitment to reaching net zero, including through the planning reform programme and the forthcoming Planning Bill. Our response to the Planning for the Future White Paper, setting out next steps on these reforms, will be published in due course.

Innovation

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish their innovation strategy. [HL247]

Lord Callanan: In the recent 'Build Back Better: our plan for growth' published alongside Budget, the government announced the publication of a new Innovation Strategy in the summer.

In line with its commitment, BEIS is currently working across government to develop the Strategy in time for then.

The Strategy will outline how we look to achieve our ambitions in innovation and where we want to focus our efforts over the next decade.

Intellectual Property

Asked by Lord Smith of Finsbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership on the intellectual property sector. [HL320]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: The UK's intellectual property (IP) regime achieves an effective balance between rewarding creators and innovation, and reflecting wider public interests such as ensuring access and use of IP on reasonable terms. The Government will not sign trade deals that compromise the UK's world leading IP regime.

The Government will publish its negotiation objectives for the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, scoping assessment, and consultation response in advance of the start of accession negotiations.

Internet: Pornography

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of organisations within the scope of the draft Online Safety Bill that are (1) pornographic websites, and (2) social media sites that contain pornography. [HL645]

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the number of (1) pornographic websites, and (2) social media sites that contain pornography, that

will be (a) Category 1 organisations, and (b) not Category 1 organisations, under the draft Online Safety Bill. [HL646]

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the number of UK users of the organisations expected to be in within the scope of the draft Online Safety Bill that access (1) pornographic websites, and (2) social media sites that contain pornography [HL647]

Baroness Barran: The Online Safety Bill will deliver the most comprehensive approach in the world to protecting children online. Where pornographic websites or social media sites host user generated content or facilitate online user interactions (including video and image sharing, commenting and live streaming), they will be subject to the duty of care. The government has not conducted a detailed sector-by-sector analysis of the services in scope of the Bill and the number of UK users accessing those services, given the breadth of services in scope of legislation. However, the online safety regime will capture both the pornography sites most visited by UK users and pornography on social media, therefore covering the vast majority of sites where children are most likely to be exposed to pornography.

The exact list of Category 1 services has not yet been determined. We have set out how the process will work for designating Category 1 services. Thresholds will be set by the government about the number of users and functionalities of a service, following receipt of advice from Ofcom. This is to ensure the process is objective and evidence-based. Ofcom will then be required to assess services against these thresholds and publish a register of all those which meet both thresholds.

Iraq: Islamic State

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following attacks by Islamic State in the last month, what assessment they have made of the security situation in (1) the Kirkuk Governorate, and (2) Iraq's disputed territories; and what support to counter such terrorism is being offered to (a) the government of Iraq, and (b) the Kurdistan Regional Government. [HL446]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The recent attacks in Kirkuk Governorate demonstrated that Daesh still remains active and represents a continuing threat to the safety and security of the people of Iraq and the wider region, particularly in the disputed territories such as Kirkuk. We work closely with the UN and international partners to encourage the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to resolve their issues, including on disputed territories.

As a leading member of the Global Coalition against Daesh, the UK continues to support the Iraqi and Iraqi Kurdish Security Forces in maintaining capacity and capability to tackle the threat from Daesh.

Israel: International Law

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether action needs to be taken to ensure that there is a cost to the government of Israel if it is found to have broken international law. [\[HL353\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is a steadfast supporter of international justice and does not hold back from voicing or raising concern about Israel's actions when warranted. However, Israel has a legitimate right to self-defence, and the right to defend its citizens from attack. In doing so, it is vital that all actions are proportionate, in line with International Humanitarian Law, and make every effort to avoid civilian casualties. 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.

Israel: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to make a statement that the Palestinians under occupation are entitled to security and self-defence. [\[HL311\]](#)

Asked by Baroness Sheehan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what they consider necessary to achieve a long-term resolution to the conflict in Israel and Palestine [\[HL312\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The recent violence across Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories demonstrates the urgent need to make progress towards peace. The UK worked actively to urge the parties to work with mediators towards an immediate ceasefire. We also fully supported Egyptian, Qatari and UN efforts to that end, working closely with the US. The UK welcomes the announcement of a ceasefire in Israel and Gaza on 20 May, which is an important step to ending the cycle of violence and loss of civilian life.

We agree with President Biden's recent remarks that Palestinians and Israelis equally deserve to live safely and securely and to enjoy equal measures of freedom, prosperity, and democracy. 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. We continue to believe that the best way to advance a two state solution is through dialogue. We therefore urge all sides to show maximum restraint and refrain from taking actions which endanger civilians and make peace more difficult.

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the possibility of independent (1)

reporting, and (2) monitoring, of human rights during the current conflict in Israel and Palestine. [\[HL355\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not made this assessment. However, the UK continues to engage with the Israeli government on human rights issues in the context of the occupation. Israel has a legitimate right to self-defence, and the right to defend its citizens from attack. In doing so, it is vital that all actions are proportionate, in line with International Humanitarian Law, and make every effort to avoid civilian casualties. The situation on the ground demonstrates the urgent need to make progress towards peace. We will continue to support human rights scrutiny in Israel and the OPTs, and support Palestinian self-determination.

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to call on the government of Israel to meet the cost of repairing (1) health centres in Gaza that have been damaged by recent air and artillery attacks, (2) the central laboratory for COVID-19 testing, and (3) schools supported by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. [\[HL438\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK priority is ensuring timely humanitarian access into and out of Gaza; we are urging the Government of Israel to ensure this access is maintained. We have made clear our concern about the ongoing humanitarian situation in Gaza, including significant damage and destruction of civilian infrastructure including homes, schools, hospitals, and clinics. We have not made representations to the Government of Israel on the issue of reconstruction.

The United Kingdom is also providing an initial £3.2 million of UK aid to UNRWA's emergency flash appeal, which launched on 19 May 2021. This appeal will address the immediate humanitarian needs of vulnerable Palestinians living in Gaza. We understand that 47,000 displaced people are currently seeking shelter in schools run by UNRWA. We remain in close contact with UN agencies and key partners on the ground and will monitor the situation closely.

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Prime Minister has spoken to President al-Sisi of Egypt since the recent outbreak of violence between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants in Gaza; and, if so, whether they discussed the possibility of Egyptian mediation between the government of Israel and Hamas to secure a ceasefire. [\[HL443\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK worked actively to urge the parties to work with mediators towards an immediate ceasefire. The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa engaged the Egyptian Ambassador in London, and the British Embassy Cairo worked closely with the Government of Egypt. We fully supported

Egyptian, Qatari and UN efforts to mediate, working closely with the US.

The UK welcomes the announcement of a ceasefire in Israel and Gaza on 20 May, which is an important step to ending the cycle of violence and loss of civilian life. Hamas must end all attacks on Israel. It is also now important for Israel to facilitate rapid humanitarian access in and out of Gaza. As the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary have made clear, this cycle of violence must stop, and every effort must be made to avoid loss of life.

Job Entry Targeted Support

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people have taken part in the Job Entry: Targeted Support scheme since it was launched on 5 October 2020; and how many of those have returned to permanent employment. [[HL442](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Up to the end of April 2021 there have been 94,560 starts on the Job Entry: Targeted Support (JETS) scheme in England and Wales (launched 5 October 2020), and 3,800 starts on the scheme in Scotland (launched 25 January 2021).

So far there have been 12,665 job outcomes in England and Wales and 160 job outcomes in Scotland (a job outcome is defined as when an individual achieves £1000 cumulative earnings within eight months of starting). It should be noted that JETS provides support for up to six months and many people who have started on the scheme will not yet have had time to achieve a job outcome.

Jobcentre Plus: Armed Forces

Asked by Baroness Sherlock

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Department for Work and Pensions Armed Forces Champions there are (1) in total, (2) on Jobcentre sites, and (3) in Jobcentre plus districts. [[HL315](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Department remains committed to the Armed Forces Covenant and will do what is necessary to provide members of the Armed Forces Community with the help and support they need and deserve.

It wants to move towards a situation where it helps serving veterans and others in a more intelligent and effective way and better matches available resources with demand.

The Department started to put in place new arrangements in April to transform the way it supports members of the Armed Forces Community, building on the successful network of Armed Forces Champions.

For the first time there will be a dedicated armed forces role at middle management level in each of the 11 Jobcentre Plus Groups. The 11 group Leads will form a virtual network and will be responsible for building capability and sharing best practice across the network.

They will also be expected to be pro-active in liaising with the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force on both recruitment and resettlement.

These Armed Forces Champions Leads will oversee 50 Armed Forces Champions across the Jobcentre Plus network (including at least one in each of the 37 Jobcentre Plus Districts) who will have specific responsibilities for supporting members of the Armed Forces Community as part of their job – and again for the first time this will involve a front line role personally handling some claims, supporting veterans into work and helping resolve complex cases where necessary.

Recruitment to these roles is largely complete and the Department expects all of the roles to be filled within the next few weeks. All of the Leads have been appointed, with most in post already. Armed Forces Champions have been appointed in 34 Districts so far.

Officials in the Department have discussed the new model with a number of Armed Forces stakeholders, and so far it has been very well received.

There are also many staff across the DWP network based in individual Jobcentre offices who will be the local “expert” on Armed Forces issues and the Department is continually working to build capability across the Jobcentre Plus network. It has also recently introduced an Armed Forces “identifier” on to the Universal Credit system which will help ensure that veterans and serving personnel making new claims to Universal Credit are given the help and support they need.

These dedicated Armed Forces roles will complement the investment in recruiting an additional 13,500 Work Coaches overall (and every Work Coach receives appropriate training to support members of the Armed Forces Community), as well as investing billions of pounds in employment support schemes (such as Kickstart and JETS). And this will come on top of the other support already in place. For example, veterans are given early voluntary entry to the Work and Health Programme. And using Service Medical Board evidence where possible, a severely disabled person does not have to undergo additional examinations for Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit purposes.

Jobcentre Plus: Staff

Asked by Baroness Sherlock

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of the 13,500 recruited work coaches since March 2020 have started work in Jobcentres. [[HL313](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Over 13.5k new Work Coaches have completed their initial learning and are now delivering Jobcentre services.

Asked by Baroness Sherlock

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Jobcentre work coaches are employed (1) in total, and (2) as full-time equivalents. [[HL314](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The latest confirmed figure for Work Coaches, was taken on 31st March 2021 and is a headcount of 27,286, this is 24,956 full-time equivalents (based on contractual hours).

Judiciary: Recruitment

Asked by Lord Dubs

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to recruit retired judges and magistrates to serve on a temporary basis to reduce delays in court hearings; and, in bringing forward any such plans, what assessment they have made of their potential contribution to reducing these delays. [HL394]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The mandatory retirement age for most judicial office holders, including magistrates and judges, is 70. The Lord Chief Justice (or in some instances the Senior President of Tribunals) may, with the agreement of the Lord Chancellor, extend the appointment of judges below the High Court following their compulsory retirement date for a period of one year and for further one-year periods, up to the point at which the judge turns 75, where it is in the public interest to do so. In addition, many salaried judges may be authorised to sit in retirement on a fee paid basis.

The government intends to legislate to raise the judicial mandatory retirement age (MRA) to 75 through the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill, to be introduced shortly. The legislation will include a transitional provision to enable retired magistrates who are younger than the new MRA to apply to return to the bench, subject to business need. The process by which such applications are to be made and considered will be set out in due course.

These and other measures to increase judicial capacity to meet demand are crucial to ensure we can continue to support the recovery of our courts and tribunals and reduce delays in hearings.

Kickstart Scheme

Asked by Baroness Wilcox of Newport

To ask Her Majesty's Government in which sectors Kickstart placements have been created; and how many Kickstart placements have been (1) created, and (2) filled, in each sector. [HL457]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: As of the 27th May 2021, over 133,000 jobs have been made available for young people to apply for through the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) Kickstart Scheme. This includes over 29,000 jobs started by young people.

There have been over 219,000 jobs approved for funding through the scheme.

The tables below show figures split by job sector (rather than the sector of the employer), the data has been rounded according to DWP statistical rounding convention.

Although care is taken when processing and analysing Kickstart applications, referrals and starts, the data collected might be subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale recording system which has been developed quickly. The management information presented here has not been subjected to the usual standard of quality assurance associated with official statistics, but is provided in the interests of transparency. Work is ongoing to improve the quality of information available for the programme.

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Jobs Made Available</i>	<i>Total Jobs Started</i>
Administration	33,630	7,480
Animal Care	600	240
Beauty & Wellbeing	930	230
Business & Finance	4,830	1,000
Computing, Technology & Digital	10,050	2,770
Construction & Trades	4,360	990
Creative & Media	10,040	3,070
Delivery & Storage	4,020	870
Emergency & Uniform Services	320	20
Engineering & Maintenance	4,740	780
Environment & Land	2,500	540
Government Services	310	50
Healthcare	4,800	800
Home Services	1,000	120
Hospitality & Food	11,140	1,760
Law & Legal	320	110
Managerial	930	170
Manufacturing	3,250	800
Retail & Sales	21,720	4,910

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Jobs Made Available</i>	<i>Total Jobs Started</i>
Science & Research	630	130
Social Care	3,270	400
Sports & Leisure	3,020	640
Teaching & Education	5,760	1,110
Transport	450	60
Travel & Tourism	500	80

Figures may not add up to provided totals due to rounding. 1,000 non-grant funded jobs are included in Jobs Advertised but not included under Jobs Started. Total jobs started includes those which have been completed or ended early.

*Asked by **Baroness Wilcox of Newport***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Kickstart placements have been created with oil and gas companies; and which oil and gas companies such placements have been created with. [HL458]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Kickstart jobs are categorised into broad sectors when vacancies details are made available for work coaches to encourage young people to apply for them. The sector category relates to the job type, rather than the nature of the main activities undertaken by the employer. This means for example, that an administrative job within an oil company would be categorised as 'administrative', rather than 'oil & gas'.

A breakdown of jobs started and made available by sector, this could include any jobs with Oil and Gas employers, is available here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-20/hl457>.

As of 20th May, almost 8,000 Kickstart Scheme applications from employers and Gateways (each representing a number of employers) had been approved. To establish which employers associated with the Oil and Gas industry have approved Kickstart jobs would require reviewing all these approved applications to consider the principal activities of each employer, this information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Although care is taken when processing and analysing Kickstart applications, referrals and starts, the data collected might be subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale recording system which has been developed quickly. The management information presented here has not been subjected to the usual standard of quality assurance associated with official statistics, but is provided in the interests of transparency.

Work is ongoing to improve the quality of information available for the programme.

Latifa bint Mohammed Al-Maktoum

*Asked by **Lord Birt***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what approaches they have made to the government of the United Arab Emirates about the situation of Princess Latifa Al Maktoum. [HL256]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of the allegations surrounding Princess Latifa bint Mohammed Al Maktoum. We are aware that the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has asked the UAE Mission in Geneva for further information and proof of life. We will continue to follow developments closely.

Local Plans: Industry

*Asked by **Baroness Eaton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they made of the efforts by local authorities and local economic partnerships to develop local industrial strategies; and what plans they have, if any, to replace the local industrial strategies with an alternative place-based model. [HL270]

Lord Callanan: The Government has worked with all places, through the Cities and Local Growth Unit (MHCLG/BEIS) to develop [Local Industrial Strategies](#) across England. However, we know that in the four years since the Industrial Strategy was produced, the UK's economic and business environment has changed.

Creating and supporting jobs remains the Government's central economic focus, and helping to drive growth in existing, emerging and new industries is also a priority. This is why we have transitioned the Industrial Strategy into our Plan for Growth and its related strategies. As part of this, we are encouraging places to consider key sectors, assets and clusters they want to support to foster their long-term growth ambitions, building on the brilliant work done by places on Local Industrial Strategies.

Later this year we will go further by publishing a Levelling Up White Paper setting out how bold new policy interventions will improve livelihoods across the country as we recover from the pandemic.

Meat and Seafood: UK Trade with EU

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to decrease the paperwork burden for the meat and seafood industry as a result of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. [HL413]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Government continues to consider means by which the burdens on traders can be minimised. Our longer term 2025 Border

Strategy is aimed at modernising the customs and wider system.

Defra has launched EHC Online, the new IT system that exporters of animals and products of animal origin will need to use to submit their export health certificates (EHCs) to ensure that their goods can successfully enter the EU. This has simplified the export health certification process and reduced the amount of paperwork that trade need to produce.

Technical work is underway on the production of electronic EHCs and ePhytos. This work is being conducted in parallel with technical and policy discussions with the EU Commission to ensure the delivery is technically acceptable to the EU and does not necessitate further dialogue. This work has been accelerated as part of the GB-NI Digital Assistance Scheme but will be equally of benefit to GB-EU exporters certifying via EHC Online or Plant Health Export System. We are expecting this to be delivered this winter which should automate the transfer of export and import data between GB and EU systems, improve data quality, reduce re-keying of information, and enable the removal of some paper-based certificates.

Migrants: Children

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the UK's departure from the European Union, what instructions they have given schools to ask for documentary proof of pupils' indefinite leave to remain in the United Kingdom. [HL276]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government provides advice for state funded schools and local authorities on gov.uk. The website is clear 'school admission authorities must not refuse to admit a child on the basis of their nationality or immigration status nor remove them from roll on this basis. The guidance can be found at:

www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children

It is the responsibility of parents to check their children have a right, under their visa entry conditions, to study at a school.' The School Admissions Code would not permit schools to ask for proof of pupils' indefinite leave to remain in the United Kingdom as a condition of admission.

Independent schools which also hold a student sponsor license have a general duty to assure themselves sponsored students have a right to study in the UK throughout their course. This is a long-standing policy for student sponsors able to recruit international students from overseas through the Student or Child Student routes.

Mobile Phones: Emergencies

Asked by Lord Harris of Haringey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord True on 21 April (HL Deb, col 1833), what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the trial of a cell broadcast emergency alert system in Reading in March. [HL497]

Lord True: The trial in the Thames Valley area on 9 March 2021 successfully tested Cell Broadcast technology on mobile networks using phones pre-prepared to receive alerts. Having proven the technology to be effective, the Government conducted a live public trial of the Emergency Alert system in East Suffolk on 25 May and plans to conduct another public trial in Reading City Centre on 15 June. Should these prove successful, the Government plans to send out a National Welcome Message across the UK later this year.

Moldova: Elections

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the situation in Moldova regarding the separatist region of Transnistria after the disputed result of last year's presidential election and the early elections called for 11 July; and what discussions they have had with the government of Russia concerning their position on the issue, particularly given recent expressions of concern by the presidential spokesman Dmitry Peskov. [HL444]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova, and a sustainable resolution of the Transnistrian conflict, with a special status for the Transnistrian region. Since Moldovan Presidential elections in 2020, which were assessed by international observers to have been 'well-managed', we do not assess that the security situation in Transnistria has worsened. However, we are concerned by recent reports of human rights abuses and limitations placed on freedom of movement by the *de facto* Transnistrian authorities. There have been no recent bilateral discussions between the UK and Russian governments on the status of this issue. Minister Morton discussed Transnistria with Moldovan President Maia Sandu, and Interim Prime Minister Aureliu Ciocoi on 12 May during her visit to Chisinau. The UK raises Transnistria regularly in international fora, and we will continue to press for the withdrawal of illegally-stationed Russian forces from the Transnistrian region, in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolutions.

Music: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Stevenson of Balmacara

To ask Her Majesty's Government why non-professional music activity in England has not been

permitted to resume indoors without limits on numbers. [HL455]

Baroness Barran: Non-professional activities are permitted indoors within the legal gathering limits in a group of up to 6 people, or as a group of 2 households/bubbles. Activities can take place with multiple permitted groups, provided the groups are kept separate throughout the activity, and the event is organised in line with the organised events guidance for local authorities. However, non-professional singing indoors should only take place in a single group of up to 6 people. Activities should be organised to allow for social distancing to be maintained.

We have followed the views of public health experts on singing. We are aware that singing can increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission through the spread of aerosol droplets. We will continue to keep guidance and restrictions under review, in line with the changing situation. Further detail on step 4 will be set out as soon as possible.

Music: Training

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure UK workers have the necessary skills to work in the UK music sector. [HL566]

Baroness Barran: This Government understands the importance of ensuring that workers in the music sector have the necessary skills, demonstrated through its commitment to music education. It was made clear in December 2018 that the existing National Plan for Music Education, originally co-published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Education (DfE), would be refreshed. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the refresh of the National Plan is currently on hold, but the Government remains committed to publishing a refresh in due course, to support the next generation of music sector workers.

DCMS is also working closely with the music sector, including UK Music, to put in place programmes to aid music education and skills development. The Music Academic Partnership (MAP), which involves UK educational institutions and UK Music members, sees industry working with academics and educators to give colleges and university students a better chance of finding a job in the music industry. UK Music is also part of the Creative Industries Advisory Group which is working with DfE on developing reforms to the apprenticeship levy.

Musicians: EU Countries

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to negotiate with the EU to reduce barriers faced by musicians intending to tour EU countries; whether

they have produced a timetable for those negotiations; and if so, whether they will place a copy of the timetable in the Library of the House. [HL561]

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to establish a transitional support fund for UK musicians intending to tour in the EU. [HL562]

Baroness Barran: The Government recognises the world-leading position of the UK performing arts sector and the rich breadth of artistic talent across the UK.

UK performers and artists are of course still able to tour and perform in the EU, and vice versa. However, we understand the concerns about the new arrangements and we are committed to supporting the sectors as they get to grips with the changes to systems and processes.

As the Prime Minister has said, we're working flat out with the industry, including through the DCMS-led working group, on plans to support the creative sectors tour in Europe. Through our bilateral discussions with EU Member States, we have established that in at least 17 out of 27 Member States some touring activities are possible without visas or work-permits. The UK has significantly more generous arrangements for touring professionals than many Member States, and should they be willing to change their rules to match ours we will have those discussions and encourage them to do so.

We are considering a number of options to ensure performers, musicians and artists have the support they need to tour and work in countries across the EU. We have produced new guidance to help artists understand what's required in different countries, and are looking carefully at proposals for a new Export Office that could provide further practical help. We will set out next steps in due course.

Asked by Lord German

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made on establishing a transactional support fund for UK musicians looking to tour the EU. [HL655]

Asked by Lord German

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have made any assessment of (1) the desirability of establishing a UK Music Export Office, or (2) other methods to promote music exports. [HL656]

Baroness Barran: The Government recognises the world-leading position of the UK performing arts sector and the rich breadth of artistic talent across the UK.

UK performers and artists are of course still able to tour and perform in the EU, and vice versa. However, we understand the concerns about the new arrangements and we are working with the creative and cultural sectors to help them get to grips with the changes to systems and processes.

We are looking closely at a range of options to support musicians and performers to resume touring with ease as soon as it is safe to do so, including proposals for an

Export Office that could provide further practical help. We will set out next steps in due course.

Navy: Deployment

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to HMS Queen Elizabeth's first operational deployment, what is the number of personnel on (1) HMS Queen Elizabeth, (2) the six accompanying Royal Navy ships, and (3) the Royal Navy submarine in the Carrier Strike Group. [HL471]

Baroness Goldie: The Carrier Strike Group 21 is the largest and most ambitious global deployment of the Royal Navy for a generation.

The number of personnel on board each ship will vary over the course of the deployment due to operational requirements, however the following table provides the average crew sizes, broken down by Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship, deployed in the Carrier Strike Group.

<i>Ship Name</i>	<i>Number of Personnel</i>
HMS Queen Elizabeth	1,600
HMS Defender	235
HMS Diamond	235
HMS Kent	185
HMS Richmond	185
RFA Fort Victoria	135
RFA Tidespring	65
Astute Class Submarine	Not Declared

Due to operational security reasons we do not comment on submarine issues.

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the objectives of the Carrier Strike Group deployment; and how achievement of these objectives will be measured. [HL474]

Baroness Goldie: The Carrier Strike Group deployment is an embodiment of the Government's Integrated Review, and has significant diplomatic, trade and security objectives:

- Send a clear message to our allies and adversaries that the UK can, and will, play a global leadership role, exerting influence on bilateral and regional issues to achieve HMG objectives and acting as a force for good in the world;
- Prove our leading role in NATO through the strength of our capability, our readiness to operate closely with Allies, and our interoperability with the US and others;
- Put the Integrated Review into action, underlining the UK's commitment to an enduring presence in the Indo-

Pacific and win support for our goals and objectives there;

- Reinforce existing UK international relationships and networks, and strengthen links with NATO's partners around the world. Establish new links with a broader audience, furthering defence engagement, political and prosperity objectives;
- Promote UK industry, technology and export sales across the breadth of the UK's commercial strengths. Improve trading relationships and trade cooperation, as well as pursuing investment prospects, especially in competitive markets; and
- Build relationships between key officials and organisations.

The achievement of these ambitious and pan-Government objectives will be measured over time and in numerous ways, including public media and communications, complex interoperability tasks, exercises and missions, and increased investment, sales and trade arrangements. Importantly, the Carrier Strike Group deployment should not be viewed as a stand-alone event but as a contribution to a broader network of military, diplomatic and trade activity over the coming years.

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of New Zealand on the Carrier Strike Group deployment. [HL475]

Baroness Goldie: New Zealand is one of the UK's key partners and a valued member of the Five Eyes alliance. The UK Defence Secretary wrote to NZ Defence Minister Peeni Henare late last year, formally inviting New Zealand to operate with the Carrier Strike Group deployment. Subsequent high-level discussions involving the Defence Secretary, Permanent Secretary, Chief of the Defence Staff and senior military officers have continued to explore the details of our engagement, and operational planning is underway.

Nepal: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the COVID-19 pandemic in Nepal. [HL281]

Asked by Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what requests for bilateral support they have received from the government of Nepal to help tackle the COVID-19 pandemic; and what their response has been. [HL282]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government is one of the leading donors to Covax, committing £548m to the scheme, which will provide more than a billion vaccines to developing countries including doses for almost a fifth of Nepal's population. The UK has also funded a new £180,000 duplex oxygen generation plant at the Nepal Police Hospital in Kathmandu to help address

oxygen shortages to treat COVID19 patients. The UK is also providing £15m of support to international NGOs and the UN to provide shelter, nutrition and other critical needs in Nepal - including cash and voucher assistance to 220,000 vulnerable people's basic needs, nutrition support to 120,000 pregnant and lactating women and infants, 400,000 people with WASH (UNICEF's water, sanitation and hygiene) support, and 210 truckloads of relief supplies to 52 different destinations.

On Friday 28 May, a plane carrying the UK's donation of 260 ventilators and 2,000 visors arrived in Nepal, in response to an urgent request for medical supplies from the Government of Nepal. Moreover, since the beginning of the pandemic, British Embassy Kathmandu has helped Nepal respond to COVID-19 by reprioritising over £40m of its aid budget. This support has included the construction of an oxygen plant in a Kathmandu hospital; technical advice to local government on managing the impact of COVID-19; water, sanitation and hygiene facilities to support around 300,000 people; safe spaces for women in isolation centres; cash and voucher assistance for the most vulnerable; and nutrition support for pregnant and lactating women.

Nepal: Overseas Aid

Asked by Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what overseas development assistance compliant bilateral financial support they intend to give Nepal over the next five years, broken down by project. [\[HL283\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government is one of the leading donors to COVAX, committing £548 million to the scheme, which will provide more than a billion vaccines to developing countries including doses for almost a fifth of Nepal's population. The UK has also funded a new £180,000 duplex oxygen generation plant at the Nepal Police Hospital in Kathmandu to help address oxygen shortages to treat COVID19 patients. On 27 May the UK sent a further package of support to Nepal to help the country's fight against coronavirus. This included 260 ventilators and personal protective equipment.

As the Foreign Secretary set out in his Written Ministerial Statement on 21 April, we have prioritised our aid to be more strategic and remain a force for good across the world. The Foreign Secretary's statement set out seven core priorities for the UK's aid budget in the overarching pursuit of poverty reduction. These principles combined with a strategic approach will ensure that every penny we spend, including to Nepal, goes as far as possible and makes a world-leading difference

The details of UK bilateral assistance programmes are set out in FCDO's DevTracker. This provides each project's allocation, the amount spent to date, and the end date for each project. Full budgets per country and a final audited spend for 2020/21 will be published in due course, including in our regular Statistics on International Development website and in the FCDO Annual Report and Accounts.

NHS Local Improvement Finance Trust

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the contribution of the NHS Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) programme to the NHS since its inception. [\[HL464\]](#)

Lord Bethell: The Local Improvement Finance Trust programme set up in 2001 has secured investment of over £2.5 billion to deliver 350 high quality, modern primary care and community facilities and supporting the integration of local services for the benefit of patients. The portfolio provides well maintained and flexible clinical space for over 1,400 individual general practitioner practices, dentists, community services, acute trusts, pharmacies and other healthcare professionals.

Northern Ireland Assembly: Members

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to amend the provisions of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 that require Members of the Legislative Assembly to designate themselves as nationalist, unionist, or other, upon taking their seats. [\[HL567\]](#)

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to modify the provisions of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 that require the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to be drawn from the largest nationalist and unionist designations in the Northern Ireland Assembly. [\[HL568\]](#)

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Government remains fully committed to the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and has no plans to amend the provisions of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 that relate to the designation of Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly, or to modify provisions of that Act in respect of the appointment of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

Nuclear Power

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether nuclear plants are currently able to provide one fifth of UK electricity supplies. [\[HL383\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The total installed nuclear capacity in the UK is 8.9 GW and if all stations were fully operational they could provide more than a fifth of UK electricity supplies. However, a proportion is likely to be unavailable at any given point due to routine inspections, maintenance and technical issues.

In 2020 nuclear power stations generated around 16% of the electricity generated in the UK. This figure is provisional and final figures will be published in July in the Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES: the annual

energy statistics publication produced by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy).

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their target for the percentage of the UK's electricity to be met by nuclear sources in 2030. [HL385]

Lord Callanan: We do not have a specific target for the amount of nuclear we will need in 2030 to meet our electricity demand. As set out in the Energy White Paper (EWP) and the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan, the government believes in the importance of a diverse mix of energy sources to support a low carbon, secure and affordable electricity system. This includes nuclear and recognises the important role which can be played by both large and small scale reactors.

Nuclear Power and Nuclear Weapons: Costs

Asked by Baroness Blower

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current annual cost of the Ministry of Defence's nuclear enterprise. [HL262]

Baroness Goldie: The forecast cost of the Defence Nuclear Enterprise for financial year 2021-22 is £6.5 billion, around 14 per cent of the £46 billion Defence budget.

Nuclear Power Stations

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of the current nuclear plants they expect to be operating in 2030. [HL384]

Lord Callanan: There are currently 15 nuclear reactors operating at 8 stations across England and Scotland, all operated by EDF. On the basis of current scheduled closure dates, all 14 of the advanced gas cooled reactors (AGR) will close between 2022 and 2030. Of the current generating fleet, only Sizewell B power station with its pressurised water reactor (PWR) is expected to continue generation past 2030. The developer of Hinkley Point C is forecasting that it will also be generating before 2030.

Offences against Children: Rochdale

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money has been spent in legal aid for members of the Rochdale grooming gang; and what is their estimate of the amount of money spent assisting the victims of that gang. [HL408]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The table below reflects the most recent legal aid costs held for each individual as at the time of writing. Costs are inclusive of both VAT and disbursements where applicable.

<i>Defendant</i>	<i>Solicitor (Crown Court)</i>	<i>Barrister (Crown Court)</i>	<i>Police Station Advice</i>	<i>Court of Appeal</i>	<i>Civil Costs</i>
Abdul Aziz	£139,519	£55,758	£202	£3,209	
Adil Khan	£200,350	£67,465	£216	£780	
Abdul Rauf	£207,582	£74,789	£459	£2,700	
Shabir Ahmed	£183,468	£69,748	£233	£1,684	
Mohammed Sajid	£147,583	£77,292		£4,301	£194.40
Mohammed Amin	£132,249	£57,552	£205		
Hamid Safi	£143,644	£54,747	£211	£870	£520.20
Abdul Qayyum	£156,482	£55,442		£3,469	
Kabeer Hassan	£138,130	£45,026			

It should be noted that these criminals did not receive a penny of these sums, which were paid to lawyers so that the criminals could face justice at a fair trial, following which they were imprisoned. Without legal representation, criminals could argue their trial was unfair and any convictions could be quashed. Defendants must pass a strict means test before being granted legal aid and they may have to pay it back if they are found guilty and can afford to do so.

In 2021-22, the MoJ will provide just under £151m for victim and witness support services. This includes an extra £51m to increase support for rape and domestic abuse victims.

We do not collect data on the costs of supporting individual victims.

We understand how traumatic the court process can be, and despite the pandemic we are continuing to improve the support provided for victims. This includes protective screens and video links in every criminal court, more separate waiting rooms, as well as piloting the pre-recording of cross-examination for rape victims to help further reduce the stress of attending court. At the same time, a new Victims' Bill – set out in the Queen's Speech – will strengthen the rights of victims at every stage of the justice system.

OneWeb

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 26 April (HL14697), what proportion of OneWeb launches are anticipated to use small launchers; and what is their assessment of the scale of the market for small launchers sited in Cornwall and Scotland. [HL257]

Lord Callanan: Launch decisions are a business matter for OneWeb. The company is aware of the UK's

ambitions to launch satellites from Cornwall and Scotland by 2022 and will be encouraged to utilise this launch capability.

Based on market analysis conducted to date by the UK Space Agency, we are confident there is a market to support planned UK spaceports in Cornwall, Sutherland, and Shetland.

Overseas Aid

Asked by Lord Collins of Highbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 29 April, how much of the 2021–22 Overseas Development Assistance will be allocated to (1) Gavi, the vaccine alliance, (2) the Global Fund, and (3) the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. [HL269]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) will spend £1,305 million of Official Development Assistance on global health in 2021/22. This will focus on the UK's position at the forefront of the international response to COVID-19 through our commitments to COVAX, Gavi, and the World Health Organisation, and through bilateral spend where the need is greatest, including in Africa. FCDO will now work through what this means for individual programmes in line with the priorities we have outlined.

Oxford-Cambridge Arc

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will provide in relation to the Oxford-Cambridge Arc (1) a list of members on the inter-ministerial group, (2) a list of members on the inter-departmental Board, (3) a list of all meeting dates since March 2019 of (a) the inter-ministerial group and (b) the inter-departmental Board; whether they plan to place the minutes of these meetings in the Library of the House and, if so, when. [HL255]

Lord Greenhalgh: Government is re-establishing the Inter-Ministerial Group for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and there will be a meeting of this shortly, to which Ministers across Government, from Environment and Transport to Business and Trade, will be invited to attend.

The Oxford-Cambridge Arc Portfolio Board, chaired by the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government, has senior representation from DEFRA, BEIS, DfT, DIT, HMT, No10 and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA).

We will continue to manage and record these Boards in line with Departmental requirements and procedures.

Palestinians: Recognition of States

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to recognise Palestine as a sovereign nation. [HL275]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace. We remain committed to a negotiated two-state solution that protects the peace and security of both Israelis and Palestinians.

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the criteria necessary for them to recognise Palestine as a State. [HL351]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK will recognise a Palestinian state at a time when it best serves the objective of peace. Bilateral recognition in itself cannot end the occupation. Without a negotiated settlement the occupation and the problems that come with it will continue. We continue to work closely with international partners to strongly advocate for a two-state solution and encourage a return to meaningful negotiations between both parties.

Passports: British National (Overseas)

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 29 April (HL15262), whether they will now answer the question put, namely, how many British National (Overseas) passports were issued in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available; and how many people have used the new British National (Overseas) visa scheme to come to the UK since it was introduced in January. [HL316]

Lord Greenhalgh: The table below provides data up to the end of March on BN(O) passports issued in the last 12 months.

<i>Volume of BN(O)s</i>	
Apr-20	363
May-20	2,270
Jun-20	7,719
Jul-20	24,972
Aug-20	33,249
Sep-20	48,081

Volume of BN(O)s

Oct-20	60,907
Nov-20	56,563
Dec-20	39,689
Jan-21	13,315
Feb-21	8,217
Mar-21	7,032

* These figures have been taken from a live operational database. As such, numbers may change as information on that system is updated.

Information on how many visas for the Hong Kong BN(O) route have been granted between 31 January and 31 March was published in the quarterly migration statistics release on 27 May and can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-statistics.

Passports: Dual Nationality

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government why dual country nationals are required to send their original foreign passport to the Home Office when applying to renew their UK passport; and what consideration they have given to allowing those individuals to instead supply a certified copy. [HL327]

Lord Greenhalgh: Where a dual national holds a passport issued by another country, HM Passport Office requires this to be provided in support of a British passport application as part of its range of checks to confirm the applicant's identity and eligibility. This includes ensuring the British passport is issued in the same identity the holder uses for all official purposes.

We ask customers to send their original document to allow physical checks ensure it is genuine, and we can return it during the application process if requested. In countries where legal restrictions prevent a customer submitting their passport as part of their application, a 'local service' is in place to submit the application so officials can check the original document and send a copy to HM Passport Office in the UK.

Personal Pensions

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Agnew of Oulton on 29 April (HL15257), when they expect the Financial Conduct Authority to provide a response about the (1) value, and (2) service, provided by UK pension providers to

holders of UK Self-Invested Personal Pensions. [HL527]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Information on the value and service provided to holders of Self-Invested Personal Pensions has now been provided by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) in the form of a letter and a copy of the letter has been placed in the Library of the House. The FCA apologise for the delay in their response.

Post Office: Public Inquiries

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to commission a public inquiry into the Post Office. [HL348]

Lord Callanan: The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry was set up in September 2020. My Hon. friend the Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets announced to the House on 19 May that the government will put the ongoing Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry to a statutory footing on 1 June. This will ensure that the Chair, Sir Wyn Williams, has all the powers he needs to get to the bottom of what happened.

Following the change to a statutory Inquiry, the final report will now be delivered by Autumn 2022, so that Sir Wyn will have more time to determine what went wrong at the Post Office during this period to ensure the right lessons have been learnt and avoid the situation being repeated in the future.

Prisoners

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will provide (1) the total number of prisoners serving more than 10 years past the expiry of their original tariff, and (2) a breakdown by each year served beyond 10 years. [HL263]

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the breakdown by ethnicity of the number of prisoners still in prison after their tariff expiry. [HL264]

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many prisoners continue to be in (1) Category A, and (2) Category B, prisons after the expiry of their original tariff. [HL265]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The total number of prisoners serving life and Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentences who have never been released and as at 31 March 2021 had served more than 10 years past the expiry of their tariff, broken down by each year served beyond 10 years (time over tariff), is shown in the following table:

<i>Time over tariff(1)</i>	<i>Status</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>Time over tariff(1)</i>	<i>Status</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Unreleased</i>	<i>Unreleased</i>			<i>Unreleased</i>	<i>Unreleased</i>	
	<i>IPP</i>	<i>Life</i>			<i>IPP</i>	<i>Life</i>	
	<i>Sentenced</i>	<i>Sentenced</i>			<i>Sentenced</i>	<i>Sentenced</i>	
	<i>Prisoners</i>	<i>Prisoners</i>			<i>Prisoners</i>	<i>Prisoners</i>	
From 10 years to less than 11 years	197	91	288	From 23 years to less than 24 years	0	12	12
From 11 years to less than 12 years	159	68	227	From 24 years to less than 25 years	0	13	13
From 12 years to less than 13 years	106	65	171	From 25 years to less than 26 years	0	6	6
From 13 years to less than 14 years	57	71	128	From 26 years to less than 27 years	0	8	8
From 14 years to less than 15 years	6	58	64	From 27 years to less than 28 years	0	11	11
From 15 years to less than 16 years	0	69	69	From 28 years to less than 29 years	0	4	4
From 16 years to less than 17 years	0	39	39	From 29 years to less than 30 years	0	6	6
From 17 years to less than 18 years	0	39	39	30 years or more(1)	0	17	17
From 18 years to less than 19 years	0	38	38	Total	525	698	1,223
From 19 years to less than 20 years	0	19	19	(1) These counts have been aggregated due to small numbers. This is to prevent the disclosure of individual information. Further disclosure control may be completed where this alone is not sufficient.			
From 20 years to less than 21 years	0	20	20	The tariff-expired unreleased indeterminate sentence prisoner population, broken down by ethnicity as of 31 March 2021, is shown in the following table:			
From 21 years to less than 22 years	0	17	17	<i>Ethnicity Group</i>	<i>Status</i>		<i>Total</i>
From 22 years to less than 23 years	0	27	27		<i>Unreleased</i>	<i>Unreleased</i>	
					<i>IPP</i>	<i>Life</i>	
					<i>Sentenced</i>	<i>Sentenced</i>	
					<i>Prisoners</i>	<i>Prisoners</i>	
				Asian or Asian British	83	65	148

Ethnicity Group	Status		Total
	Unreleased	Unreleased	
	IPP	Life	
	Sentenced	Sentenced	
	Prisoners	Prisoners	
Black or Black British	208	172	380
Mixed	67	46	113
Other ethnic group	8	11	19
White	1,334	1,345	2,679
Unrecorded	1	2	3
Not stated	4	7	11
Total	1,705	1,648	3,353

The tariff-expired unreleased indeterminate sentence prisoner population, broken down by prison security category as of 31 March 2021, is shown in the following table:

Main Function of Prison*	Unreleased IPP	Unreleased Life
	Sentenced Prisoners	Sentenced Prisoners
Cat A (High Security)	167	299
Cat B Trainer	229	203

*These prisons may hold prisoners with lower security categories than the main function of the prison.

Notes for all tables:

1. These figures have been drawn from the Public Protection Unit Database and Prison-NOMIS held by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service. As with any large scale recording systems, the figures are subject to possible errors with data migration and processing.

2. The figures in these tables do not include recalled indeterminate-sentence prisoners.

Statistics on the indeterminate sentence population in prisons are routinely published as part of the Quarterly Offender Management Statistics on Gov.uk - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>.

By law prisoners serving indeterminate sentences who have completed their tariff will be released only when the independent Parole Board concludes that the risk they present to the public is capable of being safely managed in the community under probation supervision.

Prisoners: Higher Education

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the effect on re-offending rates of prisoners participating in higher education while serving their sentences. [HL297]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The Ministry of Justice has enabled the Open University and the Prisoners' Education Trust to use The Justice Data Lab to explore the rates of reoffending for prisoners participating in higher education. The Justice Data Lab provides group-level reoffending information to organisations who have worked with offenders and would like to understand the impact of their intervention.

The Justice Data Lab Analysis (2019) reports that 14% of people who studied for an OU degree committed a proven reoffence within one year, compared to 18% who did not.

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many prisoners are currently enrolled in higher education. [HL298]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: We do not hold information centrally on the number of prisoners currently enrolled in higher education. However, the Open University reports that around 1295 prisoners were registered for Open University courses in England in 2020/21.

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why prisoners seeking higher education in prison must be within six years of their release date. [HL299]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The six-year rule relates to eligibility of prisoners for student loans and is required by the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 ("the 2011 Regulations"). The rationale for this regulation is that prisoners studying an undergraduate degree in prison would take six years to complete on a part-time basis. Prisoners who wish to complete an undergraduate degree must self-fund if they have more than six years left on their sentence. Prisoners can also apply to the Prisoners' Education Trust (PET) to fund Open University 'access to higher education' courses.

Prisoners: Self-harm

Asked by **Lord Blunkett**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the latest data on the number of prisoners reported to have self-harmed while serving imprisonment for public protection sentences on recall. [HL266]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: Figures for the number of self-harm incidents by recalled Imprisonment for Public Protection prisoners for each of the past three years are shown below:

2018 = 584

2019 = 743

2020 = 761

We are focussing our efforts to address the levels of self-harm across the prison population, and are under no illusions about the impact of the measures which were put in place to protect lives during the Covid-19 pandemic, so we have made prisoners' safety and wellbeing our priority.

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

We have renewed our partnership with the Samaritans who are providing the excellent Listeners scheme, which trains selected prisoners to provide emotional support to their fellow prisoners.

We have prioritised the roll-out of the revised version of the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) multi-disciplinary case management system used in prisons to support people at risk of suicide and self-harm.

We have delivered improvements to the way we support, and case manage prisoners throughout their sentences by the significant investment in and changes introduced by the new Offender Management in Custody (OMiC) model. This will provide each prisoner with a dedicated key worker who will be able to better support them and identify concerns at an early stage so that they can receive the right support at the right time.

Prisons: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) prison staff, and (2) prisoners, have received their (a) first, and (b) second, COVID-19 vaccinations; and what progress they have made in restoring family visits to prisoners. [HL440]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The total number of staff in Public Sector and Youth Custody Prisons who have declared that they have received their first COVID-19 vaccination, as at midday 21 May 2021, was 10,612. The

total number of staff in Public Sector and Youth Custody Prisons who have declared that they have received their second COVID-19 vaccination, as at midday 21 May 2021, was 2,508.

For prisoners in England as at the end of 14 May 2021, the total number who had received their first COVID-19 vaccination was 25,655. The total number of prisoners of all ages who had received their second COVID-19 vaccination was 8,485.

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service strongly encourages all staff and prisoners who are offered the Covid-19 vaccine, to take it. We ask employees to let us know when they have had each dose of the Covid-19 vaccine by recording their vaccine status on our HR system. As the disclosure of their vaccine status is entirely voluntary, it means the self-declaration rates presented below will be lower than the actual number of staff who have been vaccinated. However, the data collected to date is still valuable in understanding staff vaccination take up and coverage.

We are acutely aware of the impact of the restrictions on family visits, and we have had to make some difficult decisions to protect both prisoners and staff. As of 20 May, 107 establishments have commenced delivery of Stage 3 of the National Framework for Prisons which allows for the delivery of social visits with social distancing and face coverings. We are also working with Public Health England and Public Health Wales to look at how we can take safe and incremental steps to improve the experience of such visits. As part of this work we are piloting lateral flow testing for visitors.

Proof of Identity: Young People

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of people aged under 25 and living in London who have neither a passport nor a photographic driving licence. [HL680]

Lord True: The Cabinet Office commissioned a nationally representative survey in 2021 to explore photographic ID ownership of residents eligible to vote in Great Britain. The list of identification accepted for voting purposes will not be limited to UK passports or driving licences and will include a broad range of documents already in use, such as various concessionary travel passes, Proof of Age Standards Scheme (PASS) cards and photocard parking permits issued as part of the Blue Badge scheme.

The survey estimates that 99% of respondents from London (with the 95% confidence interval placing this estimate between 97.8%-100%) and 99% of 18-24 year olds (with the 95% confidence interval placing this estimate between 97.5%-100%) hold at least one of the forms of photographic identification accepted under the planned policy.

Further information on photographic identification ownership for voting can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/voter-identification-photographic-id-ownership-in-great-britain>.

Protective Clothing: Health Hazards

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any research on the effects of continuous mask-wearing over long periods; and if so what are the findings of that research. [HL481]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England has not conducted any research nor conducted a review of research evidence on this topic.

Public Value Review

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the findings of Sir Michael Barber's "rapid review" of Government delivery. [HL246]

Lord True: Sir Michael Barber conducted a rapid review to help ensure the Government is in the very best shape to level up and build back better from the pandemic. Rather than documenting specific findings in a report, Sir Michael gave operational advice to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Secretary on how a refreshed delivery unit could be established. This approach was accepted and the creation of the new No10 Delivery Unit was announced on 21 April.

Regional Planning and Development

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish the Levelling-Up white paper; and whether the white paper will seek to increase the spread, funding and powers of metro mayors. [HL244]

Lord Greenhalgh: Later this year we will publish a Levelling Up White Paper setting out how bold new policy interventions will improve livelihoods across the country as we recover from the pandemic.

We remain committed to devolving power to people and places across the UK. Our plans for strengthening local accountable leadership will now be included in the Levelling Up White Paper.

Remittances

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce remittance costs; whether they intend to raise the issue of remittance costs at the upcoming G7 Summit in June; and what plans they have to mark

International Day of Family Remittances on 16 June. [HL251]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Call to Action has raised awareness of the potentially devastating impact of COVID-19 on remittances. Over 40 countries took actions to improve access to remittances and financial services. Some remittance companies waived their transfer fees and offered incentives to senders and receivers of remittances. Two Call to Action Partners (United Nations Capital Development Fund and World Bank) are writing a stocktake report that will analyse key factors and measures taken that have contributed to changes in remittances flows since the start of COVID-19. The report will be published and made public in June.

The UK and Swiss Governments will build on the Call to Action coalition, including creating a "Peer-to-Peer Learning platform". This will facilitate learning between remitting countries and key stakeholders.

The Call to Action monitors developments at national levels through the World Bank and updates a tracker on the Call to Action website:

<https://www.knomad.org/covid-19-remittances-call-to-action/#actions>.

Remittances: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 15 February (HL12985), what developments have been made following the call to action 'Remittances in Crisis: How to Keep them Flowing', which the UK co-launched with Switzerland in May 2020; and how do they intend to measure progress. [HL250]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Call to Action has achieved its key objective of raising awareness on the potentially devastating impact of COVID-19 on remittances. Over 40 countries took actions to improve access to remittances and financial services. Remittance companies also responded by waiving their transfer fees and offering incentives to senders and receivers of remittances. A stocktake report is currently being written to understand the key factors and measures taken that have contributed to changes in remittances flows since the start of COVID-19. The UK and Swiss Governments are leveraging the unique composition and convening power of the Call to Action coalition to transition it to a "Peer-to-Peer Learning platform", which will facilitate dialogue, share experiences and best practices, and facilitate learning between remitting countries and key stakeholders.

The Call to Action monitors developments at national levels through the World Bank and updates a tracker on the Call to Action website.

Restart Grant Scheme

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure local authorities are issuing Restart Grants within the required timeframe. [HL412]

Lord Callanan: The £5 billion Restart Grants scheme announced by my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer on 3 March 2021 are one-off grants to businesses in the non-essential retail, hospitality, leisure, personal care and accommodation sectors to support businesses to reopen as covid-19 restrictions are lifted in the coming months.

Throughout the pandemic, BEIS officials have worked closely with Local Authorities to ensure that grants are delivered as quickly as possible, while safeguarding public funds. As the range of grants available has increased, officials have continued regular briefings with all 314 Local Authorities. Ministers have also held regular conversations with leaders and chief executives.

Officials continue to engage with Local Authorities to ensure compliance to both the scheme rules and wider reporting requirements. We will be releasing data on Restart Grant payments in due course.

Restraint Techniques: Children

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of children under the age of 16 who have been subject to handcuff restraint in the last 12 month period for which statistics are available. [HL392]

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government what protocols exist governing the circumstances under which a person under the age of 16 can be subject to handcuff restraint. [HL393]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: There are two settings in which a child aged 16 or under may be handcuffed: through interaction with the Police, or within a secure setting overseen by the Youth Custody Service.

Owing to the way in which police use of force data is collected, data is recorded on the number of times a tactic was used, not the number of unique events or people involved in incidents. 36,279 police handcuffing tactics were recorded for those aged under 18 in the year ending March 2020.

In 2019/20, in Young Offender Institutions and Secure Training Centres handcuffs were applied to children under the age of 16 on 117 occasions, involving 63 different individual children.

Any use of force, including the use of handcuffs by the Police or within a secure setting, must be reasonable and necessary in the circumstances, proportionate to the threat

posed and only the minimum force necessary may be used.

The College of Policing is responsible for setting the standards and training to which police operate. Guidance on the use of force and restraint by the police is set out in the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice, which includes guidance on how to deal with vulnerable people.

In Young Offender Institutions and Secure Training Centres, handcuffs are one of a range of approved restraint techniques. Handcuffs are used as an ethical and safer alternative to physical restraint technique. The use of handcuffs must always be reasonable and proportionate, and with the aim of preventing harm occurring to the young person or others. A report must be made every time handcuffs are used.

Russia: Pipelines

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the apparent change in policy towards the Nord Stream 2 pipeline announced by the US Secretary of State and the Russian Foreign Minister on 20 May; and further to that announcement, whether they plan to reassess UK policy on the pipeline. [HL422]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK remains concerned about the impact Nord Stream 2 will have on European energy security and particularly on the interests of Ukraine. Our focus continues to be supporting resilient European energy markets, including measures that diversify energy supply.

Schools: Admissions

Asked by Baroness Burt of Solihull

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take to ensure that the Fair Access Protocol under the School Admissions Code includes all children escaping domestic abuse, not only those in refuges. [HL469]

Asked by Baroness Burt of Solihull

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish the outcome of the review of the School Admissions Code. [HL470]

Baroness Berridge: In 2020 the Government consulted on changes to the School Admissions Code (the Code) to improve the in year admission process for all children, including those fleeing domestic abuse, and to improve Fair Access Protocols, which act as a safety net for the most vulnerable children. The new Code and associated regulations were laid before Parliament on 13 May and, subject to Parliamentary procedure, they will come into force 1 September. On the same day, the Government published the response to the consultation which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-school-admissions-code--4>.

The new Code ensures that unplaced children who are living in a refuge or other relevant accommodation will be eligible to be considered by a Fair Access Protocol, which exists to ensure that unplaced and vulnerable children are allocated a school place as quickly as possible. Relevant accommodation, for the purposes of the Code, means a safe place to stay for victims and their children fleeing domestic abuse. This can include, but is not limited to, refuges, specialist safe accommodation, sanctuary schemes and second stage accommodation.

Schools: Equality

Asked by Lord Woolley of Woodford

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support schools which seek to create (1) equal, (2) racially diverse, and (3) inclusive, environments for their pupils. [HL547]

Baroness Berridge: All schools must offer a balanced and broadly based curriculum, which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

In November 2018, the department published Respectful School Communities, a self-review and signposting tool to support schools to develop a whole-school approach which promotes respect and discipline: <https://educateagainsthate.com/school-leaders/?filter=guidance-and-training-school-leaders>. This can combat bullying, harassment and prejudice of any kind. It will help schools to identify the various elements that make up a whole school approach, consider gaps in their current practice, and get further support.

Citizenship education also plays an essential role in developing knowledge and understanding about the world today through teaching politics, democracy, power, the law, human rights, justice and the economy, as well as the changing nature of communities, identities, diversity in the UK and the UK's relations with the wider world.

From September 2020, relationships education became compulsory for all primary school pupils, relationships and sex education compulsory for all secondary school pupils, and health education compulsory for pupils in all state-funded schools: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationship-s-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>. These subjects are designed to give pupils the knowledge they need to lead happy, safe and healthy lives and to foster respect for other people and for difference.

The teaching workforce has become steadily more racially and ethnically diverse over the last decade, which is the period for which we have comparable data, although we know there is further to go to attract and retain diverse teachers who are representative of the

communities they serve: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england>. Our recruitment campaigns are targeted at audiences of students/recent graduates and potential career changers of all ethnicities and characteristics.

Finally, it is important all children and young people are treated fairly and there is no place for discrimination in our education system. The Equality Act 2010 ensures that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils or staff because of their sex, race, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief. The department has published guidance on the Equality Act 2010 for schools, which includes advice on how they can meet their duties under the act: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf.

Secondary Education: Vocational Guidance

Asked by Lord Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase the effectiveness of careers advice in secondary schools. [HL506]

Baroness Berridge: We are continually reviewing the effectiveness of careers policy. We are aware that information on education or training options provided by schools at key transition points too often fails to correct, or even reinforces, the impression that technical education, including apprenticeships, is somehow second-best to academic study.

Through the 'Baker Clause', introduced in January 2018, all maintained schools and academies must publish a policy statement setting out opportunities for providers of technical education courses and apprenticeships to visit schools to talk to all year 8 to year 13 pupils, and to make sure that the policy is followed.

A January 2019 report by the Institute for Public Policy Research found that, whilst one in three schools say the situation improved in the year since the Baker Clause was introduced, only 40% of schools were complying with the Baker Clause.

In the Skills for Jobs White Paper, the department announced plans to go further to improve compliance with the Baker Clause through the introduction of a 3-point-plan. This is an important step towards real choice for every pupil. We will create clear minimum legal requirements, specifying who is to be given access to which pupils and when. We will take tougher formal action to enforce compliance. The government's investment in careers will be conditional on Baker Clause compliance.

Through the work of the Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC), we are increasing young people's exposure to the world of work and supporting schools and colleges to achieve the Gatsby Benchmarks for Good Career Guidance. As set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper, we will continue the national roll-out of Careers

Hubs, digital support, Careers Leader training and the Enterprise Adviser Network to all secondary schools in England. This will continue to accelerate the progress of all schools and colleges towards achieving the Gatsby Benchmarks so that all young people are equipped to make informed career and learning decisions.

We have also committed in the Skills for Jobs White Paper to take steps to improve both local and national alignment between the CEC and the National Careers Service to create a clear, all-age careers system. Professor Sir John Holman has been appointed as Independent Strategic Adviser on Careers Guidance and will advise on closer alignment of the National Careers Service and the CEC, based around 4 important principles:

- Completing the national roll-out of careers infrastructure.
- Developing an enhanced National Careers Service website.
- Better collaboration at an area-level.
- Complementary personal guidance for young people.

The department is working closely with Professor Sir John Holman, the National Careers Service and CEC to agree what further action that can be taken across all 4 principles to make sure that young people and adults have access to a joined-up careers offer across their lifetime.

Service Industries: Switzerland

Asked by The Earl of Clancarty

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to amend the definition of a 'service supplier of the United Kingdom', as set out in Annex 1, Article 1(a) of the Temporary Agreement between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Swiss Confederation on Services Mobility, in order to enable UK service providers living in the EU to provide services in Switzerland. [HL335]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: The Temporary Agreement between the United Kingdom and Switzerland on Services Mobility (SMA) provides British nationals with crucial certainty to supply services in Switzerland from the United Kingdom. To further support service suppliers, HM Government secured unprecedented access for British nationals to the Swiss Online Notification Procedure, simplifying application processes. Given the temporary nature of the agreement and the strong outcome secured for British services suppliers, HM Government is not planning to renegotiate the SMA at this time. However, the United Kingdom and Switzerland share a joint aim to maintain and develop our close trade relations.

Sizewell B Power Station

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect Sizewell B to return to service. [HL382]

Lord Callanan: Sizewell B was brought offline on 16 April 2021 for planned refuelling and maintenance work. The outage has been extended to 30 August 2021 to allow for additional work to be carried out. The reactor will not be returned to service without the permission of the regulator, the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

Small Businesses: Climate Change

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to require mandatory climate reporting for small and medium sized businesses. [HL414]

Lord Callanan: The Government and regulators have concluded that to accelerate progress on climate risk disclosures, the UK will become the first country in the world to make Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)-aligned disclosures fully mandatory across the economy by 2025, with most requirements coming into force by 2023.

The UK Government recently published a consultation on Mandatory Climate-related Financial Disclosures, which closed on 5 May. The proposal covers larger companies and is consistent with the roadmap towards mandatory and climate related disclosures, and the interim report that was published in November 2020, which noted that the benefits of mandatory disclosures are likely to increase with an organisation's size.

We will now carefully consider all of the responses to the consultation and a response will be published by the end of the year. BEIS has committed to review the case for expanding the scope of the regulations in 2023.

Small Businesses: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase awareness of government support for small businesses in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL378]

Lord Callanan: The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy continues to deliver a rolling plan of engagement with UK SMEs, webinars and other events across the spectrum of our sectors to discuss the impact of COVID-19 and the continued support Government is providing to small businesses.

Moreover, through the Growth Hubs, led and governed by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP), business advisers can highlight potential sources of support available and increase awareness of government support for small businesses. Demand for Growth Hub services doubled in the first 6 months of COVID-19 impact. LEP's have self-reported that in the first six months of the financial year 2020-2021 (1/4/20 to 31/10/20) alone, their Growth Hubs have engaged with over 1.63m businesses and individuals; provided direct support to over 147,000 businesses (of which an estimated 6,400 received over 12

hours of high level support); and helped an estimated 3,900 individuals start a business.

The Government's business advice pages on GOV.UK also provide information and guidance relevant to starting, growing and maintaining a business, as well as their statutory rights and obligations. More detail on the support provided by devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland can also be found online: www.gov.uk/browse/business.

Small Businesses: Labour Turnover

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to assist small businesses staff retention rates. [HL538]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: In order to support businesses, including small businesses, to retain their employees and protect the UK economy, at the Budget the Chancellor extended both the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) until September 2021. Moreover, the Government is also providing support to small businesses through other schemes that reduce their fixed costs and increase certainty, supporting them in retaining staff through the pandemic and the reopening of the economy.

For example, in England, about a million business properties received over £11.6 billion worth of grants through the Small Business Grant Fund, the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund, and the Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund. These schemes provided support to small businesses in some of the sectors hit hardest by COVID-19, with applications accepted between March and August 2020. Local authorities are also receiving over £2 billion of funding through the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG), providing local councils with grant funding to support businesses that do not directly pay business rates as well as businesses that do not have to close but which are affected by COVID-19 restrictions, such as small businesses in their communities.

At the 2020 Summer Economic Update, the Government introduced the Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) Rebate Scheme to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) who may face abnormally large SSP costs caused by COVID-19 related staff absences. This refund will cover up to two weeks' SSP per eligible employee who has been off work because they have been ill with COVID-19 or have had to self-isolate because of it and are unable to work from home. At Spring Budget 2021 the Government temporarily extended this measure.

Moreover, eligible businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors in England will benefit from business rates relief worth over £6 billion in 2021-22. The Government is also providing a Restart Grant of up to £18,000 to over 680,000 business premises, giving them the cash certainty they need to plan ahead and relaunch trading safely over the coming months.

Small Businesses: Loans

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that small businesses can repay government loans over flexible time frames. [HL324]

Lord Callanan: We have always been clear that businesses are responsible for repaying any finance they take out. However, we recognise that some borrowers will benefit from additional flexibility with regards to their repayments. That is why we announced the Pay As You Grow measures last year.

Pay As You Grow is designed to provide Bounce Back Loan borrowers more time and flexibility over their repayments by giving them the option to:

- Extend the length of the loan from six years to ten.
- Make interest-only payments for six months, with the option to use this up to three times throughout the loan.
- Take up a six-month repayment holiday. This option is available once during the term of their loan.

Businesses will be able to use these options either individually or in combination with each other. In addition, they have the option to fully repay their loan early and will face no early repayment charges for doing so.

While the Government covers the interest due on Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) loans for the first twelve months of the loan, repayments of capital are required during this period unless the lender chooses to grant additional forbearance measures.

CBILS lenders can extend the repayment period for CBILS facilities where this is needed, to a maximum of 10 years. CBILS term extensions are offered at the discretion of lenders, and for forbearance purposes only.

South Sudan: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of who is responsible for the attack on the village of Dungob Alei in South Sudan on 16 May. [HL387]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK condemns the attack on the village of Dungob Alei on 16 May, for which the perpetrators have not been identified, but it follows a series of violent clashes between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka ethnic groups. We continue to press the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to resolve the status of Abyei and we support the role played by the UN Peacekeeping Mission in Abyei (UNISFA).

South Sudan: Peace Negotiations

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the progress towards ensuring that all commitments entered into in the peace deal signed in

South Sudan in 2018 are fully implemented; and which commitments are still to be put into effect. [HL388]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Implementation of the 2018 Peace Agreement remains behind schedule, with continued delays to key tasks such as the unification of armed forces and transitional justice. As the country's best chance for achieving sustainable peace, the UK is at the forefront of international efforts to pressure South Sudan's leaders to meet their 2018 commitments in full, including during my last visit in October 2020 and the UK Special Envoy's visit in early May.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what (1) peacebuilding programmes, and (2) other peacebuilding initiatives, they intend to continue funding in South Sudan. [HL389]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As the country's best chance for achieving sustainable peace, the UK is at the forefront of international efforts to pressure South Sudan's leaders to fully implement the 2018 peace deal, including during my last visit in October 2020 and UK Special Envoy's visit in early May. More broadly, the UK supports a number of peacebuilding initiatives at a grassroots level via the UK Peacebuilding Opportunities Fund and the UN Peacekeeping Mission in South Sudan, to which the UK contributed £57.9m and up to nine military staff officers in 2020-21.

South Sudan: Refugees

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the safety of ethnic minorities in refugee displacement camps in South Sudan following the withdrawal of peacekeepers from that country. [HL386]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) continues to play a vital role in the protection of civilians across South Sudan, including minority groups, and there have been no recent changes to the mission's focus or numbers of peacekeepers authorised to be in country. The mission's mandate was renewed in March, with UK support, for another year.

Spaceflight: China

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the landing of a Chinese rover on Mars; and what plans they have, if any, to support the 1979 Moon Agreement, and in particular its principle that the resources of space should not be appropriated by any commercial or state interest. [HL253]

Lord Callanan: Her Majesty's Government has noted with interest the successful landing of the Zhurong rover

on Mars and we welcome the increased scientific research and understanding of Mars that it will enable.

Her Majesty's Government is not a signatory to the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies; therefore, its principles do not apply to the United Kingdom.

However, the Government continues to support the principle that all nations operating rovers on Mars and other celestial bodies abide by the provisions of the UN Outer Space Treaty. The UK actively participates in the UN Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Subcommittees to define best practice and associated guidelines.

Students: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Education Policy Institute Education recovery and resilience in England, published on 14 May, what assessment they have made of the benefit of allowing students the option to retake an academic year, in cases of extreme learning loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL379]

Baroness Berridge: The degree of time away from school will be considered when schools are planning their support for pupils to catch up on lost education and development. The department does not anticipate that all pupils will need to repeat a school year due to the COVID-19 outbreak. In exceptional circumstances it remains possible for headteachers to agree to a pupil repeating a school year if they think it is appropriate.

In June 2021 we announced £1.4 billion of additional funding for education recovery. This is in addition to the £1.7 billion already committed bringing total investment announced for education recovery over the past year to over £3 billion.

The package provides an additional £1.4 billion to support children aged 2 to 19 in schools, colleges and early years. This will provide an additional £1 billion for tutoring, which will allow us to provide up to 100 million hours of tuition for 5 to 19 year olds by 2024, targeting disadvantaged children and key subjects such as mathematics and English. We are also making available an extra £400 million to help provide 500,000 teacher training opportunities across the country, alongside professional development for early years practitioners.

In addition, schools or colleges will be able to offer students in year 13 a repeat year where they have been particularly badly affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Funding for this will be met from existing departmental budgets.

This is the third major recovery intervention in the past year and comes on top of the £1.7 billion already announced to support recovery to date. This package provides additional investment, building on the almost £550 million already announced for small group tuition, £200 million for secondary schools to deliver face to face

summer schools this summer, a £650 million universal catch up premium for schools this year and a £302 million recovery premium next year.

This package is the next step towards recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak. We are also launching a review of the evidence on extending the school and college day, to conclude in time for the Spending Review, alongside continuing to monitor how effectively pupils are catching up.

Swimming: Primary Education

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what help they are providing to primary schools to ensure that all children have the opportunity to learn to swim before moving on to secondary school. [HL399]

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many primary school children have not been able to swim the statutory 25 metres in the 2019/20 academic year and what is their projection for this figure in 2020/2021. [HL400]

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much of the £320 million of PE and sport premium available for primary schools has been spent on children's swimming. [HL401]

Baroness Berridge: The department does not collect data from schools on how many pupils are able to swim 25 metres, but data from Sport England's annual Active Lives Children Survey provides the government with a national picture. Data for the 2019-20 academic year shows that 77% of children in year 7 report they can swim 25 metres.

The physical education (PE) and sport premium can be used by primary schools to support swimming and water safety, for example, through 'top-up' lessons or additional teaching training. The department provides schools with the flexibility to decide how to spend their premium in line with the conditions of the grant and do not collect data on the proportion or the amount of spend for any given activity.

In addition to the PE and sport premium, schools are able to access new virtual water safety lessons from Oak National Academy and the department will be supporting the Royal Life Saving Society UK's Drowning Prevention Week in June 2021. The department has provided an additional £10.1 million to improve the use of school sport facilities, including swimming pools. New resources to support children with special educational needs and disabilities to swim and knowing how to be safe in and around the water have been developed through the department's Inclusion 2020 grant, which is led by the Youth Sport Trust. These resources are available on Swim England's inclusion hub.

Television Licences: Enforcement

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what further steps they have taken since January to ascertain the impact of alternative enforcement schemes for the BBC licence fee. [HL402]

Baroness Barran: The government is considering decriminalisation of TV licence evasion and other possible reforms to the licence fee system to increase fairness and proportionality within the broader context of the ongoing licence fee settlement.

The government may in future undertake a further, technical consultation on the possible alternative civil sanctions to set out in more detail how alternative schemes could work in practice.

Television Licences: Non-payment

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many over 75 year-olds have been prosecuted for non-payment of the BBC licence fee since the free licence was abolished. [HL403]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The Ministry of Justice holds data on prosecutions for TV licence evasion up to December 2020. Since the free TV licence was abolished in August 2020, there have been no prosecutions for defendants aged over 75 years.

Territorial Waters: Protection

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to conduct a review to ensure adequate monitoring and protection of the UK's exclusive economic zone, territorial seas and coastline. [HL545]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The monitoring and protection of UK waters is a priority for maritime security leads across Whitehall including the Ministry of Defence, Home Office and the Department. As part of this joined up, multilayered approach, the Joint Maritime Security Centre (JMSC) monitors UK waters using a range of maritime domain awareness technology such as sensors, radar and aerial surveillance. This capability, as well as the level of data and awareness it provides, is reviewed regularly by officials and Ministers.

Tigray: Armed Conflict

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports of Ethiopian Orthodox priests being murdered in Tigray; and what assessment they have made of religious freedom in Ethiopia. [HL309]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As the Minister of State responsible for human rights issues for the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, I [Lord Ahmad] tweeted on 11 May to express my deep sadness at the reported murder of priests in Tigray. This is one of an increasing number of horrifying reports of atrocities coming out of Tigray. Civilians must be protected and the violence must stop. We have also stressed the need for Ethiopia to safeguard its incredible diversity of faith and identity in order to uphold freedom of religion and belief.

The G7, under the UK Presidency, issued a statement on 2 April and a Communiqué on 5 May condemning human rights violations and abuses in Tigray. The UK also condemned in the strongest terms the reported killings of civilians in Tigray via a joint statement on Ethiopia with 41 other countries at the 46th Session of the Human Rights Council. We support the UN's call for a "zero tolerance" policy and welcome the UN Security Council's 22 April Press Statement expressing their deep concern about allegations of human rights violations and abuses in the Tigray region. The UK will support the UN Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights to ensure that their joint investigations with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission into atrocities in Tigray are independent, transparent and impartial and that those responsible for these human rights abuses are held to account. The Foreign Secretary, Minister for Africa and our Ambassador in Addis continue to raise human rights issues in their discussions with the Ethiopian government.

Tigray: Chemical Weapons

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of allegations reported in the Europe External Africa Report on Tigray, published on 19 May, that internationally banned chemical weapons have been used in the villages of Tigray; and what steps they are taking (1) to verify these reports, and (2), if confirmed, to hold those responsible to account. [HL420]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is appalled by reports of atrocities in Tigray and is aware of recent reports that civilians have again been victims of indiscriminate shelling. It is clear that the conflict in Tigray is being conducted with little regard for civilian welfare and as a consequence reports of civilian casualties are all too common.

Ethiopia is a state party of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and has not declared any Chemical Weapons programme. The Government of Ethiopia has denied that Chemical Weapons have been used. We are working to establish the facts. Access to the affected areas, and to verified information, remains difficult. We have consistently called for access for independent human rights investigators and will continue to do so.

Tigray: Humanitarian Situation

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the World Peace Foundation *Starving Tigray*, published on 6 May; and what plans they have to raise the humanitarian situation in Tigray at the next UN Security Council meeting. [HL274]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK shares the call made in the World Peace Foundation report for all parties to the conflict to place the survival and welfare of the affected people above political and military goals. We also share concerns about a continued lack of information about the humanitarian situation and lack of access. The UK has been consistent in calling for the protection of civilians in Ethiopia, unfettered humanitarian access, and respect for human rights. We are deeply concerned about the impact of the conflict on food security and nutrition in Tigray, including reports of people dying from hunger. To date the UK has provided £22 million of badly needed support to people in Tigray. UK-funded aid agencies in Tigray are delivering support in challenging circumstances, including food, shelter, water and healthcare. A joint humanitarian and political team from the British Embassy in Addis Ababa visited Tigray 4-5 March, 4-7 April and the week of 19 April.

We have spoken about the situation in Tigray in the five 'AOB' discussions on that subject at the UN Security Council and will do so again in the upcoming open debate on Protection of Civilians. We will continue to support discussion in the UN on this pressing matter.

Tigray: Rape

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of allegations reported in the Europe External Africa Report on Tigray, published on 19 May, that killings, abductions, and rape are still occurring in Tigray, and that soldiers "are raping and destroying women to ensure that they cannot raise a community in the future. They are using rape and food as weapons of war." [HL421]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has led calls on the parties to the Tigray conflict to place the survival and welfare of the affected people above political and military goals. We are deeply concerned about the impact of the conflict on food security and nutrition in Tigray, including reports of people dying from hunger. We have raised the points with the Government in Addis Ababa consistently and at the highest levels, most recently during the visit of the Special Envoy for Famine Prevention and Humanitarian Affairs from 19-25 May. To date the UK has provided £22 million of badly needed support to people in Tigray.

Trade Agreements: COE Countries

Asked by The Earl of Dundee

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, along with local authorities, (1) to promote, and (2) to further enable, international partnerships with Council of Europe member states, as part of their future international trading strategy. [HL433]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: The Department for International Trade develops and maintains close links across the United Kingdom on trade and investment objectives. We support businesses to seize opportunities worldwide through our network of British High Commissions, Embassies and Consulates in countries that are members of the Council of Europe.

In addition, we seek to identify and remove market access barriers, drive inward investment, and implement the United Kingdom's trade agreements to promote and enable bilateral trade with countries around the globe, including with members of the Council of Europe.

Trade Marks: Maladministration

Asked by Lord Kilclooney

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in the event of an erroneous trademarking of a trade name by the Intellectual Property Office, they may reverse the trademarking without the need for further legal action by any aggrieved party. [HL280]

Lord Callanan: The IPO's examiners undertake a stringent examination of any trade mark application before it is accepted for registration, which includes a search of current trade marks. Once accepted, all applications are published for a 2-month window where anyone can lodge observations or launch a legal opposition.

Anyone can submit observations to the IPO and outline reasons why they believe a trade mark should not be registered from the date the application is made until it is registered. This IPO does not charge for this service. The IPO will then consider whether the mark has been accepted in error and can reopen the examination phase if there are grounds to do so.

There are more formal legal routes to oppose a trade mark application or invalidate an existing trade mark registration. Whilst these are formal legal processes, the IPO's Tribunal service is set up to be a low cost and accessible service.

Travel Restrictions

Asked by Lord Bowness

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment, if any, they have made of the long-term economic impact of the restrictions on international travel during the COVID-19 pandemic on (1) aviation communities, and (2) the UK. [HL425]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government recognises the challenging circumstances facing the aviation industry as a result of Covid-19 and firms experiencing difficulties can draw upon the unprecedented package of measures announced by the Chancellor. In total, we estimate that by the end of April 2021 the air transport sector (airlines, airports and related services) has benefited from around £7bn of Government support since the start of the pandemic.

The Government conducted an assessment of the impact of the International Travel regulations, including the Passenger Locator Form and self-isolation in June 2020. The International Travel regulations are subject to review at least once every 28 days, to ensure they are in line with the latest scientific evidence and remain effective and necessary.

Travel: Mauritius

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to add Mauritius to the list of islands being considered for the Green List of destinations to which tourists can travel without isolating on return to the UK. [HL623]

Lord Bethell: Decisions to place countries on 'red/amber/green list(s)' are taken by Ministers informed by evidence, including the Joint Biosecurity Centre's risk assessments alongside other wider public health factors.

A summary of the methodology used to inform these decisions is published on GOV.UK. The methodology consists of 4 parts: variant assessment; triage; risk assessment; and outcomes that inform ministerial decisions. All countries and territories that pass triage for green or red indicators undergo a more comprehensive risk assessment using additional quantitative and qualitative information (for example, from publicly available platforms such as the Global Initiative on Sharing Avian Influenza Data and the World Health Organization, host government websites, United Kingdom mandatory testing data and travel data), taking into account data availability, limitations and biases.

Available and relevant sources of information for each country or territory are used to provide an overall assessment on genomic surveillance capability, COVID-19 transmission risk and Variant of Concern/Variant Under Investigation transmission risk.

UK Internal Trade: Northern Ireland

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made on the implementation of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland and the commitments it contains. [HL667]

Lord Frost: The Government's policy has been for the Protocol to be operated in a pragmatic and proportionate way, protecting the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in

all its dimension and minimising its impact on everyday lives in Northern Ireland.

In doing so, the Government has developed significant measures to support businesses, such as the Trader Support Service, Movement Assistance Scheme and UK Trader Scheme.

Nevertheless, there have been significant difficulties in the Protocol's operation, and solutions must be found rapidly. We are working through the structures of the Withdrawal Agreement to find pragmatic ways forward in a range of problem areas. We look to the EU to show a common sense, risk-based, approach.

UN World Conference against Racism

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports about the possibility of (1) antisemitism, and (2) anti-Israel sentiment, at events marking the anniversary of the 2001 World Conference Against Racism in Durban. [\[HL452\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The United Kingdom is committed to combatting all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism, both at home and abroad. We believe that one of the most effective ways to tackle injustices and advocate respect among different religious and racial groups is to encourage all states to uphold their human rights obligations. Some of the anti-Semitic actions and speeches in and around the 2001 Durban conference and its various follow-up events gave rise to serious concerns. We will consider UK attendance in the light of developments between now and the commemoration event, including the likelihood of any recurrence of anti-Semitism.

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make a statement regarding the Durban IV event commemorating the 2001 World Conference Against Racism in Durban. [\[HL453\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The United Kingdom is committed to combatting all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism, both at home and abroad. We believe that one of the most effective ways to tackle injustices and advocate respect among different religious and racial groups is to encourage all states to uphold their human rights obligations. Some of the anti-Semitic actions and speeches in and around the 2001 Durban conference and its various follow-up events gave rise to serious concerns. We will consider UK attendance in the light of developments between now and the commemoration event, including the likelihood of any recurrence of anti-Semitism.

Universal Credit: Carers

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) how many, and (2) what proportion of, couples with children claiming Universal Credit since July 2019 have nominated the main carer's bank account for payment. [\[HL58\]](#)

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Analysis of the proportion of first payments that go to the main carer has been carried out. However, it is not possible to draw robust conclusions based on the limited evidence available

Unmanned Air Vehicles

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what countries UK Reaper drones have launched strikes in, without parliamentary approval, since 2015. [\[HL473\]](#)

Baroness Goldie: On 21 August 2015 an RAF Reaper RPAS precision airstrike was conducted in Syria and Parliament were notified of this operation on 7 September 2015 by the then Prime Minister, David Cameron. This strike preceded the Parliamentary vote of 2 December 2015 which saw Parliament support a motion to extend the UK's support to the global-coalition's counter-Daesh operations into Syria. We will continue to ensure that Parliament is kept informed of significant major operations and deployments of the Armed Forces.

Unmanned Air Vehicles: Satellite Communications

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what US satellite networks UK Reaper drones use. [\[HL472\]](#)

Baroness Goldie: In general, the RAF use a combination of Ku-band satellite links together with line of sight Radio Frequency communications and telephone networks for UK Reaper. These are used across the UK, US and NATO military systems, dependent on requirement, the area of operations and the specific task.

However, I am withholding further details about specific satellite networks as they would likely prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

Vitamin D

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 1 February (HL12508), what assessment they have made of the recommendation of the Irish Joint Committee on Health

for people in that country to take a daily dose of Vitamin D at least two times higher than the dose recommended by Public Health England; and what steps they intend to take as a result. [HL512]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England has not made a formal assessment.

War Crimes: Accountability

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the importance of accountability for war crimes. [HL354]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to the principle that there should be no impunity for those who perpetrate the most serious crimes of international concern, including war crimes. This commitment underpins our support for international criminal justice and accountability as a global Force for Good.

The UK has always been, and remains, a strong supporter of an effective International Criminal Court (ICC), alongside other international tribunals. In addition, we provide political, financial and practical support for accountability mechanisms such as the Independent Impartial Investigative Mechanism to assist in the investigation and prosecution of those responsible for the most serious crimes under international law committed in Syria since March 2011. We also provide support to the United Nations Investigative Team to promote accountability for crimes committed by Da'esh.

Waste: Exports

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to stop exporting waste to other countries for disposal or recycling. [HL279]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The export of UK waste for disposal is generally prohibited, save for the strictly limited exceptions which are laid out in the [UK Plan for Shipments of Waste](#).

In addition, the UK Government is committed to banning the export of plastic waste for recycling to countries that are not members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Government will consult on this measure and work is underway to make this happen.

West Coast Railway Line

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to safeguard the Holyhead to London line as part of the proposed reorganisation of Rail Services in England. [HL451]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: On 20th May, Government published Great British Railways: The

Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail – a blueprint for a more customer focused, reliable and growing railway. The biggest reform and simplification of our railways in 30 years will bring “track and train” together under single national leadership in a new public body – Great British Railways – accountable to ministers. Great British Railways will own the infrastructure, collect fare revenue, run and plan the network, set the timetable and most fares.

As set out in The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail, a joint working agreement between Transport for Wales and Great British Railways will be explored to improve the rail offer in Wales.

Windrush Lessons Learned Review

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Durham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, as part of their Comprehensive Improvement Plan in response to the Windrush Lessons Learned Review, they have a stated aim to increase case escalation where there are ethical considerations. [HL395]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The ethical decision making model, developed in response to Recommendation 17 of the Windrush Lessons Learned Review, is designed to support staff to flag possible unintended consequences to ensure that services and policies are delivered in the way that Ministers intended.

The focus is on ensuring that operational staff are making the right decision first time. The model takes decision-makers through a four step process from evidence through to impact, and prompts staff to consider whether their decisions are in line with the ethical standards within the Home Office Values (Respectful, Compassionate, Collaborative and Courageous) and Civil Service Code (Integrity, Honesty, Objectivity and Impartiality). If a member of staff identifies an ethical issue, that signals a possible unintended consequence of policy, they may resolve it themselves, discuss it with a colleague, or escalate the concern as appropriate. The model will not replace the immigration rules.

As part of the Comprehensive Improvement Plan, we state that we expect to see an increase in the number of cases escalated for ethical consideration. This increase will take place as the ethical decision-making model, that is currently being tested in different immigration business areas, is rolled out fully and prompts that consideration. Over the longer term, we would expect to see a decrease in the number of cases that are overturned at tribunal as the ethical decision-making model will assist decision-makers to get the decision right first time.

Workplace Pensions: Tax Allowances

Asked by Baroness Altmann

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans do they have to implement legal obligations on employers (1) to select a suitable pension scheme for low-paid workers, and (2) to inform those workers about the lower take-

home pay as a result of enrolling onto a Net Pay scheme. [HL550]

Asked by Baroness Altmann

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to implement legal obligations on (1) pension scheme trustees, (2) pension advisers, and (3) pension scheme providers, to ensure that the take-home pay of members of auto-enrolment pension schemes take-home pay is not reduced as a direct result of the pension scheme's tax relief administration system. [HL552]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government recognises the different impacts of the two systems of paying pension tax relief on pension contributions for workers earning below the personal allowance. The Government committed in its manifesto to review this issue and published a Call for Evidence on 21 July 2020. The Call for Evidence set out the Government's views on proposals already put forward by stakeholders, invited further proposals, and sought views on the operation of the relief at source method of tax relief for pension contributions.

The Call for Evidence is now closed. The Government is carefully analysing this issue and the responses received to understand what deliverable options for change may exist. These responses have raised technical points that we are continuing to explore with HMRC and others. The Government will respond to the Call for Evidence in due course.

World Heritage Sites: Liverpool

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions, if any, they have had with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation about Liverpool's World Heritage Status; and what responses they received during any such discussions. [HL419]

Baroness Barran: My Department has had regular discussions with UNESCO since Liverpool was placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2012, and we will continue to do so. The views expressed by officials in UNESCO's World Heritage Centre are consistent with those set out in the Decisions of the World Heritage Committee on the measures it expects to be taken if Liverpool's world heritage status is to be protected.

Young Offenders: Mental Health Services

Asked by Lord Laming

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to help the almost 500 children under the age

of 18 held in youth detention to recover from the effects of being locked up for 23 hours per day over the past year. [HL441]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: During the pandemic our priority has been to protect children in custody and the staff who support them. While the measures we have put in place have been successful in doing this, they have also necessarily, but regrettably, resulted in more limited regimes for young people, who now spend on average around five hours out of room each day in our under 18 Young Offender Institutions (YOIs).

Following the national restrictions announced in January, we have been able to maintain 'face to face' education and social visits in the youth estate (to take place virtually where possible). Average daily time out of room for children in YOIs has been largely increasing month on month since July and as of April, the daily average figure was the highest since March 2020, the start of the pandemic.

We have continued to support regular phone calls with additional free phone credit and access to video calls to help children keep in touch with their families. We have also continued 'SECURE STAIRS' - a trauma-informed framework of integrated care jointly led by the NHS and the Youth Custody Service (YCS). This provides the foundations as to how the YCS works with children and has adapted its approach to meet the needs of children at this time. We have regularly communicated with staff and children to ensure they are aware and understand the reasoning as to why such measures have had to occur, with HM Inspectorate of Prisons acknowledging positive communication from managers in their published scrutiny visit reports.

Given the uncertainty this period has presented, it has also been encouraging to see that levels of self-harm have fallen during the COVID-19 period, as reflected in latest published statistics (with the annualised rate of self-harming per 100 children and young people in the three months to December 2020 falling by 56% compared to the same period last year).

We are also carrying out work to ensure that lessons learned from the COVID-19 period are taken into account going forwards, and the YCS has commissioned a programme of research, in collaboration with academics, to evaluate and learn lessons from the impact and response to COVID-19 with the results used to further inform recovery planning.

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