



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 24 April 2019 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:41 P.M., 24 April 2019). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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**Notes:**

Questions marked thus [R] indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

## ANSWERS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Competition and Markets Authority

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[244068\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the First Delegated Legislation Committee of Wednesday 10 April 2019, Official Report, column 14, and the oral contribution of the member for Sefton Central, what involvement the CMA will have with local and regional government, industry bodies, trade unions and civil society.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The CMA will be responsible for approving notifications of new State aid and investigating potential breaches of the State aid rules by all levels of government, including local government. Industry bodies, trade unions and civil society will be able to submit a complaint or comments to the CMA about any aid which might affect their interests.

The CMA has committed to continuing to make its senior staff available to maintain and strengthen links with regional governments and devolved administrations. This includes building relationships with State aid teams in devolved governments across the UK.

The CMA has significantly expanded its Scotland office during the past year including appointing a dedicated State aid 'point person', based in their Edinburgh office, to liaise with the Scottish Government and wider Scottish stakeholders in relation to State aid. Recruitment is ongoing for similar liaison positions in Wales and Northern Ireland.

#### ■ Competition and Markets Authority: Parliamentary Scrutiny

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[244070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the First Delegated Legislation Committee of Wednesday 10 April 2019, Official Report, column 15, and the oral contribution of the member for Sefton Central, what arrangements he plans to introduce for Parliamentary oversight of the CMA.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

Under the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) must submit an annual plan and an annual report to Parliament on its work. The intention is that State aid would be included in these documents when the CMA takes on this new responsibility.

In addition, the CMA publishes all its decisions on individual cases on its website.

## ■ Competition and Markets Authority: Public Consultation

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[244067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the First Delegated Legislation Committee of Wednesday 10 April 2019, Official Report, column 15, and the oral contribution of the member for Sefton Central, whether he will publish the results of the CMA consultation.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is responsible for publishing the response to its consultation on the Guidance on state aid notifications and reporting, rather than my rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State. The CMA is currently analysing the responses to its consultation, and intends to publish the result in due course.

## ■ Competition and Markets Authority: Staff

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[244071\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the First Delegated Legislation Committee of Wednesday 10 April 2019 and the oral contribution of the member for Sefton Central, what assessment he has made of the expertise of the staff recruited by the CMA with responsibilities for the state aid regime.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Government has supported the CMA in ensuring that it has robust and appropriate plans in place to recruit and train staff.

We understand the CMA has already recruited and trained the staff that it considers necessary to start operating the regime at the point this is required.

These staff join an organisation which is already highly skilled and experienced in dealing with markets and competition issues. The CMA has assured us that in recruiting its State aid staff, it has continued to recruit staff of the highest calibre, who are capable of delivering work of the high standards that will continue to be required by the CMA. In addition, during February and March those staff who are expected to be working on State aid cases each received extensive State aid training.

Both the National Audit Office (NAO) and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) have over the last year undertaken assurance reviews of the CMA's preparedness to take on its State aid role and found that the CMA's plans were robust.

## ■ Domestic Appliances: Safety

**Ronnie Cowan:**

[\[244165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that consumers are protected from household appliances that are found to be faulty.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Consumer Rights Act 2015 (CRA) sets out the standards consumers can expect of the goods they obtain from traders and remedies if these rights are breached. Under the CRA goods sold by traders must be as described, of a satisfactory quality, and fit for a particular purpose if that purpose was made known to the trader by the consumer before the contract was made.

Consumers have a 30-day time period from delivery and/or installation when they can return sub-standard goods and get a full refund. After 30 days consumers are entitled to require the trader to repair or replace faulty goods within a reasonable time and without significant inconvenience to the consumer. If this cannot be met, the consumer would be entitled to a final right of rejection with full refund or the right to keep the goods and receive a partial refund.

Under the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016 where a product is found to be unsafe appropriate action must be taken by the manufacturer or importer to withdraw, recall or otherwise bring the equipment into conformity.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards commissioned a new British Standards Institution code of practice on recalls and corrective actions last year and is working with UK manufacturers and suppliers of white goods to ensure that their recall plans and processes are adequate as part of a new compliance review programme.

For free advice and information on their rights, consumers should contact the Citizens Advice consumer service on 03454 04 05 06 ( [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/) ). However, if the consumer resides in Scotland, they should contact Advice Direct Scotland on 0808 164 6000 ( [www.consumeradvice.scot](http://www.consumeradvice.scot) ).

**■ Energy: Prices****Marion Fellows:****[244160]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to help ensure that energy services are affordable for older people.

**Claire Perry:**

The Government is committed to ensuring fair energy prices for all consumers. This has been delivered through the Domestic Gas and Electricity (Tariff Cap) Act, which requires the energy regulator to cap standard variable and default energy tariffs.

The cap will save consumers a total of £1 billion on their bills annually.

In addition to the price cap, there is a strong package of financial support for older people. The Warm Home Discount provides a rebate of £140 off the winter energy bill for over 2 million low income and vulnerable households. All pensioner households receive a payment between £100 and £300 each winter through the Winter Fuel Payments and additional payments of £25 are available for cold periods through the Cold Weather Payment.

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[244188\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that the price of energy is affordable for older people.

**Claire Perry:**

The Government is committed to ensuring fair energy prices for all consumers. This has been delivered through the Domestic Gas and Electricity (Tariff Cap) Act, which requires the energy regulator to cap standard variable and default energy tariffs.

The cap will save consumers a total of £1 billion on their bills annually.

In addition to the price cap, there is a strong package of financial support for older people. The Warm Home Discount provides a rebate of £140 off the winter energy bill for over 2 million low income and vulnerable households. All pensioner households receive a payment between £100 and £300 each winter through the Winter Fuel Payments and additional payments of £25 are available for cold periods through the Cold Weather Payment.

#### ■ European Research Council: Grants

**Gordon Marsden:** [\[244027\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on European Research Council grants for UK researchers between June 2016 and March 2019 of the UK leaving the EU.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The table below outlines the number of awarded European Research Council grants in the UK since 2016.

	2016	2017	2018
<b>Starting Grant</b>	66	75	66
<b>Consolidator Grant</b>	60	59	55
<b>Advanced Grant</b>	41	65	47
<b>Proof of Concept Grant</b>	30	27	31
<b>Synergy Grant</b>	-	-	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>202</b>

Further information can be found at <https://erc.europa.eu/projects-figures/statistics>.

**Gordon Marsden:** [\[244028\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the (a) British Academy, (b) Royal Society and (c) Wellcome

Trust on the effect on British academics of being able to participate in joint bids with EU colleagues for future European Research Council grants as a result of the extension to Article 50.

**Chris Skidmore:**

BEIS regularly engages with stakeholders in the science, research and innovation community on the impact of EU exit on British academics.

This includes with the British Academy, Royal Society and Wellcome Trust through the High Level stakeholder working group on EU Exit, universities, research and innovation, chaired by the Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation.

■ **Government Assistance**

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[244063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the House Of Lords Secondary Legislation Committee report page 13 on Draft State Aid (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, paragraph 47, if he will publish the response of the Local Government Association; and if he will (a) confirm whether the meeting between the LGA and the CMA took place and (b) publish minutes of that meeting.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has met with the Local Government Association (LGA) to discuss the future operation of the state aid regime by the CMA. The minutes of this meeting were prepared by the CMA, and the CMA does not routinely publish the minutes of its meetings.

**Bill Esterson:**

[\[244066\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the First Delegated Legislation Committee of Wednesday 10 April 2019 and the oral contribution of the member for Sefton Central, whether he will publish the responses of the CBI and FSB.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) were consulted in the preparation of the Technical Notice on State Aid, published in August 2018 to help provide clarity and certainty on Government's preparations for the unlikely event of the UK exiting the European Union without a deal.

The Technical Notice made clear that the Government was adopting a continuity approach through transposing into UK domestic law existing EU rules on State aid, and the CBI and FSB recognised that this approach was right and responsible. The Government's continuity approach supports businesses through maintaining well-understood and supported rules to prevent anti-competitive State aid.

**Bill Esterson:**[\[244069\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the First Delegated Legislation Committee of Wednesday 10 April 2019, Official Report, column 15, and the oral contribution of the member for Sefton Central, what plans he has to change the policy of the application of state aid.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The aim in bringing across the EU State aid acquis into UK law under the draft Regulations considered in the First Delegated Legislation Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> April is to provide certainty and continuity for aid givers and beneficiaries. There are therefore no plans to change policy.

**■ Government Assistance: Scotland****Bill Esterson:**[\[244065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the First Delegated Legislation Committee of Wednesday 10 April 2019 and the oral contribution of the member for Sefton Central, whether the Scottish government made representations in response to a request by him on the draft state aid regulations.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

The Scottish Government wrote to my rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 21 November 2018 and 28 January 2019. Whilst expressing broad agreement with the policy position of reflecting the current EU State aid regime, the letter queried the position on reservation and the fact that the draft State aid regulations provided a limited role for Scottish ministers.

The Secretary of State recognised these queries, but explained that the administrations are closely aligned on policy and that the UK Government will work closely with the Scottish Government (and other devolved administrations) on the development of State aid policy.

**■ Government Assistance: Wales****Bill Esterson:**[\[244064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the First Delegated Legislation Committee of Wednesday 10 April 2019 and the oral contribution of the member for Sefton Central, when he plans to respond to the request of the Welsh Government for an explanation of the government's legal position that State Aid is a reserved matter; and if he will confirm whether the government has previously given the commitment not to amend domestic legislation in devolved areas without the agreement of the devolved administrations.

**Kelly Tolhurst:**

Ken Skates, Minister for Economy and Transport at the Welsh Government, wrote to the Secretary of State on 25 January 2019. Whilst noting that the regime established by the State aid regulation was an important step in ensuring alignment between the UK and EU on state aid, the letter queried the position on reservation.

My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State explained that there is no difference of opinion between the administrations on the current policy adopted in relation to State aid and explained the UK Government's intention to work closely with them (and the other devolved administrations) on the development of State aid policy.

I understand this correspondence enabled Jeremy Miles, Counsel General and Brexit Minister for the Welsh Government, to update the National Assembly for Wales' Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee by letter dated 20 March 2019, noting that he was, "*reassured that there is still scope to resolve the ongoing dispute between our administrations to reflect devolution in the medium to longer term, and will continue working with the UK Government towards that end.*"

Under the EU Withdrawal Act 2018, the UK Government can amend deficiencies in retained EU law where this would fail to operate effectively otherwise. Where EU law falls within an area of devolved competence, the Memorandum on the EU Withdrawal Bill and the Establishment of Common Frameworks (April 2018) clarifies that the Government will not normally seek to use these powers without the agreement of the devolved administrations.

The UK Government remains fully committed to this position. However, given that we consider that the regulation of State aid is reserved, we did not consider that this commitment was engaged in respect of the draft State aid regulations. I am nevertheless still committed to working closely with the Welsh Government and the other devolved administrations on the development of State aid policy.

## ■ Greenhouse Gas Emissions

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[244148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the viability of the Implementation Plans for the elimination of greenhouse gas emissions published by Climate Mobilization.

**Claire Perry:**

No assessment has been made. The Government recognises that climate change is one of the most urgent and pressing challenges we face, and our Clean Growth Strategy sets out our plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through to 2032, including ambitious policies and proposals on housing, business, transport, the natural environment and green finance.

The Strategy builds on the strong progress we have made towards our legally binding targets established in the world-leading Climate Change Act. Between 1990 and 2017, the UK reduced its emissions by over 40 per cent while growing the economy by more than two thirds.

We recognise the need to go further, which is why we have commissioned the Committee on Climate Change to provide advice on the implications of the Paris Agreement for the UK's long-term emissions reduction targets, including on setting a net zero target. They have been asked to include evidence on how carbon emission reductions in line with their recommendations might be delivered in key sectors of the

economy. This advice is due on the 2 May and we will consider it carefully when it is received.

## ■ Horizon 2020

**Gordon Marsden:**

[\[244029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with (a) Universities UK, (b) UK Research and Innovation, (c) Office for Students on whether the UK will participate in the Horizon Europe scheme from 2021 following the extension to Article 50.

**Chris Skidmore:**

I chair a High Level stakeholder group on EU Exit. This group meets monthly to discuss EU Exit issues related to universities, research and innovation and is attended by a wide range of stakeholders including Universities UK, UK Research and Innovation and Office for Students.

Horizon Europe is still being negotiated through the EU Institutions, but we have been clear that we would like the option to associate to the Programme. Further details on Horizon Europe need to be finalised before we can make an informed decision on future UK participation.

In any scenario, the Government remains committed to continuing to back UK researchers and innovators by supporting measures to enable world-class collaborative research.

## ■ STEM Subjects: Research

**Chris Green:**

[\[245819\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he has taken to increase the skills for people working in STEM research,

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Government recognizes the need to enhance the UK's research talent pipeline and increase the number of opportunities on offer for highly-skilled researchers and innovators and has taken steps to do so.

For example, in June 2018 we announced £1.3bn investment in UK talent and skills to grow and attract the best in science and innovation. This includes:

- £900m invested for the UKRI Future Leaders Fellowship which is open to the best researchers from around the world.
- £50m invested to existing programmes that are delivered through UKRI which include 300 additional PhDs, 90 additional Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, and up to 300 PhD additional Innovation Placements
- £350m invested for prestigious National Academy fellowships.

**CABINET OFFICE**■ **Cabinet Office: Scotland**

**Douglas Ross:** [\[910481\]](#)

When he last met with Ministers from the Scottish Government; and what issues were discussed at that meeting.

**Mr David Lidington:**

I spoke with the Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations, Michael Russell MSP, on 11 April to update him on the European Council meeting on 10 April and next steps. In addition, the Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations meets regularly to discuss matters relating to our withdrawal and future relationship with the European Union.

■ **Civil Servants: Location**

**Royston Smith:** [\[910478\]](#)

What steps are his department taking to move civil service jobs out of London in line with the Government's industrial strategy.

**Oliver Dowden:**

Our Places for Growth programme will relocate Civil Servants out of London, with at least 1,000 roles moved by 2022 and thousands more by 2030.

This in addition to the twelve new public bodies that will be located outside of London.

■ **Devolution**

**Chris Philp:** [\[910482\]](#)

What steps he is taking to strengthen the Union.

**Mr David Lidington:**

We remain fully committed to the constitutional integrity of the United Kingdom. As the minister responsible for constitutional issues, I am working with Ministerial colleagues to ensure that this Government delivers for people in every part of the UK.

■ **Disinformation**

**Lucy Powell:** [\[910479\]](#)

What steps his Department is taking through the Government Digital Service to tackle the spread of fake news.

**Oliver Dowden:**

Last year we launched the Rapid Response Unit to help government understand the increasingly complex online news environment, tackle false information (both misinformation and disinformation), and promote a fact-based public debate. To note, this work sits within the Government Communication Service, rather than the Government Digital Service.

## ■ Elections: Proof of Identity

**Craig Mackinlay:** [\[910485\]](#)

Whether the Government will conduct further voter ID pilots; and if he will make a statement.

**Kevin Foster:**

The British public deserves to have confidence in our democracy. A diverse range of 10 local authorities have confirmed that they will be taking part in Voter ID and postal vote pilots for the 2019 local elections. The pilots will provide further insight into ensuring the security of the voting process.

## ■ European Parliament: Elections

**Mike Amesbury:** [\[244195\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the readiness and capacity of local authorities to perform their duties relating to the 2019 European Parliament elections.

**Kevin Foster:**

It remains the Government's intention to leave the EU with a deal and not participate in European Parliamentary elections.

Returning Officers, who are statutorily independent, work with their local authority to ensure the necessary support and resource are made available to them to deliver elections, including through following guidance issued by the Electoral Commission.

**Mr Virendra Sharma:** [\[910480\]](#)

How many civil servants have been moved from other tasks to work on preparations for holding European Parliament elections this year.

**Oliver Dowden:**

Departments continually review workforce plans and reprioritise according to changing needs. The number of people moved from other tasks at any one time is not recorded.

## ■ Local Government: Elections

**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[244015\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps the Government is taking to increase voter (a) registration and (b) turnout at local government elections in May.

**Chloe Smith:**

The Government is committed to building upon recent record levels of electors registering to vote and participating in elections. One year on from the Democratic Engagement Plan the Government published its follow up report, Democratic Engagement: Respecting, Protecting and Promoting Our Democracy, setting out progress in 2018 and priorities for 2019 and beyond.

The UK Government will help equip councils and civil society groups to improve engagement in democratic events such as at the upcoming local elections in May. This will be achieved by: sharing our knowledge and products, including our Suffrage Centenary 'Educate' projects for young people; insight and solutions to tackle barriers to electoral registration for ethnic minorities and those who are homeless or move frequently; by evaluating progress on student registration; and we have an 'Easy Read' guide on the Register to Vote website homepage, produced in partnership with the Royal Mencap Society, to make it easier for people with learning difficulties to apply online.

Since its introduction in 2014, the Individual Electoral Registration digital service has been a huge success, facilitating over 38 million applications; with over 75% of these being made online.

#### ■ **Public Sector: South West**

**Luke Pollard:**

[\[910483\]](#)

What plans he has to move public sector jobs from London to Devon and Cornwall.

**Oliver Dowden:**

Our Places for Growth programme will relocate Civil Servants out of London, with at least 1,000 roles moved by 2022 and thousands more by 2030. The programme is engaged on an ongoing basis with stakeholders across all four nations of the UK, including in South West England. Location decisions will be made by departments in conjunction with the Cabinet Office, and will form an integral part of planning for the Spending Review.

#### ■ **Rendition and Torture: Inquiries**

**Mr Andrew Mitchell:**

[\[245667\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 11 April 2019 to Question 242032 on Rendition and Torture: Inquiries, with reference to the five months of serious consideration now undertaken, how much further time is required by HM Government before the conclusion of the process.

**Mr David Lidington:**

I refer the Honourable Gentleman to the answer I gave on 11 April 2019 to his previous Question 242032.

#### ■ **Vote Leave: Election Offences**

**Stewart Malcolm McDonald:**

[\[240037\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, with reference to the recent report of the Electoral Commission into the activities of Vote Leave, whether the Government has plans to set up a judge-led public inquiry to investigate the alleged fraud committed by Vote Leave during the EU referendum 2016.

**Kevin Foster:**

There are no plans to establish a public inquiry. The independent Electoral Commission is responsible for ensuring that elections and referendums are run effectively and in accordance with the law. It regulates the spending of, and donations and loans, to political parties and other campaigners.

It is not acceptable for any organisation to breach electoral procedures – and it is regrettable that fines have been levied on multiple groups on both sides of the referendum campaigns. Pro-Remain groups outspent pro-Leave groups by £4 million in the referendum campaign.

With 17.4 million votes to leave the European Union, more people voted for Brexit than have ever voted for anything else in the United Kingdom. Almost three quarters of the electorate took part in the referendum. The result was a bigger popular vote than won by any government in history. The will of the British people must be respected and delivered. The public delivered a clear verdict and that is what the Government is implementing.

**Dr Rupa Huq:**[\[910484\]](#)

If he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the Electoral Commission's decision that a new investigation into the Vote Leave campaign would not be in the public interest.

**Kevin Foster:**

The Electoral Commission is an independent regulator, accountable to Parliament, not the Government. The Government is, rightly, not involved in decisions over what the Electoral Commission investigates. We remain committed to upholding the integrity of our democratic processes.

**DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ **5G****Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[244206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps the Government plans to take to (a) protect national telecoms security and (b) meet its 5G rollout targets.

**Margot James:**

The Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review in July 2018 set out the Government's strategy for delivering 5G ambitions. The ambitions on 5G are for the UK to become a world leader in the technology and for the majority of the population to have access to a 5G signal by 2027.

Furthermore, DCMS is leading a cross-government review into the supply chain arrangements for the UK's telecoms infrastructure. The terms of reference are available here: (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/telecoms-supply-chain-review-terms-of-reference>). The Review includes consideration of the full UK market

position, including the resilience and security standards of equipment for 5G and will report in due course.

DCMS and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) actively manage the potential risks to the UK telecoms industry, and security is part of the 5G Testbeds and Trials programme.

#### ■ **Broadcasting: Disability Aids**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[244205\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he has taken to work with streaming services to improve the accuracy of their subtitling.

**Margot James:**

As part of a digitally inclusive society, television content should be accessible for all UK audiences. Following a commission from DCMS, Ofcom published a report in December 2018 that provided recommendations on making on-demand services more accessible, including subtitling provisions.

Government is considering Ofcom's report and will set out next steps in due course.

#### ■ **Music: GCSE**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:** [\[244202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking with the Secretary of State for Education to help ensure all children have the opportunity to study GCSE music.

**Michael Ellis:**

Ministers and officials have regular discussions with their counterparts at DfE on a wide range of issues including music education.

The arts are a key part of the national curriculum and music remains a compulsory subject for 5 – 14 year olds. In support of music education, we have announced almost £500 million of funding in 2016-20 for a diverse portfolio of music and arts education programmes that are designed to improve access to the arts and develop talent across the country.

In addition, this Government's introduction of music education hubs has enhanced existing music education provision offering support to all schools which they can draw on to help them deliver a music curriculum including GCSE music.

In January 2019 DfE announced an additional £1.33 million funding for music education hubs and that DfE and DCMS would work together to refresh the National Plan for Music Education.

In order to ensure all pupils are able to enjoy a high quality music education, DfE are developing and publishing a non-statutory model music curriculum for key stages 1 to 3. This will expand on the statutory programmes of study and act as a benchmark for all schools.

The model curriculum will provide pupils with the knowledge and skills which enable them to embark with confidence on a GCSE course of study.

#### ■ **Music: Licensed Premises**

**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**

[\[244207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the potential benefits of extending business rates relief to include grassroots music venues.

**Margot James:**

Grassroots venues are a vital part of the UK's live music ecosystem which contributes around £1bn a year to our economy. We are aware of the concerns around grassroots venues and will continue exploring a range of issues affecting them with industry and government to help protect and grow this important sector.

Since 2016 the Government has cut business rates for all ratepayers, announcing reforms which will reduce business rates by more than £13 billion over the next five years. Local authorities also have powers to support specific sectors in their local area through the existing system of discretionary reliefs.

## EDUCATION

#### ■ **Apprentices: Age**

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[244092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether apprenticeships are age restricted; and whether they are designed to entice any particular demographic.

**Anne Milton:**

The Department for Education is responsible for the apprenticeship programme in England.

Individuals in England can apply for an apprenticeship whilst they are still at school but must be 16 or over by the end of the summer holidays to start an apprenticeship. There is no upper age limit. Apprenticeships offer people of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to earn whilst they learn.

We are encouraging participation from under-represented groups, including people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, people with a learning disability or learning difficulty, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, so that everyone can benefit from the increased wage returns and employment prospects that apprenticeships offer. We are also working to improve gender representation in sectors where it is needed, such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****■ Birds: Conservation**

**Paul Farrelly:** [\[244035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department is issuing guidelines to local authorities on the use of mesh netting which prevents birds from nesting.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the Rt. Hon. Member for Birkenhead, Frank Field, on 23 April, PQ 243353.

**■ Electronic Equipment: Recycling**

**Paul Farrelly:** [\[244034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that all household e-waste is recycled.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The current 2013 Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations require producers to pay for the environmentally sound collection, treatment and recycling of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) when it becomes waste.

Producers are set annual WEEE collection targets and finance the full cost of collection and proper treatment of household WEEE, including costs incurred by local authorities, which in turn must enable householders to deposit WEEE for recycling at household waste recycling centres.

Retailers of EEE are required to either offer a like for like in-store take back upon sale of a new item of EEE or to provide funding support for local authorities to support collection, recycling and reuse of WEEE.

The Government funds guidance for householders, including a postcode search function for UK WEEE disposal locations, available at: [www.recyclenow.com](http://www.recyclenow.com).

Any producers that fail to meet their household WEEE collection target are required to contribute to a fund which provides further support to local authorities to support increased WEEE collections, leading to higher levels of recycling and reuse of unwanted WEEE.

As laid out in our ambitious Resources and Waste Strategy, the Government will consult on reforms to the WEEE producer responsibility regime to drive more sustainable product design and further increase recycling rates by the end of 2020.

**■ Electronic Training Aids**

**Stephanie Peacock:** [\[244193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2019 to Question 230930, what plans he has to bring forward

primary legislation to amend the Animal Welfare Act 2006 to ban the use of hand-held remote controlled e-collar devices.

**David Rutley:**

The Government will introduce the necessary legislation, which will be regulations made under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, in due course.

■ **Meat: Overseas Trade**

**Dr David Drew:**

[\[215075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether all current trade agreements that include the export of meat specify that animals have be stunned before slaughter; and if he will make a statement.

**David Rutley:**

Through membership of the EU, the UK currently participates in around 40 free trade agreements. These do not specify that animals have to be stunned before slaughter.

However, all slaughter of animals for export from the UK – whether stun or non-stun – must strictly comply with EU and the UK regulations on animal welfare at the time of killing and additional welfare at slaughter rules apply to animals subject to non-stun slaughter.

## FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ **China: Embassies**

**Helen Goodman:**

[\[244041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the projected cost of the planned UK embassy building in Beijing.

**Mark Field:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is committed to redevelop our embassy site in Beijing which is not fit-for-purpose and does not meet the scale of ministerial ambitions in China. Our SR15 Settlement commits us to provide £80 million of funding towards this raised by the sale of our assets. Project planning continues and is at an early stage. However, details of costs are commercially sensitive.

■ **Iran: Capital Punishment**

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[244014\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Iranian authorities on the increase of the death penalty against people below the age of 18 as stated in the Amnesty International Report Death Sentences and Executions 2018.

**Mark Field:**

The British Government is firmly opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances and in every country, including Iran. This is especially so in cases which do not meet the minimum standards defined by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We have made clear to Iran, both in public and in private, our opposition to the use of the death penalty and will continue to do so, particularly in relation to the execution of minors and those sentenced to death for crimes committed as minors. The UK is committed to holding Iran to account on a wide range of human rights issues, through contact with the Iranian government, through the UN, and with our European partners. The EU demarched Iran on use of the death penalty most recently in March 2019, and about the case of Zeinab Sekaanvand (under the age of 18 when sentenced) in October 2018. The EU conducts such demarches whenever it becomes aware of cases.

**■ Sudan: British Nationals Abroad****Stephen Gethins:**[\[244153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made about the safety of UK citizens in Sudan.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The situation in Khartoum and across Sudan remains fragile following an announcement on 11 April that President Bashir had been replaced by a Military Council. Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) travel advice was updated on the same day to advise against 'all but essential' travel to the whole of Sudan, in addition to long standing existing advice against travel to certain areas of the country. We advise that British citizens currently in Sudan ensure they are familiar with FCO travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/sudan>) which is frequently updated. Further, they should carefully review whether their need to remain is essential, and consider leaving the country.

**■ Yemen: Military Intervention****Stephen Twigg:**[\[244004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make it his policy to support an independent investigation into the airstrike on two schools in Sana'a, Yemen on 7 April 2019.

**Stephen Twigg:**[\[244005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make an assessment of whether the airstrike on two schools in Sana'a, Yemen on 7 April 2019 was a legitimate military operation in line with international humanitarian law.

**Mark Field:**

We are deeply concerned at reports of an explosion at a warehouse near two schools in Sa'wan. British officials have raised this incident with Saudi officials, who have denied publicly that an airstrike took place, and British officials are urgently seeking

information from all credible sources. We endorse the statement of the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General of 9 April and continue to call on all parties to the conflict in Yemen to exercise restraint, comply fully with international humanitarian law and implement the Stockholm Agreement without delay in order to improve the humanitarian situation in Yemen.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

### ■ Asthma: Prescriptions

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[244090\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that prescription charges do not have an impact on health inequalities in people with asthma, following Asthma UK's recent report *Paying to Breathe: Why unfair asthma prescription charges must be stopped?*.

**Seema Kennedy:**

Extensive arrangements are already in place to help people afford National Health Service prescriptions. These include a broad range of NHS prescription charge exemptions, for which someone with asthma may qualify.

To support those with greatest need who do not qualify for an exemption, prescription prepayment certificates are available. A holder of a 12-month certificate can get all the prescriptions they need for just £2 per week.

### ■ Cannabis: Medical Treatments

**Jo Stevens:**

[\[244142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many NHS prescriptions for medicinal cannabis (a) THC and (b) CBD have been issued in England since December 2018.

**Seema Kennedy:**

NHS England is using extant systems to monitor use of the newly rescheduled unlicensed cannabis-based products for medicinal use in England. In England, these systems monitor the number of items dispensed and associated costs in primary care and the volume of products used and associated cost in secondary care. NHS England Controlled Drug Accountable Officers are also collecting local intelligence in both the National Health Service and independent sector.

Data on the number of items of cannabis-based medicines dispensed in NHS primary care in England from December 2018 to January 2019 has been published by the NHS Business Services Authority. Such data is published three months in arrears, and we expect information for February 2019 to be published shortly.

The published data shows that the following number of items of Nabilone and Sativex (two cannabis-based medicines) were dispensed from December 2018 to January 2019:

	DECEMBER 2018	JANUARY 2019
Nabilone	49	44
Sativex	181	167

### ■ Naloxone: Prisoners

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[244050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 4 July 2018 to Question 158990 on Naloxone: Prisoners, which prisons provided take-home Naloxone in 2017-18.

**Jackie Doyle-Price:**

In the replies to Questions 153247 and 158990, we stated that this information would be published in 2019. While the numbers of people who were provided with take-home Naloxone are published, the names of prisons that provided take-home Naloxone to prisoners in 2017-18 are not included in the data collection.

### ■ NHS: Drugs

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[\[244134\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his Department's (a) anticipated growth rate, (b) allowed growth rate and (c) anticipated rebate payment percentages will be for the current (i) Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access and (ii) statutory scheme to control costs of branded health service medicines in each year of the operation of both schemes.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The following table shows the initial growth forecast for the Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing and Access and Statutory Scheme to control costs of branded health service medicines in each year of the operation of both schemes.

VOLUNTARY SCHEME	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Initial forecast growth rate of Voluntary Scheme Measured Sales	5.91%	7.16%	8.90%	9.53%	9.12%
Voluntary Scheme	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%

VOLUNTARY SCHEME	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Allowed Growth Rate					
Initial payment percentage for Voluntary Scheme members	9.6%				
Estimated 2020 future payment percentage for Voluntary Scheme members		14.2%			
Statutory Scheme	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Initial forecast growth rate of Statutory Scheme Measured Sales	5.8%	7.0%	8.7%		
Statutory Scheme payment %	9.9%	14.7%	20.5%		

Statutory Scheme allowed growth rate:

“The payment percentages are calculated to limit the growth rate of branded health service medicines sales consistent with the average annual growth rate agreed in the 2014 voluntary scheme, which was an average of 1.1% per annum growth.”

These figures are published in the following publications:

Page 13 of the 2019 Voluntary Scheme Annex 3 which is available at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/761835/voluntary-scheme-for-branded-medicines-pricing-and-access-annexes.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/761835/voluntary-scheme-for-branded-medicines-pricing-and-access-annexes.pdf)

Page 8 of the Statutory Scheme Impact Assessment which is available at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/761064/impact-assessment-2018-statutory-scheme-branded-medicines-pricing.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/761064/impact-assessment-2018-statutory-scheme-branded-medicines-pricing.pdf)

## ■ Vaccination: Research

**Norman Lamb:**

[244039]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to his oral contribution on 26 March 2019 to Question 910028 on Antimicrobial Resistance: Vaccines, what steps his Department is taking to stimulate research and development into vaccines, including for tuberculosis, as an alternative to antibiotics.

**Norman Lamb:**

[244040]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to his oral contribution on 26 March 2019 to Question 910028 on Antimicrobial Resistance: Vaccines, what funding he plans to make to stimulate research and development into vaccines as an alternative to antibiotics.

**Seema Kennedy:**

The United Kingdom national action plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), published on 24 January 2019, contains the commitment to continue to support research into new and alternative treatments, vaccines and diagnostic tests.

The Government has invested over £350 million in AMR research and development since 2014, including research funding calls with vaccination in scope, most recently the £32 million capital funding call lead by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), and the Small Business Research Initiative competition which announced its awards in January 2019. We would expect to consider the role of vaccines for AMR in future programmatic funding.

The UK supports the development of vaccines through UK Aid programmes such as the Global AMR Innovation Fund (GAMRIF) and the UK Vaccine Network. GAMRIF is a £50 million fund to support innovative research and development for AMR, for the benefit of people in low- and middle-income countries, and invests £30 million into preventative measures in human and animal health, including vaccines for AMR not including tuberculosis (TB). The fund includes a £1 million work package with the Bacterial Vaccinology Network which supports early stage research and development around the world to drive the development and uptake of vaccines for AMR in humans and animals.

The UK supports TB vaccine research through the Medical Research Council (MRC), with support to the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership, and through the Joint Global Health Clinical Trials programme represented by the Department for International Development (DFID), MRC, NIHR and Wellcome.

DFID's Agriculture research team is supporting work on bovine TB vaccine development in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

## HOME OFFICE

### ■ 101 Calls: Fees and Charges

**Steve McCabe:**

[244012]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the potential benefits of removing the 15 pence service charge on 101 calls so that non-emergency phone calls to the police are free of charge.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

Calls to 101 cost 15p from a mobile device or landline phones, from anywhere in the country and regardless of duration. Calls are free from payphones.

The public have always paid to contact the police by telephone for non-emergencies and the 15p charge per call is a transparent rate that fully funds the 101 non-emergency service. Police non-emergency numbers (such as 0845 numbers) which were used before 2011 could cost members of the public up to 40p per minute. While it may not be an option for everyone, the public can also report non-emergency crimes online via forces' websites, free of charge.

The Home Office is supporting the digital transformation of policing through programmes such as the Digital Policing Portfolio (DPP), led by the NPCC. Within the DPP, the Digital Public Contact programme aims to provide appropriate digital channels for the public to report and track crime online, facilitating greater public-police interaction in real time.

### ■ Abortion: Protest

**Stella Creasy:**

[243439]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what systems are in place for (a) women accessing abortion care, (b) healthcare professionals and (c) members of the public to submit new experiences of anti-abortion clinic protests to the Home Office.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Home Office carried out an in-depth assessment to understand the scale and nature of protests outside abortion clinics to establish if more needs to be done to protect those requiring an abortion. The Home Secretary set out his position on 13 September 2018 through a Written Ministerial Statement. A link to the statement can be found here: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2018-09-13/HCWS958>.

As explained in the Home Secretary's statement, the Government recognises the adverse impact that anti-abortion protests can have on patients and staff and the Home Office is keeping this important matter under review. The Home Office would welcome any new evidence that becomes available

## ■ Domestic Abuse

**Mr Paul Sweeney:**

[\[242934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment the Government has made of trends in the level of the incidents of partner violence in which perpetrators (a) monitor and (b) control their victims through (i) apps on smartphones and (ii) other internet-connected devices.

**Victoria Atkins:**

On 21 January we published the Government response to our public consultation on transforming the response to domestic abuse, in which we asked about the risk of technology being used to perpetrate abuse. In our response we committed to continue to work on the Government Online Harms White Paper, which was published on Monday, and which sets out our proposals to address both harmful and illegal conduct and content, including the broad range of online harms associated with domestic abuse.

In addition, the Government has provided Refuge with £250,000 of funding through the Tampon Tax to provide specialist nationwide support to staff and survivors who experience technologically facilitated abuse. We have also provided Northumbria PCC with £646,000 through the Home Office Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Service Transformation Fund for a project which includes work to tackle cyberstalking.

## ■ Domestic Abuse and Stalking

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[243336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of police domestic abuse and stalking training.

**Victoria Atkins:**

A number of police forces have undertaken Domestic Abuse Matters training developed by the College of Policing and SafeLives. This training has been evaluated and found to be effective at improving knowledge and attitudes of police officers. HMICFRS' latest inspection into domestic abuse has found that police forces are continuing to invest in training and guidance about domestic abuse.

As part of our package of measures announced on 21 January 2019 to protect victims of domestic abuse, we have committed to provide funding to enhance existing training to include economic abuse and to support the extension of domestic abuse training.

The College of Policing has recently published new advice for first responders on stalking, with further training products being developed for secondary investigators.

## ■ Domestic Abuse: Criminal Investigation

**Vicky Foxcroft:** [\[243523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans he has to establish a dedicated unit to investigate historic domestic abuse.

**Victoria Atkins:**

It is the responsibility of the police to investigate allegations of domestic abuse.

HMICFRS' latest inspection on domestic abuse found that the police response continues to improve, particularly around the first response. Furthermore, police recorded domestic abuse crimes have increased by over 60% in the last three years, demonstrating increased victim confidence to report and better police recording of these crimes. Overall, prosecutions and convictions for domestic abuse are both up since 2010 – by 20 per cent and 28 per cent respectively, with 76% of all prosecutions resulting in successful convictions, the highest since 2010.

Our landmark draft Domestic Abuse Bill and consultation response published in January includes measures to help the police tackle domestic abuse, including the creation of a Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Order and training for police. We will continue to monitor the police response through the Home Secretary chaired National Oversight Group and through HMICFRS inspections.

## ■ Early Intervention Youth Fund

**Louise Haigh:** [\[216382\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will list the (a) unsuccessful bids and (b) cost of those bids to the Home Office Early Intervention Youth Fund.

**Victoria Atkins:**

We received 111 bids to the Early Intervention Youth Fund. The Early Intervention Youth Fund of £22 million is already supporting 29 projects in England and Wales. Over £17 million has already been allocated to projects delivering interventions to young people at risk of criminal involvement, gang exploitation and county lines.

I can confirm that there were 82 bids that did not receive funding in November 2018 which totalled nearly £26million over the two financial years (2018/19 and 2019/20).

## ■ Female Genital Mutilation

**Neil Coyle:** [\[244129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department is taking to improve the evidence base for understanding the levels and risks of female genital mutilation in the UK.

**Neil Coyle:** [\[244130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how his Department measures the efficacy of funding to prevent and protect girls and young women from female genital mutilation.

**Neil Coyle:**

[244131]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how his Department plans to advise local authorities on the targeting of funding for tackling female genital mutilation across the UK.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a crime and it is child abuse. The Government is clear that we will not tolerate a practice that can cause extreme and lifelong suffering to women and girls.

In March 2019, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government allocated £375,000 for 37 local authority areas to fund locally-driven out-reach, engagement and communications on the practice of FGM. It is for Local Authorities to determine how best to utilise funding to combat the practice of FGM in their areas.

Data on FGM includes a 2015 City University and Equality Now study, part funded by the Home Office, which estimated that 137,000 women and girls who had migrated to England and Wales were living with the consequences of FGM, and approximately 60,000 girls aged 0-14 were born in England and Wales to mothers who had undergone FGM. The study also provides a breakdown of FGM prevalence estimates by local authority area which is available online at <http://openaccess.city.ac.uk/12382/>.

In addition, NHS Digital publishes data on the prevalence of FGM within the NHS in England. The most recent quarterly statistics were published in February 2019. A detailed breakdown of these statistics, including by local authority and age, is available online at <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/female-genital-mutilation>.

To improve understanding of the prevalence of so-called 'Honour Based Abuse' (HBA), we introduced a mandatory HBA collection to the Annual Data Requirement (ADR) of police forces in England and Wales. This requires police forces to record where a crime has been committed in the context of preserving the honour of a family or community. This new collection is also capturing police recorded offences of FGM which were initially reported to the police under the mandatory reporting duty <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>

■ **Foreign Nationals: Saudi Arabia**

**Crispin Blunt:**

[243988]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Saudi Arabian citizens or former Saudi Arabian citizens have been put under police protection in the UK since 2015; and how many of those have been put under police protection from October 2018 until now.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

It is our long-standing policy not to provide detailed information on the security arrangements for individuals. To do so could compromise the integrity of those arrangements and affect the security of the individuals concerned. This includes numbers related to those in receipt of protection measures.

**Crispin Blunt:** [243989]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many complaints have been made to the police by Saudi Arabian citizens, or former Saudi Arabian citizens, who felt threatened or sought advice as a result of intimidation they believed was from the Saudi Arabian Government in each year for which information is available.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The Home Office do not hold this data and therefore cannot provide a response to the request.

Whilst reported notifiable crimes are recorded and published annually in the crime statistics, recorded and published crimes do not go into the detail of the nationalities of individuals reporting these crimes.

**Crispin Blunt:** [243990]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Saudi Arabian citizens were deported from the UK in (a) 2015, (b) 2016, (c) 2017 and (d) 2018; and how many such citizens have been deported from October 2018 to date.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The number of enforced returns from the UK by year and country of nationality is published in table rt\_02 (returns data tables, volume 1) in 'Immigration Statistics, year ending December 2018', available from the GOV.uk website at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/781113/returns1-dec-2018-tables.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781113/returns1-dec-2018-tables.ods)

The term 'deportations' refers to a legally-defined subset of returns which are enforced either following a criminal conviction or when it is judged that a person's removal from the UK is conducive to the public good. Information on those deported is not separately available and therefore the published statistics refer to all enforced returns.

Information for January to March 2019 will be published in May 2019.

**■ Hezbollah: Sanctions****Dr Matthew Offord:** [244056]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the legal sanctions of proscribing Hezbollah in its entirety extends to UK nationals meeting with representatives of that organisation overseas.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

Proscription makes it a criminal offence to invite support for, or arrange, manage or assist in arranging or managing a meeting in support of a pro-scribed organisation. This offence does not have extra-territorial jurisdiction.

■ **Home Office: Contracts**

**Tom Brake:** [\[179072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether gagging clauses have been used in contracts drawn up between his Department and any charities, voluntary sector organisations, social enterprises or companies with the intention of stopping any criticism of Ministers of his Department.

**Victoria Atkins:**

There are no gagging clauses within Home Office contracts or Grant agreements specifically to stop criticism of Home Office Ministers.

■ **Home Office: Secondment**

**Preet Kaur Gill:** [\[242921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 25 March 2019 to Question 234783 on Department for International Development: Secondment, what teams within his Department the 49 requested roles from the Department for International Development will be in.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Home Office, as is the case with other Government Departments, has made requests for short term support roles through the Cabinet Office. Provisional matches were made that would have meant staff moving from DfID to the Home Office for a short period. These moves were not implemented, and Home Office roles were sourced via other government departments and through alternative methods.

■ **Immigration: EU Nationals**

**Jo Stevens:** [\[243505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many settled status applications have taken more than (a) 4 weeks and (b) 10 weeks for a decision in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The latest figures that are available have been published in two separate re-ports on the both private beta phases and we have committed to provide fur-ther details in due course of the planned phased implementation of the scheme. We will continue to update Parliament as part of that process. Please see the private beta reports here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/752872/181031\\_PB1\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/752872/181031_PB1_Report_Final.pdf).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-private-beta-2/eu-settlement-scheme-private-beta-testing-phase-2-report>

Currently the public beta report is being drafted, when this has been published the Home Office will prepare to publish regular statistical updates on the Settlement Scheme.

**Keith Vaz:** **[244017]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications have been made to the EU Settled Status Scheme since its inception on 30 March 2019.

**Keith Vaz:** **[244018]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU citizens have been granted settled status since the full opening of the Settled Status Scheme on 30 March 2019.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The latest figures that are available have been published in two separate reports on both private beta phases:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-private-beta-1>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-private-beta-2>

Interim statistics on the public beta phase was also referenced in the Written Statement HCWS1387WS1387 of 7 March:

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2019-03-07/HCWS1387/>

We will publish further data on the operation of the EU Settlement Scheme in due course.

**Keith Vaz:** **[244019]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what representations he has received on the functioning of the EU Settled Status Scheme since 30 March 2019.

**Caroline Nokes:**

Since November 2017, we have held monthly meetings with representatives from user groups, EU27 consular officials, Local Authorities, community groups and employers to help on the design and development of the EU Settlement Scheme.

Feedback since the full launch of the scheme on 30 March 2019 has been very positive and we continue to work closely with these representatives and other partners to ensure that the scheme is accessible and that we are able to reach all prospective applicants.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** **[244111]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what safeguards are in place for looked after children or care leavers who are EEA nationals where parents retain parental

rights but do not exercise their parental rights to apply for their children's leave under the EU Settlement Scheme.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[244112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to his Department's document entitled EU Settlement Scheme: Looked After Children and Care Leavers. Local Authority and Health and Social Care Trusts Guidance, when applications are due under the scheme in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal; and what the status would be of children who are EEA citizens under care orders or care leavers in the event the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[244113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department is taking to prevent a situation in which EEA children in care who are only granted pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme and subsequently leave care and fall out of status.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[244114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department is taking to monitor the number of looked-after children and care leavers unable to complete an application under the EU Settlement Scheme.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[244115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons his Department's document entitled EU Settlement Scheme: Looked After Children and Care Leavers - Local Authority and Health and Social Care Trusts Guidance, does not include information about the Legal Aid Agency's ability to grant exceptional case funding; and what legal aid will be provided to the local authority and children under that scheme.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[244116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much additional funding and support his Department has allocated to local authorities to implement the EU Settlement Scheme: Looked After Children and Care Leavers - Local Authority and Health and Social Care Trusts Guidance.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[244117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment his Department has made of how much it will cost local authorities to implement his Department's document entitled EU Settlement Scheme: Looked After Children and Care Leavers. Local Authority and Health and Social Care Trusts Guidance.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:** [\[244119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who pays for ID that children might have to obtain to participate in the EU Settlement scheme for looked after children and care leavers.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**

[\[244120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the cost to local authorities of citizenship registration for children applying for British citizenship under the EU Settlement Scheme.

**Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:**

[\[244121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the status of children who are Swiss nationals and either in care orders or are care leavers.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The Home Office has put in place a comprehensive vulnerability strategy to ensure that the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) is accessible for all, including children in care.

The Home office has been engaging with relevant stakeholders such as the Department for Education, Local Government Association and Association of Directors of Children's Services to assess the needs of this group and ensure they are supported.

For England, Scotland and Wales local authorities (LAs) and for Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCTs) will have responsibility in ensuring that applications are made on behalf of all looked after children for whom they have full parental responsibility and who are EEA citizens or family members and to assist with accessing services with status once granted.

If the child is cared for under shared care provisions, then it is LAs and HSCTs responsibility to ensure that the child, and their carers, are aware of the need to make an application to the EUSS, signposting and pointing them to practical support where needed.

LAs and HSCTs also have continuing duties to support care leavers and therefore have the responsibility to identify those eligible to apply to EUSS and to ensure that they make an application. Making an application to EUSS for those who are eligible and to keep an adequate record of applications and status granted should form part of the necessary pathway planning for care leavers ordinarily carried out by LAs and HSCTs in the discharge of their duties.

A child does not require consent from an adult in order to apply and can make their own application. However, children who have failed to make an application by the deadline as a result of a parent or guardian having failed to submit an application on their behalf would meet the criteria for being permissible to submit a late application.

It is not possible to apply for British citizenship under the EUSS. There is no requirement for any local authority to make an application for British citizenship on behalf of a looked after child: EEA and Swiss children, and the non-EEA children of EEA and Swiss citizens, can obtain the status they need to remain in the UK by making a free application to the EUSS. As there is no need for LAs or HSCTs to

make applications for citizenship there is no reason why any of the costs of doing so should be incurred, unless the LA or HSCT voluntarily chooses to do so.

Obtaining identity documents should be a familiar process for LAs and HSCT due to these documents being required in other circumstances.

The Home Office has introduced a range of support including up to £9 million grant funding for voluntary and community organisations, assisted digital support and support via the EU Settlement Scheme Resolution Centre.

A New Burdens Assessment has also been produced in collaboration with key stakeholders representing local authorities and children's social services to ensure they are funded to identify and support eligible EEA children and family members in care.

The EUSS has been designed to be streamlined and user-friendly, and the majority of applicants will be able to apply without the need for general advice from a lawyer on rights to enter or remain required as a result of the Bill.

As the scheme is free to apply and simple to navigate, it is not anticipated that applicants will need legal aid but it will be available to some particularly vulnerable individuals. Legislation will also be introduced to bring immigration matters for separated migrant children into the scope of legal aid, meaning this group will get support in securing their immigration rights. Legal aid may also be available through the Exceptional Case Funding scheme where a failure to provide legal aid would breach, or risk breaching, ECHR or enforceable EU law rights.

The Home Office has created and issued guidance about the EUSS to help LAs and HSCTs understand their responsibilities for supporting looked after children and care leavers and how to apply. The EUSS has been designed to be as simple as possible, but we have committed to working with applicants, and those supporting them, to ensure they obtain the status they need where required. The guidance is clear that where necessary, because of case complexity, or if there is any doubt about how to proceed, that the LA or HSCT may consider obtaining independent legal advice, in line with their own organisation's processes and policies.

Some of the voluntary and community organisations who receive support from the grant funding will also be able to provide legal advice.

Swiss citizens continue to enjoy the same rights and status as EEA citizens while the UK remains a member of the EU. Like EEA citizens, they can protect those rights and obtain a permanent UK immigration status by applying to the EUSS by 31 December 2020.

In the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal eligible EEA and Swiss citizens, and their family members, resident in the UK by the date that the UK leaves the EU, will have until 31 December 2020 to make an application to the EUSS. However, the Government has confirmed that it will take a proportionate approach to those that miss the deadline and make provision for those with a good reason for missing it to

apply later. A child whose parent or guardian fail to make an application on their behalf would meet this criteria.

**Daniel Zeichner:**

**[244133]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the availability of ID scanning centres for EU citizens applying for settled status who do not have Android mobile phones in (a) Cambridge, (b) the East of England and (c) across the country.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The application process for the EU Settlement Scheme is straightforward and user-friendly, and it is accessible on any smartphone, tablet or computer using internet browsers.

There are multiple ways to have identity documents checked, including using the EU Exit: ID Document Check app or by posting identity documents to the Home Office. There are currently 50 locations nationwide where applicants can have their passport scanned and verified.

The ID document scanning service is provided at the discretion of each local authority. The Home Office would encourage as many local authorities as possible to offer the service, and we continue to work with local government bodies across the UK to increase the provision of this service by local authorities, including in the East of England.

Details of the service and the locations where this service is available can be found on Gov.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-id-document-scanner-locations>

The Home Secretary also announced that the EU Exit ID Document Check app will be available on iPhones by the end of the year.

**Patrick Grady:**

**[244147]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much time the online EU Settlement Scheme platform has spent undergoing maintenance which prevents the completion of applications since that service was launched.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The EUSS fully launched on 30 March following almost 5 months of successful beta testing. The Scheme will remain open until 2021 so there is no rush to apply.

The Home Office is committed to continuously improving the application process based on applicant feedback. To this end, we have and will continue to make frequent upgrades to the service to ensure that the EU Settlement Scheme remains as user friendly and performant as possible.

We try to minimise the disruption to applicants by keeping maintenance windows as short as possible and by making changes during quiet periods, often during the night or early morning where there is little or no applicant activity. So far, Applications to

EUSS have been unavailable to applicants due to maintenance for less than 2 hours in total since EUSS fully launched on 30 March.

Customers impacted by any disruption to their applications will be directed to the Settlement Resolution Centre to help resolve these issues

**Helen Hayes:** [\[244171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance his Department plans to issue to landlords in relation to the introduction of the settled status scheme for EU nationals who live in the private rented sector.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The Government has made clear that the current arrangements for landlords conducting checks on EU nationals, involving the use of national passports and identity cards, will not change prior to introduction of the future skills-based immigration system. Updated guidance for Landlords will be published shortly.

#### ■ Julian Assange

**Keith Vaz:** [\[244020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the cost has been of the police operation to monitor Julian Assange since August 2012.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The Metropolitan Police have confirmed that the estimated cost of policing the Embassy between June 2012 and October 2015 was £13.2m. The Home Office does not hold any further information on this matter. It is an operational decision for the Metropolitan Police how to use their available resources.

#### ■ Refugees: National Insurance

**Marion Fellows:** [\[244159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of his Department's policy on the criteria for awarding people awaiting a decision on their refugee status a national insurance number.

**Caroline Nokes:**

Asylum Seekers are provided with a National Insurance number if they have permission to work. The rules allow those asylum seekers who have been waiting for 12 months through no fault of their own to take up employment in Shortage Occupation list roles.

Asylum Seekers who are granted leave to remain are provided with a National Insurance number by DWP as quickly as possible after their grant. We have worked with DWP to ensure National Insurance numbers are issued on the BRP to enable those with a right to work.

## ■ Religious Hatred: Crimes of Violence

**Jo Stevens:**

[244143]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of religiously motivated hate crimes that involved violence against a person resulted in (a) charge, (b) conviction or (c) a custodial sentence in 2018.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

Official statistics on charges for racially or religiously aggravated violent offences are restricted to the offences of assault with injury, assault without injury and harassment. These are routinely published by the Home Office. The latest available information relates to the 12 months ending September 2018 and can be found in the Open Data tables available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables> Statistics for the whole of 2018 are due to be released on 25th April 2019.

The latest published figures are for the 2017 calendar year and statistics for the 2018 calendar year are due to be published on 16th May 2019.

## ■ Stalking

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[243338]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on restricting the online sale of tracking devices which are bought by people who stalk women.

**Victoria Atkins:**

Stalking is an insidious crime that has a deep and significant impact on victims' wellbeing. Both online and offline, perpetrators leave victims feeling constantly at risk and looking over their shoulder. This Government is committed to ensuring that victims are supported.

On 8 April we published the Online Harms White Paper and in it we set out our proposals to address both harmful and illegal conduct and content, including a broad range of online harms associated with abuse, including stalking.

Additionally, the Government has provided Refuge with £250,000 of funding through the Tampon Tax to provide specialist nationwide support to staff and survivors who experience technologically facilitated abuse. We have also provided Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner with £646,000 through the Home Office Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Service Transformation Fund for a project which includes work to tackle cyberstalking.

## ■ Travellers: Caravan Sites

**Alex Sobel:**

[244190]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 March 2019 to Question 226712, what steps his Department is taking to give due consideration to the Public Sector Equality Duty in terms of the effect on Gypsy and

Traveller communities during the review into how to criminalise the act of trespassing when setting up an unauthorised encampment.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

Acting on the findings of the last year's Government consultation on powers for dealing with unauthorised development and encampments, where the majority of respondents believed that the Government should consider criminalising unauthorised encampments, the Home Office launched a review into whether this could be achieved.

All government departments have an ongoing responsibility to meet the Public Sector Equalities Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010. As such, when formulating any policy changes following the consultation, ministers must have due regard to the three limbs of the PSED: (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, and (3) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

■ **Violence**

**Helen Hayes:**

[\[242900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the consultation on Serious violence: new legal duty to support multi-agency action published on 1 April 2019, what additional (a) training and (b) funding will be offered to public agencies to support proposed arrangements.

**Victoria Atkins:**

On 1 April the Home Secretary published a consultation on a new legal duty to support a multi-agency or 'public health' approach to preventing and tackling serious violence. This builds on the programme of work outlined in the Serious Violence Strategy, published in April 2018, which brings together a range of partners across different sectors to form a multi-agency response.

This approach involves partners across different sectors, such as education, health, social services, offender management services, housing, youth and victim services, working closely with community and faith leaders, and the voluntary and charitable sectors, to take joint action to address the underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or a perpetrator of violence.

Our consultation seeks information on the potential impact on agencies and a full cost assessment will be undertaken on the preferred option. We have also committed to provide guidance alongside any new duty.

The consultation will be open for a period of 8 weeks and will close on 28 May.

## ■ Violence: Voluntary Organisations

**Mike Amesbury:**

[242242]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the (a) ability and (b) capacity of voluntary sector organisations to assist (i) the police and (ii) other authorities in tackling serious violence.

**Victoria Atkins:**

The Serious Violence Strategy sets out the importance of a multi-agency approach to tackling serious violence which involves a range of partners and agencies. The strategy places a strong emphasis on early intervention and tackling the root causes of the problem to prevent young people from being drawn into violence in the first place.

Voluntary sector organisations are essential in helping the Government to deliver on our commitments in the strategy. We have provided support to a number of voluntary sector partners to help tackle serious violence, including through the £1.5m we made available for grassroots projects through our anti-knife crime Community Fund in 2018/19 and making available £22m through our Early Intervention Youth Fund through which we have already invested £17.7m in 29 projects across England and Wales. We will be evaluating the projects and sharing information and learning across all areas to assist voluntary and community sector organisations to continue to provide the best support to young people to tackle serious violence.

In addition, the £200m Youth Endowment Fund, announced by the Home Secretary last October, will deliver a ten-year programme of grants that will enable interventions targeted at children and young people who are at most risk. It will act as a centre of expertise; finding out which approaches are most effective; generating, disseminating and promoting new knowledge and practice to transform local and national responses.

## ■ Visas: Applications

**Chi Onwurah:**

[244083]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for UK visas are received for processing on average each day in (a) Pretoria, (b) Abuja, (c) Lagos, (d) Accra, (e) Croydon and (f) Sheffield decision making hubs.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The available published information relates to all entry clearance visa applications received per quarter, by nationality of the applicant, which is published on a quarterly basis as part of the Home Office's publication scheme, in the Home Office's 'Immigration Statistics', Visas data tables volume 1, table vi\_02\_q, latest edition at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-december-2018/list-of-tables#visas>

**■ Visas: Carers and Home Care Services****Darren Jones:** [243550]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans he has for individuals who employ (a) carers and (b) other types of domestic help to have sponsorship and guarantor rights under the Tier 2 regulations.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The Government has no plans to allow individuals to sponsor carers or other types of domestic help.

**■ Visas: Sudan****Stephen Gethins:** [244154]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the safety of UK citizens who have been asked to travel to Sudan with family members as part of their visa application processes.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The FCO advise UK citizens against all but essential travel to the majority of Sudan and all travel to some parts of Sudan. They further advise that if a UK citizen is in Sudan, they should consider carefully whether their need to remain is essential and consider leaving the country by commercial means.

There is no requirement for UK Citizens to travel to another country as part of a family member's visa application process. Furthermore, whilst some entry clearance applications should be made in the country or territory in which the applicant is living, there is discretion to allow an application to be made in another country in exceptional circumstances.

**HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT****■ Buildings: Insulation****Mr Steve Reed:** [244108]

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 9 April 2019 to Question 240560 on Buildings: Insulation, whether his Department has published documentation outlining the definition of the term filler.

**Kit Malthouse:**

The view of the Department on how the requirements and guidance should be applied to composite cladding panels was set out in an explanatory note June 2017 which is available on-line at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/624285/Safety\\_checks\\_explanatory\\_note\\_170630.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/624285/Safety_checks_explanatory_note_170630.pdf).

## ■ Council Housing: Construction

**Liam Byrne:**

[\[244032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the average cost of building council houses to A+ EPC standard.

**Kit Malthouse:**

In the Clean Growth Strategy, Government committed to reviewing the Building Regulations energy efficiency standards for all new dwellings. As part of a full public consultation for this review, we will publish an impact assessment of proposed changes, including a quantification of costs.

Government has also committed to introducing a Future Homes Standard by 2025 for new build homes to be future-proofed, with low carbon heating and world-leading levels of energy efficiency. We will consider this further as part of our 2019 consultation on the Building Regulations energy efficiency standards.

## ■ Council Housing: West Midlands

**Liam Byrne:**

[\[244031\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what his forecast is for the number of council houses to be built in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area in each of the next five years.

**Kit Malthouse:**

MHCLG does not publish forecasts of this nature.

## ■ Hotels: Insulation

**Mr Steve Reed:**

[\[244109\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what information his Department holds on the number of hotels in England that have (a) cladding and (b) Aluminium Composite Material cladding.

**Kit Malthouse:**

MHCLG has been informed by local authorities and building owners of 31 hotels over 18 metres tall in England with Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding systems unlikely to meet Building Regulations which are yet to be remediated (31 March, 2019). This data is published monthly in the [Building Safety Programme Data Release](#).

MHCLG does not hold information on hotels with other types of cladding systems.

**■ Housing Improvement: Planning Permission****Mrs Anne Main:** [\[244045\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if the Government will extend the temporary size limit for permitted development rights for domestic extensions beyond the planned end date of 30 May 2019.

**Kit Malthouse:**

As set out in the Written Ministerial Statement of 13 March 2018, HCWS1408, we will make permanent the time-limited right to build larger single storey rear extensions to dwellinghouses, and will introduce a proportionate fee.

**Giles Watling:** [\[244191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the Government plans to maintain the relaxation of permitted development rights for private dwelling extensions beyond 30 May 2019; and if he will make a statement.

**Kit Malthouse:**

As set out in the Written Ministerial Statement of 13 March 2018, HCWS1408, we will make permanent the time-limited right to build larger single storey rear extensions to dwellinghouses, and will introduce a proportionate fee.

**■ Private Rented Housing: EU Nationals****Hugh Gaffney:** [\[242232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to issue guidance on the settled status scheme to landlords.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

The Government has made clear that the current arrangements for private landlords conducting checks on EU nationals, involving the use of national passports and identity cards, will not change prior to introduction of the future skills-based immigration system. This position applies also to those EU nationals who have acquired pre-settled or settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme. Updated guidance for private landlords will be published shortly.

Regarding social landlords, I can confirm that EU, EEA/EFTA and Swiss nationals registered under the EU Settlement Scheme will have broadly the same eligibility to access social housing and homelessness assistance as they do now. Those granted settled status, who have five or more years' continuous residence in the UK, will have the same access to social housing and homelessness assistance as comparable UK nationals. Those granted pre-settled status, where they have less than five years' continuous residence, will remain eligible on the same basis as now. We have laid amendment regulations to make clear that the existing position remains in place. We will revise current statutory guidance for local authorities to reflect the amending regulations when time allows.

## ■ Religious Hatred: Islam

**Jo Stevens:**

[\[244144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the reasons for the increase in Islamophobic hate crimes after the 2016 EU referendum.

**Mrs Heather Wheeler:**

Police recorded hate crime across all strands, including those targeting Muslims, has increased despite a backdrop of a longer-term downward trend in the experience of hate crime overall according to the Crime Survey of England and Wales. We know that there have been trigger events for increases in hate crime, such as the EU Referendum and the terror attacks in 2017, though data shows that these have been temporary. A significant driver of this overall increase is general improvements in police recording, and through our work with the National Police Chiefs' Council and third party services such as Tell MAMA, police are better at identifying whether a crime is a hate crime and victims may be more willing to come forward.

The Government has a comprehensive plan to tackle hate crime in all its forms, as set out in the refreshed Hate Crime Action Plan published in October 2018, which sets out a programme of work across Government and by the police. We are clear that Britain leaving the EU cannot be a reason to target groups or individuals because of their faith or background. We will not tolerate efforts to create division in our communities, against EU citizens or people of any other race, faith or background.

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### ■ Department for International Development: Brexit

**Tom Brake:**

[\[243999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many staff in her Department received notice to be on standby for redeployment to support essential work related to the UK's withdrawal from the EU; and in which countries do those staff work.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

DFID has undertaken prioritisation work and has reviewed delivery plans with these principles in mind to allow the department to successfully deliver EU Exit whilst protecting essential business. Staff deemed as deployable were then matched provisionally to roles, therefore placed on standby to deploy, should they be required.

As a result of recent developments, DFID is working closely with other government departments and the Cabinet Office to plan for the return of staff deployed onto no deal planning. All 48 DFID staff who were on standby to be deployed have now been stood down.

**■ Venezuela: Humanitarian Aid****Stephen Twigg:**[\[244008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment her Department has made of the level of access to Venezuela for providers of humanitarian aid.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

Recent developments such as the announcement by the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) that they will have unhindered access to bring humanitarian aid into Venezuela, the expansion of the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) following a visit by their President from 7-11 April, and the entrance of additional UN humanitarian staff into the country, indicate that there may be some improvements to the level of access to Venezuela for providers of humanitarian aid. However, additional steps are needed. We continue to follow developments closely and call for unhindered access for all humanitarian assistance to meet the urgent needs of the Venezuelan people. The UK is providing a package of £6.5 million in aid to respond to the most urgent needs in Venezuela and the region.

**■ Venezuela: Infectious Diseases****Stephen Twigg:**[\[244007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment her Department made of trends in the level of incidences of (a) measles, (b) diphtheria and (c) malaria in Venezuela; and what steps is her Department taking to support programmes to tackle incidences of these diseases in that country.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

Official figures show that the incidences of measles, diphtheria and malaria in Venezuela have all risen over the past few years. They report that a diphtheria outbreak began in Venezuela in July 2016 and from then until February 2019, a total of 2,726 suspected cases were reported (324 in 2016; 1,040 in 2017; 1,198 in 2018; and 164 in 2019) with 1,612 confirmed cases and 270 deaths (17 in 2016; 103 in 2017; and 150 in 2018).

Regarding measles, World Health Organisation assesses that the 2018 epidemic seems to have been largely brought under control thanks to vaccination campaigns supported by Pan American Health Organisation, but the risk remains. They report that, from mid-2017 to February 2019, a total of 9,399 suspected cases were reported (1,307 in 2017; 7,809 in 2018; and 283 in 2019) with 6,242 confirmed cases and 76 deaths (2 in 2017 and 74 in 2018).

According to the World Malaria Report 2018, the Americas accounted for 0.44% of malaria cases (975,700 cases) in the world; 42% (519,109 cases) were reported by WHO in Venezuela. It is now part of the group of countries with the highest burden of malaria at the global level with 0.22% of global cases.

The UK Government remains extremely concerned about the situation in Venezuela and has announced an emergency aid package of £6.5 million to respond to the most severe needs, in particular health, by providing immunisations against deadly diseases, supporting emergency rooms and ensuring that people who are fleeing their homes have access to crucial support, including through the provision of mobile health clinics.

## ■ **Yemen: Mental Health Services**

**Stephen Twigg:**

[\[244006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to provide psychological support to children in Yemen who are affected by the conflict in that country.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

In 2017, through the UK's support to the UNICEF/UNFPA Global Programme to End Child Marriage, UK support reached 5,569 adolescent girls in Yemen with life skills training, information and services for psychosocial support. In addition to the training, they were also provided with medical and legal services, safe shelter and cash support, including dignity kits.

The UK has also supported over 2,600 children in Yemen over the last twelve months with protection activities, including psychosocial support, as part of our £19 million of funding to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### ■ **Exports: Licensing**

**Judith Cummins:**

[\[244136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether existing licences that have been granted under the current EU exports control regime will continue to apply once the UK has left the EU.

**Graham Stuart:**

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal export licences granted by the UK would continue to be valid for export from the UK. Licences granted by the UK would no longer be valid for export from other EU Member States, and licences granted by the other Member States would no longer be valid for export from the UK.

If the UK ratifies the draft Withdrawal Agreement licences granted under the EU export control regime would continue to be valid throughout the EU until the end of the Implementation Period.

## JUSTICE

■ **Offenders: Electronic Tagging**

**Mary Glendon:** [\[244088\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many offenders have been given electronic tagging orders in each month since January 2013.

**Mary Glendon:** [\[244089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average number of offenders on electronic tagging orders has been in each month since January 2013.

**Rory Stewart:**

Electronic Monitoring is an effective criminal justice tool. It gives those on a tag a chance to maintain family ties and remain in work or education while providing additional safeguards.

The table below provides details of the average number of individuals on electronic tagging orders from January 2013 to March 2018. This is Management Information, is not published and has not had the level of scrutiny and quality assurance as for Official Statistics data.

The table below also provides information on how many notifications for new orders were issued every month from April 2014 to March 2018. The table from where the data is drawn can be found in Table 12.4 at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-hm-prison-and-probation-service-digest-2017-to-2018>. Data for 2014 is of poor quality and not available. Data from April 2018 to March 2019 will be published in July 2019.

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF OFFENDERS ON ELECTRONIC TAGGING ORDERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES, IN EACH MONTH JANUARY 2013 - MARCH 2018** <sup>(1)(2)(3)</sup>

**Monthly new electronic monitoring order notifications in England and Wales, in each month from April 2014 to March 2018** <sup>(1)(4)(5)</sup>

Month	Average number of offenders on EM order	Total notifications
July 2013	14,555	
August 2013	14,384	
September 2013	14,185	
October 2013	14,284	
November 2013	14,551	
December 2013	14,585	

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF OFFENDERS ON ELECTRONIC TAGGING ORDERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES,  
IN EACH MONTH JANUARY 2013 - MARCH 2018 <sup>(1)(2)(3)</sup>**

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January 2014	14,042	
February 2014	14,096	
March 2014	14,267	
April 2014	14,224	5,975
May 2014	13,987	5,753
June 2014	13,879	5,564
July 2014	13,940	5,982
August 2014	13,912	5,635
September 2014	13,843	5,817
October 2014	13,973	6,353
November 2014	14,294	6,135
December 2014	14,446	6,236
January 2015	13,907	6,316
February 2015	13,902	5,872
March 2015	13,925	6,292
April 2015	13,803	5,804
May 2015	13,589	5,797
June 2015	13,516	6,218
July 2015	13,393	6,150
August 2015	13,389	5,310
September 2015	13,119	5,937
October 2015	13,197	5,802
November 2015	13,329	5,814
December 2015	13,415	5,647
January 2016	12,914	5,597
February 2016	12,781	5,585

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF OFFENDERS ON ELECTRONIC TAGGING ORDERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES,  
IN EACH MONTH JANUARY 2013 - MARCH 2018 <sup>(1)(2)(3)</sup>**

March 2016	12,684	5,543
April 2016	12,614	5,458
May 2016	12,432	5,239
June 2016	12,223	5,373
July 2016	11,896	5,152
August 2016	11,628	5,237
September 2016	11,168	5,079
October 2016	11,222	5,029
November 2016	11,443	5,545
December 2016	11,743	5,149
January 2017	11,395	5,606
February 2017	11,559	4,982
March 2017	11,363	5,606
April 2017	11,350	4,576
May 2017	11,052	5,204
June 2017	10,843	4,968
July 2017	10,851	4,761
August 2017	10,713	4,803
September 2017	10,620	4,767
October 2017	10,781	4,771
November 2017	10,865	5,012
December 2017	10,961	4,197
January 2018	10,566	5,397
February 2018	10,925	4,718
March 2018	11,064	4,954

(1) These figures are drawn from administrative data systems. Although care is taken when processing and analysing the returns, the detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large scale recording system.

(2) Monitored subjects are unique subjects with a live EM order and with a tag fitted and Home Monitoring Unit (HMU) installed.

(3) Note that from the 12/07/2016 the Manchester caseload definition changed to include subjects with an active EM order. Previously it only included subjects with an active EM service. This means that subjects on a break in their service are included in the Manchester figures. This was done to align the Manchester and Norwich caseload definitions.

(4) One subject may be given multiple orders over the course of the year. In these figures each is counted individually. i.e. one person with four orders counts as four.

(5) Comprises notifications of new electronic monitoring orders received by the EM contractor that started between April 2014 and March 2018. In some cases the monitoring equipment may never have been installed, e.g. if the subject is taken into custody prior to installation. These cases are included in the total.

#### ■ Personal Independence Payment: Appeals

**Marsha De Cordova:**

[\[242948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average clearance time has been for personal independence payment appeals at tribunal in (a) Battersea and (b) nationally in each of the last five years for which data is available.

**Edward Argar:**

*[Holding answer 15 April 2019]:* Information about the average clearance times for personal independence payment (PIP) appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Social Security and Child Support) (SSCS) is published at:

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/tribunals-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/tribunals-statistics)

SSCS appeals are listed into the hearing venue nearest to the appellant's home address. The published data (which can be viewed at the link above) provide information about clearance times for PIP appeals at (a) the hearing venue covering Battersea and (b) nationally from 2015/16; data for the preceding two years are provided below.

#### PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT <sup>1</sup>

Financial Year	Fox Court <sup>2</sup>	National
	Average Clearance Time (in weeks)	Average Clearance Time (in weeks)
2013-2014	~	9
2014-2015	15	14

1. PIP was introduced in April 2013 and replaced Disability Living Allowance
2. Appeals for those people living in the Battersea area are heard in the Fox Court venue

~ There were insufficient cases in this period to provide a statistically robust average

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the details are subject to inaccuracies inherent in any large- scale case management system and are the best data that are available.

Clearance times are calculated from receipt of the appeal to its final disposal. An appeal is not necessarily disposed of at its first hearing. The final disposal decision on the appeal may be reached after an earlier hearing had been adjourned (which may be directed by the judge for a variety of reasons, such as to seek further evidence), or after an earlier hearing date had been postponed (again, for a variety of reasons, often at the request of the appellant). An appeal may also have been decided at an earlier date by the First-tier Tribunal, only for the case to have gone on to the Upper Tribunal, to be returned once again to the First-tier for its final disposal.

Latest figures (to December 2018) indicate that since PIP was introduced, 3.9 million decisions have been made, and of these 10% have been appealed and 5% have been overturned at tribunals.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### ■ Terrorism: Northern Ireland

**Lady Hermon:**

[\[244036\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office of 10 April 2019, Official Report, column 306 and the Irish Mirror article of 9 April entitled Fears growing dissident republicans using stolen ATM cash to build war chest ahead of Brexit, what assessment she has made of the veracity of media reports that dissident republicans are responsible for thefts of ATMs across Northern Ireland; and if she will make a statement.

**Karen Bradley:**

I remain in regular contact with the Chief Constable of the PSNI on a range of security-related matters. It would not be appropriate for me to comment on the PSNI's ongoing investigations but PSNI has publicly stated that there is no current link to the involvement of dissident republicans.

**SCOTLAND****■ Food Banks: Scotland****David Linden:**[\[245950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, whether he plans to visit a food bank in May 2019.

**David Mundell:**

I currently have no plans to visit a food bank in my capacity as Secretary of State for Scotland in May 2019.

**TRANSPORT****■ Blue Badge Scheme****Matthew Pennycook:**[\[245912\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 13 February 2019 to Question 218834 on Blue Badge Scheme, on what date the guidance to local authorities on changes to the Blue Badge scheme extending eligibility to those with less visible conditions will be issued.

**Jesse Norman:**

The guidance necessary for local authorities to assess applications under the expanded eligibility criteria for non-physical and hidden disabilities is currently being finalised. The Department for Transport is hoping to publish the guidance at the end of May.

**■ East Midlands Rail Franchise****Mr Clive Betts:**[\[244022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that at the introduction of the new East Midlands Trains Franchise journey times on all services be as as least as good as they were before the timetable changes in May 2018.

**Andrew Jones:**

Abellio will invest £600 million in trains and stations in the new franchise, while the Government continues with its £1.5 billion upgrade to the Midland Main Line, the biggest upgrade to the line since it was completed in 1870. This is part of the Government's £48 billion investment to modernise our railways over the next five years. £200m was spent last year to provide new track, signalling and a new platform at Derby Station in preparation for the 2020 timetable change, which will help to reduce journey times between Nottingham and Sheffield and London.

The upgrade of the Midland Main Line means that, from the December 2020 timetable change, the new franchise operator will be able to introduce new fast services on the Corby-London route, on modern express trains, with more seats. Inter-city services will receive brand new trains and passengers will see faster

journey times over long-distances, while regional services will receive modern diesel trains replacing the current aging rolling stock.

#### ■ East Midlands Rail Franchise: Pensions

**Mr Clive Betts:**

[\[244026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the current east midlands trains franchise was the first one to require bidders to cover pension costs.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Railways Pension Scheme was established in 1994, replacing the previous British Rail scheme. Contributions in to the Railways Pension Scheme are split according to a shared cost arrangement, whereby employers (the Train Operating Companies) pay 60% and employees pay the remaining 40%. Train Operating Companies are and continue to be responsible for paying employer pension contributions during a franchise term, and in the vast majority of franchises, have been on full risk for changes to those contributions during their franchise term since the Railways Pension Scheme was established.

In the new East Midlands franchise, the operator is exposed to no additional risks or demands when compared to current franchisees. Indeed, the new franchise includes a risk sharing mechanism with the government, which reduces the risk that the operator will be exposed to. In this, the operator retains the risks that it is able to manage, which are the contributions which cover employee's pension rights arising from future service.

#### ■ East Midlands Rail Franchise: Rolling Stock

**Mr Clive Betts:**

[\[244023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department will be take to make all rolling stock on the East Midlands Trains service compliant with disability discrimination legislation by 2020.

**Andrew Jones:**

We take PRM compliance very seriously and will work with the Abellio in this regard. Abellio has committed to developing solutions with industry partners to deliver the most appropriate outcome for passengers.

**Mr Clive Betts:**

[\[244024\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on which parts of the East Midlands Trains franchise hydrogen powered trains will run; by what date such trains will run; where those trains will be manufactured; and where those trains will be refuelled.

**Andrew Jones:**

In line with our specification for the new franchise, Abellio will be trialling hydrogen fuel cell trains.

Plans for the trains and their service trials are at a very early stage, so I am unable to provide any further details at this point. However, I am pleased that the next East

Midlands franchise will be at the forefront of the government's commitment to deliver a cleaner, greener rail network.

## ■ Hammersmith Bridge

**Zac Goldsmith:**

[\[244073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to ensure that Hammersmith Bridge can safely reopen as soon as possible.

**Jesse Norman:**

Maintenance on Hammersmith Bridge is the responsibility of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. It is for the Council to determine their road maintenance programme.

**Zac Goldsmith:**

[\[244075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he has had discussions with representatives of Hammersmith and Fulham Council on their prioritising maintenance of repairs of Hammersmith Bridge; and if he will make a statement.

**Jesse Norman:**

Maintenance on Hammersmith Bridge is a matter for the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. It is for the Borough to determine their road maintenance priorities. Ministers have not held discussions with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham on this matter.

## ■ Local Government: Cooperation

**Zac Goldsmith:**

[\[244074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to ensure that local authorities work together in ensuring that key routes between council areas, such as bridges, remain safe and accessible to the public.

**Jesse Norman:**

Local authorities are independent bodies. Section 108, Part 2 of the Transport Act 2000 (as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008) sets out that each local transport authority must (a) develop policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within their area, and (b) carry out their functions so as to implement those policies. The Act also defines transport as, among other things, the transport required to meet the needs of persons living or working in the authority's area, or visiting or travelling through that area.

The Department collaborates closely with local authorities on a range of issues. However, in London, Transport for London is best placed to facilitate any additional coordination of transport issues between Boroughs that may be considered necessary.

**TREASURY**■ **Brexit**

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[244081\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the unrecoverable cost to British economy of preparations for the (a) 31 March deadline for the UK to leaving the EU and (b) 12 April deadline for the UK to leaving the EU.

**John Glen:**

The government has committed to ensuring that preparations are in place for leaving the European Union.

Despite the uncertainty around Brexit, the economy remains resilient. We are currently enjoying the longest unbroken quarterly growth streak of any G7 nation and employment is at a record high. The Government's priority is to leave the EU with a deal as soon as possible, providing certainty for businesses and delivering a Brexit that best supports the economy and jobs. The Government has published extensive advice on the steps that businesses may need to take to prepare for our exit from the EU. The public information campaign pages on Gov.uk provide all up to date material on the considerations of EU exit for businesses, and the practical steps that they will need to take in preparation.

■ **Manufacturing Industries**

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[244078\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the oral contribution of 9 April 2019, Official Report, column 159, which banks the Government is working with; how much funding has been made available; and what the process is for businesses to apply for that funding.

**Chi Onwurah:** [\[244079\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the oral contribution of 9 April 2019, Official Report, column 159, if he will publish the (a) organisations and (b) individual his Department is consulting with to establish (a) the level of need and (b) the most appropriate way to make that support available.

**Robert Jenrick:**

The Government has been clear that should there be no deal, we would support the economy through whatever action is appropriate. Meanwhile, our modern industrial strategy will ensure that the UK remains one of the most competitive locations in the world for manufacturing investment.

Treasury Ministers have regular engagement with a wide range of banks and other financial services providers to discuss a variety of matters, including support for businesses as the UK withdraws from the European Union.

Individual banks' lending commitments are commercial decisions for those organisations, and are in the public domain. Businesses should engage with lenders in the usual manner.

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[244080\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the oral contribution of 9 April 2019, Official Report, column 159, what assessment he has made of the effect of the extension to Article 50 has had on levels of stockpiling; and what support his Department provides to help businesses that are stockpiling.

**John Glen:**

The Prime Minister has agreed to an extension to Article 50 until 31 October 2019 at the latest. This eliminates the risk of a near-term economic disruption as a result of leaving the EU without a deal before that date. The Government's priority is to leave the EU with a deal as soon as possible, providing certainty for businesses and delivering a Brexit that best supports the economy and jobs. The Government has published extensive advice on the steps that businesses may need to take to prepare for our exit from the EU. The public information campaign pages on Gov.uk provide all up to date material on the considerations of EU exit for businesses, and the practical steps that they will need to take in preparation.

## ■ National Insurance Contributions

**Anneliese Dodds:**

[\[244194\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many SME's had national insurance contributions of over (a) £100,000, (b) £75,000 and (c) £50,000 in 2018.

**Mel Stride:**

It is not possible to estimate the number of SME's with employer National Insurance Contributions over the (a) £100,000, (b) £75,000 and (c) £50,000 in 2018 as the information is not readily available.

HMRC does not collect information on employer size and turnover in relation to an employer's National Insurance Contributions.

## ■ Non-domestic Rates

**Paul Farrelly:**

[\[244033\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of replacing business rates with a transaction tax on retail sales in order to support the UK's high streets.

**Mel Stride:**

Business rates raise £25 billion in England annually, and are an important source of funding for key local services.

The Government concluded a fundamental review of business rates in 2016. Some respondents suggested alternative taxes, but there was no consensus and respondents were clear that these alternatives were not without their own issues.

Respondents agreed that property based taxes were easy to collect, difficult to avoid, stable and clearly linked with local authority spending. Following stakeholder responses, the Government decided to keep business rates as a property tax.

To support the high street, at Budget 2018 the Government announced Our Plan for the High Street – a package of support worth £1.6 billion.

### ■ Treasury: Gender Impact Assessment

**Anneliese Dodds:** [\[244196\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what training been provided to his Department's staff on gender-based analysis in advance of preparation of Tax Information and Impact Notes.

**Mel Stride:**

Face-to-face training sessions are offered to those involved in the completion of equality impact assessments as part of preparation of Tax Information and Impact Notes. Guidance is also available on HMRC's intranet.

**Anneliese Dodds:** [\[244197\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what guidelines have been provided to his Department's staff relating to gender-based analysis in advance of preparation of Tax Information and Impact Notes.

**Mel Stride:**

For those undertaking equality impact assessments as part of the preparation of Tax Information and Impact Notes face-to-face training sessions are offered, complemented by guidance on HMRC's intranet.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Children: Maintenance

**Kate Hoey:** [\[244011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether a paying parent is able to decide that they do not need to make child maintenance payments when their income and tax liability is derived overseas but are resident in the UK.

**Will Quince:**

If a paying parent is found to be habitually resident in the UK, the Child Maintenance Service has jurisdiction to perform a calculation, once a legal liability to pay child maintenance is established. The maintenance calculation will be based on information held by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) about their earnings for the most recent complete tax year.

Access to income information reported by HMRC allows us to capture a much wider range of income types received by paying parents, including income from property, savings and investments (including dividends) and other miscellaneous income. In

December 2018 we introduced new powers which also enable us to target complex earners via a calculation of notional income based on their assets.

## ■ **Employment and Support Allowance**

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[244145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the potential benefits of reducing the current £16,000 savings threshold for entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

We have no plans to change the capital rule on income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

Entitlement to contributory ESA is not affected by the amount of capital a person has.

The current upper capital limit strikes a balance between protecting less well-off people and protecting the taxpayer, whilst at the same time recognising the conscientious efforts of people who have built up capital. This limit ensures that the help which comes from taxpayers, many of whom are themselves on low incomes and have limited capital, is directed to people who need it most.

The effect of reducing the savings threshold would be that fewer claimants would be entitled to ESA.

## ■ **Employment and Support Allowance: Veterans**

**Carol Monaghan:**

[\[244163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many veterans are owed back-payments for employment and support allowance as a result of historical errors from her Department.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

The Department only collects data which determines benefit entitlement or which contributes to the good management of a claim.

## ■ **Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit: Dupuytren's Contracture**

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[244051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when she plans to lay the Statutory Instrument to include Dupuytren's Contracture in the list of prescribed diseases for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit.

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[244052\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to Budget 2018: Policy Costings document, for what reasons the Minister did not lay a Statutory

Instrument to include Dupuytren's Contracture in the list of prescribed diseases for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit by April 2019.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

We have always intended to bring legislation forward for this change as soon as possible in 2019/20, and we anticipate this may be during the latter part of 2019.

■ **Pensioners: Social Security Benefits**

**Mike Amesbury:**

[244186]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps the Government is taking to ensure older people in difficult financial circumstances can access to the benefits they are entitled to.

**Guy Opperman:**

The Government is committed to ensuring that older people receive the support they are entitled to and the DWP targets activity on engaging with people who may be eligible to benefits at pivotal stages, such as when they claim State Pension or report a change in their circumstances. The DWP uses a wide range of channels to communicate information about benefits to potential customers; including information on <https://gov.uk/>, in leaflets and by telephone. People wishing to claim Pension Credit can do so by calling 0800 99 1234. DWP staff in Pension Centres and Jobcentres including visiting officers are able to provide help and advice about entitlement to benefits, as are staff in Local Authorities who administer Housing Benefit.

One of the best ways to reach eligible customers is through trusted stakeholder working in the community and we have developed the Pension Credit toolkit, as an on-line tool for agencies and welfare rights organisations to use in order to encourage Pension Credit take-up. It can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit>

The toolkit contains resources for anyone working with pensioners and includes guides to Pension Credit. It also contains publicity material and guidance designed to help older people understand how they could get Pension Credit and help organisations support someone applying for Pension Credit as well as ideas for encouraging take-up. The toolkit also provides links to information about disability and carers benefits.

Most recently we have provided to relevant organisations a fact sheet about Pension Credit and forthcoming changes for couples to ensure that accurate information is available in the places where people are most likely to seek information.

The majority of people of pension age in receipt of a State Pension or another social security benefit receive their annual winter fuel payment automatically without the need to make a claim.

## ■ Personal Independence Payment: Autism

**Gavin Robinson:**

[\[244125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will conduct a thematic review of the success of claimants with autism in migrating from disability living allowance to personal independence payment.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

We have no plans to conduct thematic reviews based on condition.

**Gavin Robinson:**

[\[244126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many applications for Personal independence payments by claimants with autism were (a) successful, (b) unsuccessful and (c) overturned on appeal in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

The information requested is provided in the table below.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) initial decisions and decisions overturned at appeal for claimants with a primary disabling condition of autism, April 2013 - 31st December 2018, Great Britain

INITIAL DECISION	NUMBER
Awarded	51,540
Disallowed	16,480
<b>Overturned at appeal</b>	<b>2,740</b>

Since PIP was introduced 3.9m decisions have been made in Great Britain across all health conditions up to December 2018, of these 10% have been appealed and 5% have been overturned.

PIP data is for both new claims and DLA reassessment claims.

Data has been rounded to the nearest 10. This is unpublished data. It should be used with caution and it may be subject to future revision.

An appeal can only be made against a decision which has gone through the Mandatory Reconsideration process.

Appeals data is up to December 2018. Claimants who have received benefit decisions more recently may not yet have had time to complete the claimant journey and progress to appeal.

Appeals data taken from the DWP PIP computer system's management information. Therefore this appeal data may differ from that held by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service for various reasons such as delays in data recording and other methodological differences in collating and preparing statistics.

Decisions overturned at appeal include claimants awarded PIP at initial decision and the claimant continues to appeal for a higher PIP award.

Decisions overturned at appeal may include a number of appeals that have been lapsed (which is where DWP changed the decision after an appeal was lodged but before it was heard at Tribunal).

Note that main disabling condition is only recorded for claims which reach the assessment stage. Claimants may often have multiple disabling conditions upon which their entitlement decision is based but only the main disabling condition is recorded and shown in these statistics.

### ■ Personal Independence Payment: Veterans

**Carol Monaghan:**

[\[244164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many veterans are owed-back payments of personal independence payment as a result of the the High Court ruling of 21 December 2017 on RF v Secretary of State for Work And Pensions [2017] EWHC 3375.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Information on owed-back payments of Personal Independence Payment to veterans as a result of High Court rulings is not held as the Department does not collect information on whether claimants on Personal Independence Payment are veterans.

### ■ Universal Credit: Housing

**Mr Steve Reed:**

[\[244110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she had made of the effect of the roll out of universal credit on levels of rent arrears in the London borough of Croydon.

**Will Quince:**

We have not made an assessment of this nature, as it is wrong to attribute any change in rent arrears solely to Universal Credit. The initial analytical work we have carried out with a single housing provider suggests that many tenants are arriving on Universal Credit with pre-existing rent arrears, that their arrears tend to increase prior to making a claim for Universal Credit, and that Universal Credit actually appears to be helping to clear arrears over time. We are currently extending this analysis to include a number of housing providers. It will be published when completed.

Furthermore, according to latest figures (November 2018) only about 8% of social rented households were on Universal Credit; therefore it is difficult to see how a national trend can be attributed to Universal Credit.

We have responded to concerns in this area by putting a number of safeguards in place - 100% advances repayable over 12 months, increasing to 16 months in October 2021; a two-week Transition to Universal Credit Housing Payment; a new Help to Claim service; and Managed Payment to Landlord Arrangements, which allow for payments direct to the landlord if the tenant is likely to have difficulty in managing

their rent payments, is unlikely to pay their rent or is in rent arrears equivalent to eight weeks.

■ **Universal Credit: Northern Ireland**

**Lady Hermon:** [\[244037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what preparations her Department has made for the the roll-out of universal credit in Northern Ireland.

**Alok Sharma:**

The roll out of Universal Credit in Northern Ireland was successfully completed in December 2018 at the same time as the remainder of the United Kingdom.

As benefit issues are devolved in Northern Ireland the Department for Communities have responsibility for the delivery of Universal Credit with the support of DWP and the Universal Credit Programme. The implementation of Universal Credit was agreed by Northern Ireland Ministers prior to the dissolution of the Northern Ireland assembly and as part of the Fresh Start agreement.

■ **Universal Credit: Veterans**

**Carol Monaghan:** [\[244162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many veterans are claimants of universal credit.

**Will Quince:**

The information requested is not held.

The Department continues to consider opportunities to improve our understanding of those claiming Universal Credit, including ways in which we might identify claims from veterans.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

#### ■ Age Verification for Online Pornography

**Minister of State for Digital and Creative Industries (Margot James):**

[\[HCWS1521\]](#)

On 17 April 2019, my department announced that age-verification for online pornography will begin on 15 July 2019. This means that commercial providers of online pornography will be required by law to carry out robust age-verification checks on users, to ensure that they are aged 18 or over.

The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) will be responsible for ensuring compliance with this new regulation. Websites that fail to implement age-verification technology face having payment services withdrawn or may be blocked for UK users.

Adult content is currently far too easy for children to access online. The introduction of mandatory age verification is a world-first, and we have taken the time to balance privacy concerns with the need to protect children from inappropriate content. We want the UK to be the safest place in the world to be online, and these new laws will help us achieve this.

We have also listened carefully to privacy concerns and take the issue of data privacy and security extremely seriously. We are clear that age verification arrangements should only be concerned with verifying age, not identity. In addition to the requirement for all age-verification providers to comply with General Data Protection Regulation standards, the BBFC has created a voluntary certification scheme, the Age-verification Certificate (AVC), which will assess the data security standards of AV providers. We feel that consumers should be able to choose age verification solutions that meet an even higher privacy standard than is offered by GDPR if they wish to.

The AVC has been developed in cooperation with industry and government. Certified age verification solutions which offer these robust data protection conditions will be certified following an independent assessment and will carry the BBFC's new green 'AV' symbol. Details will also be published on the BBFC's age-verification website, [ageverificationregulator.com](http://ageverificationregulator.com) so consumers can make an informed choice between age-verification providers.

### ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

#### ■ Contingent liability

**Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Mr Robert Goodwill):**

[\[HCWS1517\]](#)

It is normal practice when a Government department proposes to undertake a contingent liability in excess of £300,000 and outside the normal course of business, for the Minister concerned to lay a Departmental Minute before Parliament giving particulars of the

liability created and explaining the circumstances. The Department should refrain from incurring the liability until fourteen parliamentary sitting days after the issue of the statement.

This Minute relates to the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), an Executive Agency of Defra, entering into a commercial arrangement with the Kuwait Environment Public Authority (an Authority of the Government of Kuwait) who have asked Cefas to contract with them to provide a marine environment monitoring information system for Kuwait. This is proposed to be a four-year contract of marine science services for which the Kuwaitis will cover all Cefas' costs, c£40m.

The Kuwait Government wishes to enhance its national environmental management capability to world leading standards and is pursuing a strategy of working with the best international government bodies from strategic partner countries. This Kuwaiti Government objective is being delivered under their Environment Monitoring Information System Kuwait (eMISK) programme which spans Marine, Waste, Terrestrial, Air and Subsurface environments. The Kuwait Environment Public Authority have asked Cefas to tender for the Marine programme and this is supported by both countries at Ministerial level, as set out in the inter-government declarations of the Joint Steering Group.

The benefits of this work to both governments are the significant contributions it will make to the long-term health of the Gulf marine environment. It will also engage the next generation of Kuwaiti scientists in bilateral co-operation with the UK, maintain and develop Cefas' international capability, and position both Kuwait and the UK in a leading position in this area of science.

The contractual arrangements between the two parties follow standard Kuwaiti national commercial terms and conditions and include two contingent liabilities relating to a performance bond and liquidated damages claims. These liabilities are limited to a maximum of 20% of the c£40m contract value. Professional indemnity insurance will be purchased, using contract funds, to protect the Department against these risks leaving a residual excess value of no more than £250,000. Only uninsurable risks remain which would be due to late delivery or third-party claims.

Cefas and Defra have considered the risks of this indemnity and they believe the likelihood of such indemnities being called upon is very low. Agency or Departmental budgets are expected to fund any liability call. If such budgets are insufficient then for any payment would be sought through the normal Supply procedure.

The Treasury has approved the proposal in principle.

If, during the period of fourteen parliamentary sitting days, beginning on the date on which this Minute was laid before Parliament, a member signifies an objection by giving notice of a Parliamentary Question or by otherwise raising the matter in Parliament, final approval to proceed with incurring the liability will be withheld pending an examination of the objection.

**EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION****■ Arrangements with Switzerland**

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union (Mr Robin Walker):** [\[HCWS1520\]](#)

The UK and Switzerland have reached an agreement on temporary transitional migration arrangements for workers in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal. These would apply until December 2020.

This agreement is further to the Swiss government's announcement in February 2019, that in a no deal scenario they would create a specific quota of 3,500 work permits for 2019 for UK workers. As part of the transitional migration agreement, Switzerland have also agreed that UK nationals would not need to meet rules regarding skill level, national preference and economic interest which normally apply to third country nationals during the period covered by the agreement. The agreement also includes protections for frontier workers not covered by the UK-Swiss citizens' rights agreement which would allow them to continue cross-border work until 31 December 2020.

The UK has agreed to provide arrangements for Swiss nationals who wish to work in the UK which are at least as favourable as those offered to UK nationals in Switzerland. In the event of no deal, and following the ending of free movement, Swiss and EEA nationals arriving in the UK for the first time would be eligible for European temporary leave to remain. This would allow them to work in the UK for three years.

This agreement will be subject to ratification processes in both states, and will be signed and published in due course. The UK and Switzerland will continue to work closely together on implementing the agreement and will discuss the arrangements which will apply from the end of 2020 in due course.

Further information about the agreement can be found on gov.uk.

**HOME OFFICE****■ Participating in new legislation governing the EU's European Travel Information Authorisation System (ETIAS)**

**The Minister of State for Immigration (Caroline Nokes):** [\[HCWS1518\]](#)

The Government has decided to opt in to the aspect of the draft Regulation that establishes the conditions for the access of the European Travel Information Authorisation System (ETIAS) to the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS-TCN), and has decided not to opt out of the aspect of the draft Regulation that establishes the conditions for the access of ETIAS to the Second Schengen Information System (SIS II).

ETIAS is the EU's travel authorisation system that visa-exempt visitors (third country nationals and stateless persons) will have to apply to prior to their entry in the Schengen area. The UK does not participate in ETIAS as it forms part of Schengen border

legislation that the UK cannot participate in, but the UK fully supports the EU's efforts to strengthen its external borders of which this forms part.

Under this proposal, an ETIAS Central Unit will access EU information technology systems to support their considerations, specifically ECRIS-TCN and SIS II. Once implemented, the Regulation will allow the EU to revoke a grant of admission to a third country national if a relevant alert is identified from data the UK has uploaded to the ECRIS-TCN or SIS II databases. The European Commission has been working towards 2021 as the date from which ETIAS would become operational, but the date might be extended to 2023.

Whilst there are advantages to the EU from ETIAS having access to UK's data, there are no obvious operational or public protection benefits for the UK given it involves the provision of data to a scheme that the UK does not participate in. However, a significant argument in favour of participating is to prevent the UK's non-participation from giving rise to issues around UK access to SIS II or ECRIS-TCN in future.

Until the UK leaves the EU we remain a full member, and the Government will continue to consider the application of the UK's opt-in to EU legislation on a case by case basis, with a view to maximising the UK's efforts to collaborate with EU on a security partnership once UK leaves the EU, including on SIS II and ECRIS-TCN.

## TREASURY

### ■ **Bilateral loan to Ireland**

**The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Glen):** [\[HCWS1519\]](#)

I would like to update Parliament on the loan to Ireland.

In December 2010, the UK agreed to provide a bilateral loan of £3.2 billion as part of a €67.5 billion international assistance package for Ireland. The loan was disbursed in 8 tranches. The final tranche was drawn down on 26 September 2013. Ireland has made interest payments on the loan every six months since the first disbursement.

On 15 April, in line with the agreed repayment schedule, HM Treasury received a total payment of £407,843,097.02 from Ireland. This comprises the repayment of £403,370,000 in principal and £4,473,097.02 in accrued interest.

As required under the Loans to Ireland Act 2010, HM Treasury laid a Statutory Report to Parliament on 1 April covering the period from 1 October to 31 March 2019. The Report set out details of future payments up to the final repayment on 26 March 2021. The government continues to expect the loan to be repaid in full and on time.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/791132/Ireland\\_loan\\_statutory\\_report\\_April\\_2019\\_web.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/791132/Ireland_loan_statutory_report_April_2019_web.pdf)

The next Statutory Report will cover the period from 1 April to 30 September 2019. HM Treasury will report fully on all repayments received during this period in the Report.

**WOMEN AND EQUALITIES****■ Update on the Government's response on Period Poverty****Minister for Women and Equalities (Penny Mordaunt):**[\[HCWS1522\]](#)

I wish to update the House on the activity that is taking place to end period poverty and ensure that every woman and girl in our society can access the menstrual products they need.

This is a complex issue and its causes are not restricted to poverty. Charities and businesses are leading impressive initiatives around the country to change old-fashioned, uninformed attitudes to menstruation and break down taboos. Many organisations and businesses are exhibiting a will to act to tackle this issue by promoting awareness and making products available to their staff and visitors. We have been consulting with these organisations and are also writing to all members of this House to ask for their help in identifying good practice and further partners around the UK.

On 4 March this year I announced that the Government would establish a new joint taskforce on period poverty in the UK. This initiative recognises the importance of tackling period poverty for the dignity and empowerment of women and girls. Up to £250,000 has been committed in seed funding to support the work.

The taskforce will launch in June and will bring together a range of different organisations working on period poverty from across the public, private and third sectors. Details on the remit and membership of the taskforce will be announced in due course. Its objective will be to join up learning and ideas and develop a comprehensive, sustainable response. By linking different sectors, it will build on the range of diverse initiatives that already exist, promoting those which are delivering impact, and helping them to grow and become sustainable.

We need much better evidence and understanding of how period poverty affects different groups in our society. Therefore, improving the data in this area will be an issue the taskforce will tackle as a priority. Addressing stigma will be another main area of focus, given the shame and taboo that still exists around periods. The taskforce will consider the role of education, communications and role models in shifting social attitudes. The Government's new relationships, sex and health education, published earlier this year, will ensure every pupil learns about leading healthy lives, including menstrual wellbeing, as part of a well-rounded education on mental and physical health.

By bringing together different parts of government, the taskforce will promote a coherent, sustainable approach. In the Spring Statement of 13 March 2019, the Government announced that it will support a new scheme to provide free sanitary products in secondary schools and further education colleges. On April 16th, it was further announced that free period products will be offered to girls in all primary schools in England from early next year.

Extending the programme to all primary schools follows feedback from teachers, students and parents. The Department for Education is now working with key stakeholders in the

public and private sector to roll-out the programme in a cost-effective manner that supports girls and young women across the country.

In March 2019 the NHS in England announced that it will offer free period products to every hospital patient who needs them and today the Home Office has announced that it is set to change the law to ensure that all menstruating women, and others with personal health and hygiene needs, are treated with dignity whilst in custody. Police forces will provide menstrual products to female detainees if required, free of charge. The intended changes will be brought into effect when the revised Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Codes of Practice have been laid in Parliament.

In recognition of the global nature of the issue, the Department for International Development is leading a new global campaign of action to end period poverty by 2030. Across low and middle-income countries it is estimated that over half of all women and girls are forced to use homemade products, rags, grass or paper to manage their periods. In many countries there is a lack of information and appropriate water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. I announced on International Women's Day that this campaign will kick-start with an allocation of up to £2 million for small and medium charities working on period poverty in DFID priority countries. We are building on existing UK aid programmes that are enabling women and girls around the world to access sanitary products, facilities and knowledge about their periods, including through the Girls Education Challenge, Amplify Change and DFID's water and sanitation, reproductive health and research programmes.

I would like to pay tribute to all those working so tirelessly to tackle period poverty and shame both in the UK and around the world. We look forward to helping their good work scale and reach every woman and girl in need.