



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 25 April 2019 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:34 P.M., 25 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

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Crown Prosecution Service: Finance

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[245948\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, whether it is Government policy to maintain the level of real-term funding for the CPS in the next three years.

Robert Buckland:

The CPS, as with all government departments, has seen a reduction in funding since 2010. Whilst it has been a challenge, it is very important to recognise that the CPS has managed to maintain its performance. It is testament to the professionalism and commitment of the staff that has enabled this, reforming all aspects of how the organisation is managed to find efficiencies wherever possible. The CPS is now amongst the most digital prosecution services in the world.

The CPS has a budget to enable its resourcing; the Law Officers will continue to work with them and HMT to ensure that this is the case and that their needs are reflected in any future Spending Review.

■ Knives: Crime

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[245949\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what steps he is taking to tackle the rise in knife crime.

Robert Buckland:

Government Departments are working quickly to tackle knife crime and the CPS continues to prosecute knife crime robustly. Charges for offensive weapons and possession of a bladed article increased to 27,525 in 2017/18, compared with 25,993 in 2016/17.

I attended the Serious Youth Violence Summit hosted by the Prime Minister in April to discuss this serious issue. Following the Summit, cross-government work will now be overseen and driven forward by the new Serious Violence Strategy Implementation Taskforce chaired by the Prime Minister. The Attorney General will be a member of this Taskforce, and both he and I regularly engage with discussions about effectively tackling knife crime.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Catering: Minimum Wage

Paul Blomfield: [\[245768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of national minimum wage compliance in the catering sector.

Kelly Tolhurst:

This Government is committed to cracking down on employers who fail to pay the National Minimum and Living Wage (NMW). We almost doubled HM Revenue & Customs' (HMRC) budget to enforce the NMW from £13.2 million to £26.3 million between 2015/16 and 2018/19.

This increase in resources enabled HMRC to identify a record £15.6 million of arrears for more than 200,000 workers in 2017/18. These totals include arrears worth £469,468 owed to 6,526 workers in relation to food and beverage service employers.

In addition to undertaking proactive enforcement work in high risk sectors, HMRC respond to each and every worker complaint received. In April 2016, the financial penalty paid by employers was doubled to 200% of the arrears identified, up to a maximum of £20,000 per worker.

■ Climate Change: International Cooperation**Stephen Morgan:**[\[245960\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to amend the targets set out in the Climate Change Act 2008 in light of reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Claire Perry:

Within a week of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's special report on the impact of global warming of 1.5°C being published in October 2018, the Government commissioned its independent experts, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), to provide their advice on the implications for the UK's long-term emissions reduction targets, including on setting a net-zero target.

As part of that advice, we have asked the CCC for advice on whether we need to raise our 2050 target of cutting emissions by at least 80% relative to 1990 levels to meet international climate targets set out in the Paris Agreement.

The CCC's advice is due on 2 May and we will consider it carefully when it is received.

■ Fireworks: Safety**Alison Thewliss:**[\[245841\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress the Office for Product Safety and Standards has made on the development of its evidence base on the safety of fireworks.

Kelly Tolhurst:

In order to develop the evidence base, officials have reviewed the existing literature, research and data sources. They are currently engaging with a wide range of stakeholders including the RSPCA and the British Fireworks Association to further develop a balanced and fact-based evidence base. The work includes considering

market related information such as sales and the impact on individuals, animals and communities.

The work will also consider the findings of House of Commons Petitions inquiry on fireworks and the Scottish Government consultation on fireworks. This ongoing process will inform current and future policy in this area.

■ Housing: Insulation

Alan Brown:

[\[245867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Committee on Climate Change's report of June 2018, Reducing UK emissions: 2018 Progress Report to Parliament, if he will make an assessment of the accuracy of the finding on page 95 of that report that home insulation rates are five per cent of peak market delivery in 2012.

Claire Perry:

As stated in the Committee on Climate Change's report, the level of home insulation under the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) in 2017 was 5% of the level of home insulation under the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) in 2012.

Installations under CERT were at their highest in 2012 as suppliers delivered a significant proportion of their obligation in its final year. Government has reduced the overall level of ECO funding by approximately half since 2012 to reduce the cost burden on domestic energy bills. This funding reduction does not account for a reduction in insulation rates of 95%, where a decreasing potential for easy, low-cost insulation measures is a large contributor to fewer annual installations.

■ Hydrogen: Storage

Paul Blomfield:

[\[245766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of using hydrogen storage to store surplus renewable energy for the electricity grid.

Paul Blomfield:

[\[245767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what Government funding has been allocated to research and development into the use of hydrogen storage to store surplus renewable energy for the electricity grid.

Claire Perry:

The Government is undertaking a range of work to assess the potential use of hydrogen as a store of renewable energy.

The Offshore Wind Sector Deal, which was published in March 2019, sets out that the offshore wind sector will establish a Systems Management and Optimisation Task Group. This Group will publish a roadmap to identify opportunities for the offshore wind sector to collaborate on pioneering technologies for system integration, such as co-located storage and wind to hydrogen.

Alongside this, BEIS supports hydrogen storage innovation through the government's £505 million Energy Innovation Programme. Within this Programme, BEIS is running a Storage at Scale competition which will provide up to £20 million to support demonstration projects using innovative energy storage technologies, including storing hydrogen produced by electricity. The scope of the Storage at Scale competition was informed by desk-based Energy Storage Feasibility Studies and the Energy Storage Cost Reduction projects, also funded by the Energy Innovation Programme.

BEIS is also supporting hydrogen storage through the £20m Hydrogen Supply Competition, this programme supports the development of large-scale production and storage of hydrogen which could take advantage of surplus renewable electricity.

■ Quantum Technology

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[245537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has developed a strategy for the development of new quantum technologies.

Chris Skidmore:

As part of the UK Industrial Strategy, government will be refreshing the 2015 national strategy for quantum technologies in collaboration with National Quantum Technologies Programme (NQTP) partners.

This will follow a refresh of the programme's governance arrangements, in response to the scale of private investment anticipated under phase 2 of the 10-year NQTP.

In Autumn Statement 2013, the UK government announced an investment of £270m over five years into the first phase of the NQTP, intended to move quantum technology out of laboratories and into the marketplace, to boost British business and make a real difference to everyday lives.

The national strategy itself was drawn up in 2015 by the Quantum Technologies Strategic Advisory Board (QT SAB). It was published by Innovate UK and the [Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council](#) (EPSRC) and its recommendations are delivered mainly through the work of the NQTP. In 2018, the UK government committed a further £315m (subject to business case approval) towards the second phase – due to start in 2019.

The strategy aims to create a coherent government, industry and academic community that will give the UK a world-leading position in the emerging multi-billion-pound quantum technology markets, delivering transformational improvements across areas as diverse as sensing, imaging, computing and communications, and substantially enhancing the value of some of the biggest UK-based industries such as finance, defence, aerospace, energy and telecommunications.

■ Solar Power: Feed-in Tariffs

Stephen Twigg:

[\[245569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when his Department plans to publish its Smart Export Guarantee proposals for new solar households.

Claire Perry:

The consultation on a Smart Export Guarantee closed on 5 March 2019. We are currently analysing the responses we received and will publish a government response in due course.

■ Tidal Power

Stephen Kerr:

[\[245935\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans the Government has for the development of tidal energy resources.

Claire Perry:

The Government has a long history of supporting the development and deployment of tidal stream technologies in the UK. Since 2010, various bodies across Government have made almost £80m of grant funding available to the wave and tidal stream sectors. Tidal stream projects are eligible to enter the forthcoming Contract for Difference allocation round.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Brexit: Referendums

Tom Brake:

[\[246007\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what analysis did the Chancellor of the Exchequer use for the statement that it is unlikely, at a technical level, whether there would be enough time to legislate for a confirmatory referendum on the EU Withdrawal Agreement before the UK leaves the EU reported in the Guardian on 12 April 2019.

Mr David Lidington:

The Government has no plans to hold another referendum on EU membership. The Government remains committed to delivering on the result of the 2016 EU referendum by leaving the EU.

An Act of Parliament is required before any UK-wide referendum can be held, the terms of which are for Parliament to debate and agree, including provisions for setting the date, franchise and the question as well as incorporating adequate time to prepare for the poll and a minimum campaigning period.

■ Cabinet Office: Brexit**Valerie Vaz:** [245777]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether his Department has deprioritised any Statutory Instruments in relation to the UK leaving the EU; and if he will publish the criteria his Department uses to deprioritise those Instruments.

Kevin Foster:

Cabinet Office did not deprioritise any SIs and they were all laid in time for Exit Day.

■ Government Departments: Policy**Jo Swinson:** [245714]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what processes his Department has put in place to (a) track and (b) manage Government policy announcements and associated deadlines.

Oliver Dowden:

Government makes collective decisions on policy via Cabinet and Cabinet Sub-Committees.

Single Departmental Plans (SDPs) are central to how the government plans and tracks its performance. Updated annually, the plans reflect changes in the Government's priorities, including new policy announcements. SDPs are agreed by Cabinet Office and HM Treasury Ministers. Departments report regularly to Cabinet Office on their progress in delivering their SDPs.

Ministerial Implementation Task Forces (ITFs) also meet regularly to monitor delivery and to discuss milestones. Details of the ITFs and their membership are available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/795150/20190411-CabinetCommitteesAndImplementationTaskforces.pdf

■ Procurement: France and Germany**Mr Kevan Jones:** [245687]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what comparative assessment he has made of the use by (a) France and (b) Germany of the most economically advantageous test method in public procurement.

Oliver Dowden:

Public sector bodies (contracting authorities) in all EU Member States are required by the EU Procurement Directives to award public contracts above certain thresholds using the overarching award criterion of the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT). Article 67 of Directive 2014/24/EU sets out the definition of MEAT. Within this framework, individual contracting authorities are free to set out their detailed award criteria on a contract-by-contract basis, taking account of the specificities of the particular procurement in question.

■ Public Sector: Procurement

Jo Platt: [\[245992\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 15 April 2019 to Question 242949 on Public Sector: Procurement, for what reason that Answer did not contain information on the number of public sector buyers that do not utilise the Digital Marketplace.

Oliver Dowden:

All information concerning buyers that have used the Digital Marketplace is in the public domain. This can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/digital-marketplace-sales#g-cloud-sales>

The number of public sector buyers (including arms length bodies, the wider public sector and third sector bodies) is continually changing, as certain bodies will dissolve while others are created.

The latest list of current and former public sector bodies is from June 2017 on the Office for National Statistics website and can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/uksectoraccounts/datasets/publicsectorclassificationguide>

DEFENCE

■ Armoured Fighting Vehicles

Sir Nicholas Soames: [\[245538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he has plans to upgrade the AFV fleet.

Stuart Andrew:

The Army is undergoing an ambitious vehicle capability upgrade across several of its key armoured fighting vehicle (AFV) platforms. This includes purchasing 589 new Ajax armoured vehicles - the biggest single order for UK military vehicles for three decades - the first of which was delivered to the Army earlier this year. The Ministry of Defence is also making significant investments into the Army's existing armoured vehicle platforms to enhance the lethality and survivability capability of the Challenger 2 tanks and Warrior vehicles. These programmes enable the British Army to maintain its warfighting edge through an AFV fleet with advanced combat and intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance capabilities that will maintain their relevance to 2040 and beyond.

■ India: Aircraft Carriers

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[245691\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions his Department has had with the Indian Government on the export of the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carrier design to the Indian Navy.

Stuart Andrew:

We have regular discussions with India on a range of equipment and capability issues. It would be inappropriate to comment further.

■ **MOD Boscombe Down****Melanie Onn:**[\[245859\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 11 April 2019 to Question 242182 on MOD Boscombe Down, when the (a) review of future requirement is expected to be completed and (b) outcome of the March 2019 new competitive process will be published.

Stuart Andrew:

As stated previously the strategic review was initiated in February 2019 and it is anticipated to be completed by July 2019. At this point the new competition will be issued with an anticipated completion of March 2020.

■ **NATO: Armoured Fighting Vehicles****Sir Nicholas Soames:**[\[245539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts in NATO on upgrading AFV Fleets.

Stuart Andrew:

Ministry of Defence Ministers routinely discuss the full range of defence and security issues with our NATO partners and interoperability is used within the decision-making criteria for upgrade programmes of our AFVs. NATO is the cornerstone of UK defence and as such the UK remains fully committed to the alliance.

■ **Syria: Migrant Camps****Stephen Twigg:**[\[245563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Royal Air Force has plans to (a) airlift and (b) airdrop humanitarian aid to civilians inside the Tanf deconfliction zone in Rukban camp, Southern Syria.

Mark Lancaster:

The UK remains immensely concerned about the humanitarian situation in Rukban camp where approximately 41,000 people remain stranded. Air drops do not provide the sustained access that humanitarian actors need to conduct needs assessments, oversee distribution, provide medical treatment and conduct evacuations. Aid delivered by road, by trusted humanitarian partners, including the UN, is by far the best way to deliver aid to hard-to-reach areas such as the Rukban internally displaced person camp. Together with our international partners, we continue to maintain pressure on the regime and its backers to facilitate sustained humanitarian access to the camp and for any movement of camp residents to be safe, voluntary and informed.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ **Big Lottery Fund: North of England****Stephanie Peacock:**[\[245936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much Big Lottery funding (a) per capita and (b) in total was allocated to the (i) North East and (ii) North West in each of the last five years for which data are available.

Mims Davies:

Applicants for funding from The National Lottery Community Fund (formally the Big Lottery Fund) often name their main office as their project delivery location. A high proportion of charities are based in cities and towns, or have their main office in London, but deliver activity and services to a much wider area. Figures often don't reflect the spread of activity and the overall offer of services and projects funded by The National Lottery Community Fund within a particular area. Therefore, when applying population figures to project delivery locations, amounts tend to be skewed towards larger towns and cities.

FINANCIAL YEAR	REGION ¹	FUNDING VALUE	PER CAPITA
2014/15	North East	£34,164,457	£12.92
2015/16	North East	£29,925,534	£11.32
2016/17	North East	£35,683,578	£13.49
2017/18	North East	£13,015,745	£4.92
2018/19	North East	£21,704,346	£8.21
Totals	North East	£134,493,660	£50.86

FINANCIAL YEAR	REGION ¹	FUNDING VALUE	PER CAPITA
2014/15	North West	£108,859,409	£15.00
2015/16	North West	£56,324,292	£7.76
2016/17	North West	£77,765,696	£10.71
2017/18	North West	£46,957,812	£6.47
2018/19	North West	£52,413,410	£7.22
Totals	North West	£342,320,619	£47.16

¹ The Community Fund's North West and North East regional offices' remit differs from government office regions in that our North East office also serves Cumbria. To avoid confusion, we have provided a Government Office Region breakdown here.

■ **Broadband**

Stephen Timms: [\[245557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much has been clawed back from providers in the Broadband UK programme as a result of a higher than anticipated take-up of broadband.

Margot James:

Superfast contracts include a take-up clawback mechanism to ensure public subsidies within the Superfast infrastructure are kept to a minimum. Clawback is generated over a 7 year period following completion of build implementation, based on customer take-up of service. Current estimates project take-up clawback to be at least £712m over this 7 year period. Some of this clawback has been returned early by agreement with the suppliers, and this is being reinvested.

■ **Broadcasting: Northern Ireland**

Liz Saville Roberts: [\[245915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much funding the Government has allocated to television broadcasting services in Irish and in Ulster-Scots under the (a) Irish Language Broadcasting Fund and (b) Ulster-Scots Broadcasting Fund.

Margot James:

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport currently provides £3m for the Irish Language Broadcast Fund and £1m for the Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund each year.

■ **Cybercrime**

Jo Platt: [\[245993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 11 April 2019 to Question 242266 on Cybercrime, whether targets have been set for industry awareness of Government cyber initiatives and communications in advance of the publication of the Cyber Security Breaches Survey 2020.

Margot James:

The Government's broad ambitions for industry awareness and engagement in cyber security are set out in the National Cyber Security Strategy 2016-2021. The Strategy can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-cyber-security-strategy-2016-to-2021>

■ Internet: Safety**Preet Kaur Gill:**[\[245929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 16 April 2019 to Question 242944 on Internet: Safety, whether all companies whose services are in scope of the duty of care will contribute to the funding of the regulator.

Margot James:

The regulator will be funded by industry in the medium term, and the government is exploring options such as an industry levy, fees or other charges to put it on a sustainable footing. Following the publication of the Online Harms White Paper, the government is consulting on how funding contributions should be determined.

■ Loneliness**Mr Steve Reed:**[\[245800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether his Department plans to undertake a loneliness policy test on the forthcoming 2019 Spending Review.

Mr Steve Reed:[\[245801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what progress his Department has made on devising a loneliness policy test to embed consideration of loneliness and relationships throughout the policy-making process as set out in the Government's tackling loneliness strategy published in 2018.

Mims Davies:

The Department remains committed to increasing awareness and embedding consideration for loneliness as part of the policy making process. Departments with commitments in the 2018 strategy, 'A Connected Society: a strategy for tackling loneliness', are required to include loneliness in their Single Departmental Plans. The Department for Work and Pension's Family Test guidance will be updated in 2019 to include loneliness. The Government's annual progress report on loneliness is due at the end of 2019.

■ Loneliness: Older People**Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi:**[\[244204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what plans does his Department has to use digital skills and online tools to tackle loneliness among older people.

Mims Davies:

Government recognises the power of digital inclusion to support social connection.

Government's strategy on tackling loneliness in England, published in October 2018, announced that loneliness would be included in the criteria for the Department for

Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's new £400,000 Digital Inclusion Innovation Fund, aimed at increasing the digital inclusion of older and disabled people. The three successful projects are now underway.

Other commitments from the loneliness strategy include pilots to explore how better use of data can help make it easier for people of all ages to find local activities, services and support. These pilots will take place by March 2020.

EDUCATION

■ Arts: English Baccalaureate

Sir Vince Cable: [\[245581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the English Baccalaureate on the take-up of creative arts disciplines.

Sir Vince Cable: [\[245582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the take-up of creative arts disciplines has been in each year since 2014-15.

Nick Gibb:

The Government is clear that the EBaccalaureate (EBacc) should be studied as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. It has been designed to be limited in size in order to allow pupils to continue to study additional subjects that reflect their individual interests and strengths, including arts subjects.

The attached table shows that the proportion of young people taking at least one arts GCSE since 2010 has fluctuated across years, but has remained broadly stable. According to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport's Taking Part Survey, in 2017/18, 96% of children aged 5-15 had engaged with the arts in the past 12 months ^[1].

[1] Arts covers music activities, theatre, drama, reading, writing, arts crafts and design, film/video/media/radio activities, dance activities, street arts/circus/carnival/festival activities.

Attachments:

1. [245581_245582_proportion_young_people_arts_tables](#)
[245581_245582_proportion_young_people_arts_subjects_table.pdf]

Jeremy Lefroy: [\[245789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect of the English Baccalaureate on access to creative subjects.

Nick Gibb:

The Government is clear that the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) should be studied as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. It is limited in size in order to allow pupils to continue to study additional subjects that reflect their individual interests and strengths, including arts subjects. The proportion of pupils taking at least one Arts

GCSE has fluctuated but remained broadly stable since the EBacc was introduced in 2010

Arts subjects are not limited to the classroom, and according to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's Taking Part Survey, in 2017-18, 96% of children aged 5-15 had engaged with the arts in the past 12 months[1]. The government is providing almost £500 million of funding between 2016-20 for arts and cultural education programmes.

[1] The arts cover music activities, theatre/drama, reading/writing, arts crafts and design, film, video, media, and radio activities, dance activities, street arts, circus, carnival, and festival activities.

■ Children's Centres

Sandy Martin: [\[245996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effect of a reduction in the number of children's centre places in local authorities on the number of children being taken into care in that area.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The information requested is not held centrally because no such assessment has been made. However, the National Audit Office's recent report on children's social care found no support for the hypothesis that a reduction in the number of children's centre buildings would increase the use of child protection plans. The report can be accessed at: <https://www.nao.org.uk/report/pressures-on-childrens-social-care/>.

Sandy Martin: [\[245997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussion he has had with representatives of local authorities on the educational value to children of children's centres.

Nadhim Zahawi:

My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education meets regularly with representatives of local authorities to discuss various matters related to the Department for Education agenda.

Sandy Martin: [\[245998\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of Children's Centre places provided in (a) 2018-19 and (b) 2019-20.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Information on the number of funded entitlement childcare places provided in Sure Start Children's Centres in 2018 is available in table 12 and 14 at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/education-provision-children-under-5-years-of-age-january-2018>.

Data for 2019 is not yet available.

Since 18 September 2017, data on Sure Start children's centres has been supplied by local authorities via the department's 'Get information about schools' database portal at: <https://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>.

Based on information supplied by local authorities as at 31 March 2019, there were 2,353 main Children's Centres and a further 700 additional sites (giving a total of 3,053 children's centre sites) open to families and children providing children's centre services as part of a network.

■ Department for Education: Brexit

Valerie Vaz:

[\[245776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has deprioritised any Statutory Instruments in relation to the UK leaving the EU; and if he will publish the criteria his Department uses to deprioritise those Instruments.

Anne Milton:

The government's objective has always been to have a functioning statute book in place by Exit Day and to ensure the most critical secondary legislation was made by this point.

All of the Department for Education's essential 'no deal' Exit Statutory Instruments (SIs) were made prior to 29 March 2019. Each Exit SI in the department was carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. Exit SIs which were deprioritised were done so because they made very minor technical changes which were not considered essential to be in force for the original Exit Day, and where there would be very little or no material impact from them not being in place for 'day 1'.

These considerations and assessments made have meant that the government has been able to lay the critical secondary legislation required before we exit the EU. The department does expect to lay its remaining 'no deal' SIs, which were deprioritised ahead of 29 March, shortly. Given the extension to Article 50, the department will consider whether any further Exit SIs will need to be brought forward to amend any EU Regulations which have come into force since the original Exit SI programme was finalised, to ensure a functioning statute book ahead of a potential 'no deal' exit. The department will keep this under careful review.

The laying of Exit SIs allows Parliament to fulfil its essential scrutiny role. The exact nature of this scrutiny, and the steps required before an SI completes its passage, is dependent on the type of SI. The government remains confident of passing the necessary legislation required to ensure a functioning statute book by Exit Day.

■ LGBT People: Education

Mark Menzies:

[\[910542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government is taking to help ensure that children are educated on LGBT issues.

Nick Gibb:

Pupils should receive teaching on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) relationships during their school years.

Through the new subjects of Relationship Education and Relationships and Sex Education, we expect secondary schools to include LGBT content. Primary schools are enabled and encouraged to cover LGBT content if they consider it age appropriate to do so.

Overseas Students: EU Nationals**Gordon Marsden:**[\[245637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether EU students enrolling on English higher education courses in the academic year 2020-21 will be eligible for home fee status and financial support.

Gordon Marsden:[\[245638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the Government will confirm the (a) fee status and (b) loan eligibility of EU undergraduate students commencing courses at English higher education providers in the 2020-21 academic year.

Caroline Lucas:[\[245750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether EU citizens starting courses in UK higher education institutions in the 2020-21 academic year will be eligible for (a) home fee status and (b) student loans and grants under the current eligibility criteria; and if he will make a statement.

Vicky Ford:[\[245994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether EU citizens enrolling on UK higher education courses in the 2020-21 academic year will be eligible for home fee status and financial support.

Vicky Ford:[\[245995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he will confirm the (a) fee status and (b) loan eligibility of EU citizens commencing courses at UK higher education providers in the 2020-21 academic year.

Daniel Zeichner:[\[246531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether EU students enrolling on UK higher education courses in the academic year 2020-21 will be eligible for (a) home fee status and (b) financial support.

Daniel Zeichner:[\[246532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when he plans to publish the (a) fee status and (b) loan eligibility of EU undergraduate students commencing courses at English higher education providers in the 2020-21 academic year.

Chris Skidmore:

We recognise how important it is that students and institutions have information on eligibility for student support before applications for courses open.

Applications for courses starting in academic year 2020/21 do not open until September 2019. We will ensure students and institutions have the information they need well in advance of that date.

■ Pupils: Bullying**Paul Farrelly:**[\[245680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the implications for Government policies of the conclusions of the report, *The Causal Effects of Adolescent School Bullying Victimization on Later Life Outcomes* by the Institute of Labor Economics.

Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education has not held any specific discussions with the Department for Work and Pensions about this report, but officials and ministers regularly meet counterparts to discuss a wide range of issues.

The Department's 'Preventing and tackling bullying' guidance sets out that bullying can be a barrier to pupils' education and have serious consequences for their mental health. Bullying which takes place at school can have a lasting effect on lives well into adulthood. This guidance includes a clear message that bullying, for whatever reason, is unacceptable and should never be tolerated. All schools are legally required to have a behaviour policy with measures to prevent all forms of bullying.

The Department supports schools to tackle bullying. In addition to updating the Department's guidance, steps have been taken to strengthen teachers' powers to enforce discipline and promote good behaviour; and the Government is providing over £2.8 million of funding between September 2016 and March 2020 to four anti-bullying organisations to support schools to tackle bullying.

The Government is also making relationships education compulsory in all primary schools, relationships and sex education compulsory in all secondary schools and health education compulsory in all state-funded schools in England. Under content regarding respectful relationships, the draft guidance sets out that pupils should know about the different types of bullying, the impact it has, the responsibility of bystanders and how to get help.

■ Schools: Private Finance Initiative**Stella Creasy:**[\[245782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish the (a) names, (b) unitary charges and (c) cost of all PFI funded schools in Bradford.

Nick Gibb:

Information on private finance initiative (PFI) and private finance 2 (PF2) data for current and in-procurement projects published by HM Treasury can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/private-finance-initiative-and-private-finance-2-projects-2017-summary-data>.

Further data relating to PFI schools in Bradford is held by Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

There are 4 PF2 schools (Carlton Bolling College, Beckfoot Upper Heaton, Dixons Cottingley Academy and Beckfoot Oakbank) in Bradford which are included in the Priority School Building Programme privately financed Yorkshire batch. The unitary charge information for that batch is available as part of the HM Treasury published data referred to above.

Special Educational Needs: Autism**Paul Blomfield:****[245769]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to increase understanding among teachers and support staff of the pathological demand avoidance behaviour profile of students with autism spectrum disorders.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Schools are responsible for the continuing professional development of staff who support children and young people with special educational needs or a disability, including those who are on the autism spectrum and/or exhibit a pathological demand avoidance behaviour profile.

The department has funded the Autism Education Trust (AET) since 2011 to deliver autism awareness training to education staff in early years, schools and further education settings. So far it has reached more than 207,000 people – not just teachers and teaching assistants, but also support staff such as receptionists, dining hall staff and caretakers, encouraging a ‘whole school’ approach to supporting pupils with autism. The AET also provides resources for teachers, including a competency framework, a progression framework for assessing children and young people with autism, and a set of standards to help them evaluate their practice in addressing the needs of children and young people with autism.

In addition, the framework for Initial Teacher Training content (published in July 2016), includes specific content on special educational need and autism and the National Association for Special Educational Needs ‘SEND Gateway’ provides access to a range of free, quality assured resources and training materials for schools, including on autism. The SEND Gateway is available here:

<https://www.sendgateway.org.uk/>.

■ Young People: Carers**Stephen Timms:** [\[245558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether it remains his policy that young carers be referred to explicitly in Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

This is a matter for Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman. I have asked her to write to the hon. Member for East Ham and a copy of her reply will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Agriculture****Alex Sobel:** [\[245976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to ensure the sustainability of the UK agriculture sector in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

It is in everyone's interests to secure a good deal with the EU and that is what we are committed to.

Whilst preparing for all outcomes, as any responsible Government would, we have also been preparing for the possibility of no deal, which is why we have contingency plans in place to minimise disruption for the food and farming sector as much as possible.

We remain confident in the resilience of our world leading agricultural sectors and their ability to thrive outside the EU.

■ Birds: Conservation**Zac Goldsmith:** [\[245772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will review the adequacy of the laws and guidance relating to the netting of bird nesting sites.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

I refer the Hon. Member to the reply given to the Rt. Hon. Member for Birkenhead, Frank Field, on 23 April 2019 to PQ 243353.

■ Bottles: Recycling**Alex Sobel:** [\[245979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to increase the level of glass bottle recycling in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Our current consultation on consistency in household and business recycling collections seeks views on whether glass should be one of the core materials to be collected by every council, including in Yorkshire and the Humber.

The Government is currently consulting on introducing a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers, including whether it should include glass bottles.

The Government is consulting on a packaging recycling rate for glass of 70% by 2025, and 75% by 2030.

Coal: Prices**Frank Field:**[\[245647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what (a) research and (b) consultation his Department has undertaken with house coal retailers in England and Wales on house coal prices throughout England and Wales in relation to his Department's consultation on cleaner domestic burning of solid fuels and wood; and if he will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The consultation on cleaner domestic burning of solid fuels and wood relates to England only.

Research has been undertaken based on responses submitted during the consultation period along with further analysis of advertised retail prices.

During the consultation period, various respondents sent in their own price analysis. These note that there are price differentials associated with volumes purchased and seasonality, as well as between differing locations across England.

Dangerous Dogs**Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[245607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of dog attacks in each of the last five years involving breeds of dog not covered by the the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

David Rutley:

The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 covers all dogs by making it an offence to allow a dog (of any breed or type) to be dangerously out of control. The Office of National Statistics collect data on the number of people attacked by dogs that results in them being admitted to hospital. However, the data does not contain the breed or type of dog involved.

The Government wants to reduce the number of dog attacks and has begun a research project which will, among other things, include identifying and examining the risk factors and situations that may cause dog attacks. We anticipate findings from the research towards the end of this year.

■ Landfill: Newcastle-under-Lyme**Paul Farrelly:**[\[245674\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect on public health of Walley's Quarry landfill site in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Environment Agency (EA) is responsible for permitting and regulating the Walley's Quarry landfill site. When determining an application for a landfill permit, public health authorities are consulted and their comments considered within any issued permit conditions.

To assist public health assessment, the EA carried out an ambient air monitoring study between 6 July 2017 and 14 February 2018. The full report has been shared with Public Health England (PHE) locally for their assessment, as they would be responsible for determining any wider impacts on human health. PHE has assessed the environmental data provided by the EA (6 July 2017 - 14 February 2018) and notes that these levels are low and that it would not expect there to be any long term health consequences.

The EA installed further mobile monitoring on 18 January 2019 near the northern boundary of Walley's landfill site. The EA continues to work with local public health partners and this further information will be shared with them to enable them to decide upon any action in relation to human health. PHE is able to provide advice to GPs if residents consult them with any health concerns.

From analysis of syndrome surveillance data, PHE has no evidence at this stage of an increase in GP consultations or calls to NHS 111 by the neighbouring population for symptoms of breathing difficulties or eye problems.

PHE continues to support the EA and local stakeholders with community engagement and will review any other potential health effects in light of further monitoring information supplied.

■ Plastics: Waste**Mary Creagh:**[\[245737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to his Department's consultation, Single use plastic: banning the distribution and/or sale of plastic straws, stirrers and plastic-stemmed cotton buds in England, which closed on 3 December 2018, how many responses were received to that consultation; and when the results of that consultation will be published.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

We received 1602 responses to this consultation. We are considering these views. We expect to publish the summary of responses together with the Government response soon.

■ Recycling: Schools

Layla Moran: [\[245965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure the provision of free recycling for schools in England.

Layla Moran: [\[245966\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of schools in (a) England, (b) Oxfordshire and (c) Oxford West and Abingdon constituency that have to pay for their own recycling collections.

Layla Moran: [\[245967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural affairs, what assessment he has made of the environmental effect of charging schools for their recycling collections.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Under the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations, waste collection authorities may charge for the collection of waste from premises forming part of a school. In some cases local authorities may also charge for disposal costs.

The Government is consulting on arrangements for all businesses and public organisations, including schools, to have duties to separate certain recycling materials. We have published an impact assessment to support these proposals alongside this Consultation on Consistency in Household and Business Recycling Collections in England.

We have not made specific estimates of the number of schools that have to pay for their own recycling collections, nor have we made a specific assessment of the environmental effects of charging schools for recycling collections.

■ Sheep Worrying

Dr Matthew Offord: [\[245756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what additional steps his Department will take to reduce the number of incidents of sheep worrying.

David Rutley:

The Government abhors irresponsible ownership which leads to dogs becoming dangerously out of control and causing injuries to people or animals. There are a number of laws and measures which police and local authorities can take to tackle dog attacks on livestock.

The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 includes provisions to prosecute owners whose dogs kill, attack or chase livestock, and to seize the dogs if they are out of control. This can lead to a prison sentence of up to six months, an unlimited fine or a disqualification order which prevents the owner from keeping dogs for a certain period of time. The police can also take action under the Dogs Act 1871. This is a useful measure to help police and local authorities to deal with dogs that are out of control and dangerous,

which includes being dangerous to other animals. Section 2 of the 1871 Act allows a complaint to be made by any individual, or the police, local authorities, etc., to a Magistrates' court that a dog is "...dangerous and not kept under proper control".

As well as these Acts there are anti-social behaviour measures, in particular the Community Protection Notice (CPN) which can be issued as a preventative measure. This means that the owner or keeper of an out of control dog could be prevented from walking it on a farmer's land. This will restrict access to when livestock is not out and ensure that the dog is kept on a lead when in fields with livestock. To breach a CPN is a criminal offence and attracts a maximum penalty of £2,500, or the option to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. It is worth noting that there are also seizure powers under the legislation.

Since April 2016, we have required all dogs to be identified by a microchip. This is quick and easy to do and provides a failsafe method of connecting dogs with their owners and has encouraged more responsible dog ownership.

Defra continues to work with the National Police Chiefs' Council Livestock Working Group which is looking at ways to reduce livestock attacks. The NFU is represented at this group and we are encouraging others in the farming and countryside community. This includes supporting the work of SheepWatch, which has produced leaflets to encourage the reporting and recording of incidents and to follow the guidance that is available on what to do when there is a dog attack.

■ Wines

Alex Sobel:

[\[245975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to support UK wine producers.

David Rutley:

UK wine producers are exceeding the targets they have set themselves for increasing the number of bottles produced and vineyards planted to 3,000 hectares and 10 million bottles by 2020. The Government commissioned research on how best to support the industry to continue to meet these targets in the face of climate change. Recent support from Defra for the UK wine industry also includes amending the English Protected Designation of Origin and Protected Geographical Origin Wine Schemes to ensure the unprecedented harvest did not damage producers of specialty wines.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION**■ British Nationals Abroad: Poland****Daniel Kawczynski:****[245729]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what assessment his Department has made of the adequacy of provisions for right to remain after the UK has left the EU for UK citizen's that have emigrated to Poland.

Mr Robin Walker:

Since the very beginning, the Prime Minister has made citizens' rights our priority for negotiations.

The Withdrawal Agreement will provide citizens with the certainty they need about their rights going forward. This means that all UK nationals lawfully residing in a Member State, including Poland, at the end of the implementation period will be able to stay and continue living their lives broadly as now.

All Member States have announced the arrangements that would apply to UK nationals in a no deal scenario. Poland has offered to preserve the rights of UK nationals and their family members residing in Poland when we leave the EU.

The Government will publish the latest information on the rights for UK nationals living in Poland on the "Living in Poland Guide" on gov.uk, which is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-poland>

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Brexit**Valerie Vaz:****[245774]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether his Department has deprioritised any Statutory Instruments in relation to the UK leaving the EU; and if he will publish the criteria his Department uses to deprioritise those Instruments.

James Cleverly:

The Government's objective has always been to have a functioning statute book in place by Exit Day and to ensure that the most critical secondary legislation was made by this point.

Each SI was carefully considered on a case-by-case basis, which has meant that the Government has been able to prioritise the secondary legislation required.

The Department for Exiting the European Union has not deprioritised any of its statutory instruments in relation to the UK leaving the EU.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE■ **Ahmed Mansoor****Martyn Day:**[\[245892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to his Emirati counterpart on the health of Ahmed Mansoor, a prisoner of conscience who has been on hunger strike for four weeks in al-Sadr prison.

Mark Field:

My officials have raised the case of Ahmed Mansoor with their Emirati counterparts at the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Similarly, in coordination with my officials and other EU member states, the EU delegation to the UAE raised this case with Emirati officials.

■ **Anguilla: Conflict, Stability and Security Fund****Helen Goodman:**[\[245700\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what progress has been made on the individual project components of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund Anguilla Programme.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The aim of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) Anguilla Territory Programme is to rebuild Anguilla's critical public infrastructure with enhanced resilience, to enable further progress towards sustainable economic development and self-sufficiency, following Hurricane Irma in 2017.

Since it was established in May 2018, the programme has delivered against its primary objective to rebuild Anguilla's critical national infrastructure, including emergency services buildings and equipment, hurricane shelters, airport and ferry terminal operations in time for the 2018 hurricane season (funded in part by the Global Britain Fund).

The Programme continues to make steady progress. To date 17 projects have been progressed with Business Cases agreed for 16. Fire-fighting appliances arrived in early 2019 and a Combined Services Building is scheduled for completion at the end of May 2019. Work on a range of longer term projects, covering education, health and infrastructure is ongoing. One primary school has already been refurbished and another is in progress. Upgrades to wards in the Territory's hospital are continuing while the roof has been strengthened, and new equipment is either on order or already in use.

All remaining projects are due to start construction by summer 2019. A full assessment, with contributions by all Government departments involved in the CSSF programme in Anguilla will be made on completion of the programme in 2021.

■ Bahrain: Civil Liberties and Press Freedom

Paul Farrelly:

[\[246010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with Bahraini Ambassador to the UK on press freedom and civil liberties.

Mark Field:

Our Embassy in Manama and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office continue to follow events in Bahrain closely. The UK enjoys a close relationship with the Government of Bahrain which allows us to speak honestly about a range of issues, including human rights. We do not shy away from sharing any concerns at a senior level.

The UK supports freedom of expression and freedom of speech as both a fundamental right in itself and as an essential element of a full range of human rights. We continue to encourage the Government of Bahrain to protect freedom of expression for all of its citizens, in line with its international obligations.

■ Belarus: Broadcasting

Paul Farrelly:

[\[245670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to (a) the Belarus Ambassador in London and (b) his counterpart in Belarus on the recent raid of the broadcaster Belsat's Minsk office.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The UK is concerned about restrictions on media freedom in Belarus. We consistently raise our concerns about media freedom as part of ongoing discussions with Belarusian counterparts on human rights and democracy. UK officials last raised concerns in a meeting with the Belarusian Ambassador on 3 April and stressed the importance of a free media with the Belarusian Deputy Foreign Minister on 17 April. Our Embassy in Minsk is monitoring the situation of the independent television channel, Belsat, following the search by Belarusian law enforcement officers. The UK continues to support a number of projects to promote and develop independent media in Belarus.

■ British Overseas Territories: Politics and Government

Helen Goodman:

[\[245702\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what progress has been made on the individual project components of (a) the Overseas Territories: Justice, Security and Governance (JSG) Programme and (b) Overseas Territories: Maritime Governance and Environment Programme.

Sir Alan Duncan:

In 2018-19, the Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) Overseas Territories' Justice, Security and Governance (JSG) Programme worked with relevant

Government Departments and Overseas Territories (OTs) Governments to support a range of areas including law enforcement, prisons, child safeguarding, criminal justice, public health, public sector reform and disaster resilience. Progress against objectives has included post-hurricane infrastructure projects for prisons in Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands; provision of a fit-for-purpose counter-terrorism training facility for the Royal Gibraltar Police Force and inclusion of OTs in INTERPOL's Ballistic Identification Network (IBIN) to support the tackling of gun crime. It also included: support to Chief Medical Officers on the control of vector-borne diseases; development of a multi-agency approach in responding to sexual assaults; and a threat analysis and needs assessment on maritime and border security to prevent drug- and people-trafficking and tackle serious and organised crime.

The Maritime Governance and Environment Programme works with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, UK Home Office, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to deliver a range of projects including the Blue Belt, which is on track to deliver the UK's commitment to protect over 4 million km² of waters around the OTs by 2020. The CSSF has been working alongside OT governments and administrations to ensure these Marine Protected Areas are properly managed, monitored and enforced. Work has been undertaken in the OTs to progress effective maritime legislation in preparation for the International Maritime Organisation Audit 2020; update seabed mapping and navigation products; improve compliance on vessel safety; and deliver training and equipment to support and maintain an effective search and rescue capability and pollution response. Gap analysis and targeted support increase OT capability to tackle the threat posed by invasive non-native species and improve the evidence base on environmental issues across the OTs. Both the FCO and CSSF will produce Annual Reports which will cover support provided to the OTs with a full finance update.

■ **British Virgin Islands: Conflict, Stability and Security Fund**

Helen Goodman:

[\[245701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what progress has been made on the individual project components of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund British Virgin Island Territory (BVITP) Programme.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The aim of the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) British Virgin Island Territory Programme (BVITP) is to support the Government of the Virgin Islands to ensure the successful long-term recovery and development of the British Virgin Islands, following the hurricanes of 2017.

The initial focus of the BVITP is to support the set-up and operation of the Virgin Islands Recovery and Development Agency (RDA), enabling the RDA to attract investment and successfully deliver the Recovery to Development Plan of the British Virgin Islands Government (BVG) in accordance with principles of accountability,

transparency and good governance. The BVITP also directly supports the transition of early recovery projects into the long-term recovery plan as well as the implementation of priority activity from the Recovery to Development Plan in areas that are key enablers for the recovery process and constitutional responsibilities of the Governor. These include robust disaster preparedness, support to improve good governance in the recovery structures and strengthened justice and security.

Good progress is being made on all components of the BVITP: the RDA has been established and is now delivering projects from Phase One of the Recovery to Development Plan. A number of priority security and justice and disaster preparedness projects have been directly supported and are either complete or expected to complete to schedule. The majority of early recovery activity supported by BVITP has now been completed and incorporated into the BVIG's long-term recovery plan. All of the activity has been undertaken in partnership with the Government of the Virgin Islands.

A full assessment, with contributions by all UK Government departments involved in the CSSF programme in the British Virgin Islands will be made on completion of the programme in 2021.

■ **Brunei: LGBT People**

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:

[\[245924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of diplomatic sanctions against Brunei as a result of the implementation of anti-LGBT laws by that country.

Mark Field:

The British Government does not support calls for sanctions or economic boycotts against Brunei. We believe that open and honest discussions best support our efforts to encourage Brunei to uphold its international human rights obligations, and to respect individual freedoms.

■ **Burma: Conflict, Stability and Security Fund**

Helen Goodman:

[\[245703\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what progress has been made under each of the individual project components of the Burma Conflict, Stability and Security Fund programme.

Mark Field:

In the last financial year the Burma Conflict, Stability and Security Fund programme provided funding for projects supporting the peace process and peacebuilding including through mediation and negotiation skills for key stakeholders; improving public administration approaches and strengthening community-led mechanisms for safer communities; and working towards reconciliation and rehabilitation among communities in Rakhine. Information on individual projects and intended outcomes is

included in the Burma Programme Summary, while a summary of progress of programmes meeting their objectives and delivering outputs is included in the Annual Review summary. Both of these documents are published online annually (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflict-stability-and-security-fund-cssf>).

■ **Caribbean: Organised Crime**

Helen Goodman: **[245697]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what progress has been made on the individual project components of the Caribbean - Serious and Organised Crime Programme.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Information on individual projects and intended outcomes is included in the Caribbean Programme Summary, while a summary of progress of programmes meeting their objectives and delivering outputs is included in the Annual Review summary. Both of these documents are published online annually (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflict-stability-and-security-fund-cssf>).

■ **Climate Change: International Cooperation**

Paul Blomfield: **[245764]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 2 April 2019 to Question 910174, Climate Change: International Cooperation, what policy objectives his Department has for discussions with international partners on tackling climate change.

Mark Field:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Priority Outcomes for 2019/20 now include a specific objective on Climate Change: 'tackle the global threat of Climate Change by: galvanising international action; promoting the role and impact of COP26, including bidding to host it; and taking a global leadership role'.

The objectives for discussions vary widely depending on the international partners concerned but focus on: increasing global ambition to bring greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into line with Paris Agreement goals; delivering policy and regulatory reform that supports sustainable growth and transition to a low carbon economy; and supporting effective measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change in the most vulnerable countries. We are well placed in these areas. We have proved that it is possible to reduce carbon emissions and grow the economy and are one of the first G7 countries formally exploring a more ambitious GHG emissions' target. With our Clean Growth Strategy and Grand Challenges we are continuing our delivery of the world-leading 2008 Climate Change Act and have committed to leading the resilience strand at the UN Secretary General's Climate Summit. We are also discussing COP26 in 2020 and our offer to host. Given that it will be a critical summit, marking

the full adoption of the Paris Treaty and the date by which countries should provide strengthened national action plans, we are committed to ensuring that it is a success.

Paul Blomfield:

[\[245765\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 2 April 2019 to Question 910174 on Climate Change: International Cooperation, what progress his Department has made on the UK's bid to host COP26 in 2020.

Mark Field:

We are currently engaging at Ministerial and Official level with interested countries and the Western European and Others Group of the United Nations, as part of a cross-Government effort. We expect that a final decision will be adopted at COP25 in Chile in December 2019.

■ Colombia: Peace Negotiations

Helen Goodman:

[\[245694\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to his Colombian counterpart on the need to pursue a negotiated settlement with the National Liberation Army of Colombia.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The UK has reaffirmed its unwavering support to the Colombian authorities as they seek to ensure sustainable peace in Colombia and has reiterated the importance of pressing ahead with work to implement the peace agreement in order to consolidate peace and build stability. At the same time, the UK, alongside international partners, has continued to urge a negotiated end to the conflict.

■ Colombia: Politics and Government

Helen Goodman:

[\[245695\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment of the refusal of the Colombian President Ivan Duque to sign the Statutory Law on the Special Jurisdiction for Peace on the political situation in that country; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The United Kingdom has expressed concern to the Colombian Government over delays to the transitional justice system, which is a critical part of the peace process. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace continues to function under existing legal provisions despite recent objections of President Duque to certain articles of the law. The law has now been returned to Congress. The UK believes that the delay risks undermining the system's authority and reducing cooperation with the FARC. We believe that the Transitional justice law must be approved swiftly to ensure continued confidence in the peace process. On 11 March, our Ambassador in Colombia informed President Duque of the UK position. On 15 March, the UK Permanent

Representative to the UN urged Foreign Minister Holmes Trujillo to support the transitional justice system.

Helen Goodman: [245698]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what progress has been made on the individual project components of the Colombia: security and access to justice for peace programme.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Information on individual projects and intended outcomes is included in the Colombia Programme Summary, while a summary of progress of programmes meeting their objectives and delivering outputs is included in the Annual Review summary. Both of these documents are published online annually (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflict-stability-and-security-fund-cssf>).

■ **France: Refugees**

Mr Jim Cunningham: [245604]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his French counterpart on the living conditions of refugees and migrants rough sleeping in France.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Neither I nor the Foreign Secretary have discussed this aspect of French internal policy with our French colleagues.

■ **Hamas**

Joan Ryan: [R] [245560]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the extent of involvement of Hamas in terrorist activities.

Mark Field:

We continue to strongly condemn all acts of terrorism by Hamas and call upon them to permanently end their incitement and rocket fire against Israel. Our policy on Hamas is clear: Hamas must renounce violence, recognise Israel and accept previously signed agreements. Hamas' military wing has been proscribed as a terrorist organisation by the UK since 2001. The UK retains a policy of no contact with Hamas in its entirety.

■ **Hamas: Freezing of Assets**

Joan Ryan: [R] [245559]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the political and military wings of Hamas, including the Izz-Al-Din Al-Qassem Brigades, will remain on HM Treasury's Consolidated List of Financial Sanctions Targets in the UK in

the event of the UK leaving the EU (a) with and (b) without a withdrawal agreement; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Field:

As the Prime Minister has set out, the UK will look to carry over all EU sanctions at the time of our departure from the EU. During an implementation period, EU sanctions will continue to apply in the UK. Under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018, individual listings will need to meet the threshold of evidence and justification that our legislation requires. In a no-deal scenario, the full list of those subject to UK sanctions will be published on the UK sanctions list on exit-day. The UK proscribes Hamas' military wing as a terrorist organisation and retains a policy of no contact with Hamas, in its entirety.

■ **Iran: Detainees**

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[245908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has made representations to (a) his counterpart in Iran and (b) the UN Security Council on the implications for international peace and security of the arbitrary detention of foreign and dual nationals in Iran.

Mark Field:

The British Government has formally notified the Iranian Government of the Foreign Secretary's decision to exercise diplomatic protection in the case of Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe. The decision represents formal recognition that Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's treatment fails to meet Iran's obligations under International Law. We have not made representations to the UN Security Council on these matters.

■ **Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps**

John Lamont:

[\[245937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his counterpart in the US Administration on that Administration's decision to classify Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a foreign terrorist organisation.

Mark Field:

We regularly engage with the US on Iran policy at a variety of levels, including through a visit to Washington by our Ambassador to Iran last month.

We have long expressed our deep concerns about the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC's) destabilising activity both within and outside Iran, including its illicit economic activity and its role in Iran's ballistic missile development and support to non-state groups around the region.

■ Israel: Refugees**Dr David Drew:** [\[245594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information his Department holds on the number of (a) Sudanese and (b) Eritrean refugees detained by the Israeli authorities; and whether the UK Government has made representations to the Israeli authorities on preventing the repatriation of those refugees.

Mark Field:

Whilst we do not hold any information on the number of Sudanese and Eritrean refugees being held by the Israeli authorities, our Embassy in Tel Aviv regularly raises our concerns over the issue of treatment of refugees with Israel.

■ Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe**Tulip Siddiq:** [\[245906\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he has taken to secure consular access for Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe following the announcement on 7 March 2019 to invoke diplomatic protection.

Mark Field:

In our bilateral discussions with Iran we regularly request consular access to all our dual national detainees, including Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe. Under the auspices of diplomatic protection, we will continue to do so to ensure her wellbeing.

Tulip Siddiq: [\[245907\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what diplomatic options are available to his Department to escalate action against the Iranian Government should the UK continue to be denied consular access to Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe.

Mark Field:

Diplomatic protection does not automatically dictate any particular course of action. We continue to make further diplomatic representations to the Iranian authorities privately and are continually reviewing what further steps are available to us to help secure Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's release. We will continue to make decisions in line with what we believe is in her best interests.

■ Nigeria: Slavery**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[245606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to tackle the causes of modern slavery in Nigeria.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK and Nigeria have a shared security and economic interest in tackling the causes of modern slavery. The British Government funds a range of interventions to help Nigeria to tackle modern slavery and human trafficking, as well as to support

victims. We continue to work with the Nigerian authorities and other donors and partners to address these issues, by helping to stabilise post-conflict areas and helping the Nigerian authorities to identify criminals involved in facilitating illegal migration and modern slavery.

Our efforts are focused in the locations from where the highest numbers of migrants come.

■ Somaliland: Human Rights

Gill Furniss: [\[245922\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what diplomatic steps he is taking to support basic human rights in Somaliland.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK provides a range of assistance that supports human rights in Somaliland. This includes working with the Somaliland judiciary to establish a Code of Conduct and a Monitoring and Inspection Committee, to provide judicial training on rights compliance, to ensure the police are operating in line with international human rights standards, and to improve detention conditions. The UK also supported the Somaliland government to establish a media code of conduct, and maintains regular engagement with civil society on freedom of expression, women's rights, and minority rights.

■ Somaliland: Politics and Government

Gill Furniss: [\[245923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what diplomatic steps he is taking to support democratic processes in Somaliland.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK is committed to supporting Somaliland's democratisation process, in particular timely elections in Somaliland. This forms an integral part of the ongoing dialogue between the British Office in Hargeisa and the Somaliland government. Earlier this month, our Ambassador to Somalia met President Bihi of Somaliland to underline the need for parliamentary and local council elections to take place on time, on 12 December 2019. The UK also provides technical expertise to the Somaliland election commission, and is working to support improvements to the voter registration system and promote women's participation.

■ South America: Organised Crime

Helen Goodman: [\[245699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what progress has been made on the individual project components of the Peru/Colombia: Serious Organised Crime Programme.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Information on individual projects and intended outcomes is included in the Peru/Colombia Programme Summary, while a summary of progress of programmes meeting their objectives and delivering outputs is included in the Annual Review summary. Both of these documents are published online annually (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflict-stability-and-security-fund-cssf>).

■ Sudan: Politics and Government

Dr David Drew: [245591]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect on the Khartoum Process of the Sudanese Government closing its borders.

Harriett Baldwin:

Following the removal of President Bashir by the Sudanese military on 11 April there was a brief closure of Sudanese borders. The broader political events in Sudan will likely have an impact on the capacity of the Sudanese authorities to engage in a number of fora and mechanisms, including the Khartoum Process, however it is not yet clear what this impact will be. Tackling the root causes of irregular migration, combatting organised immigration crime and addressing the devastating effects of trafficking is a key UK priority. As a former Chair, the UK remains committed to playing our full part in the Khartoum Process; we are on the Steering Committee; the Khartoum Process is one of many ways the UK engages with East African partners to address these shared threats. We continue to monitor the situation.

Dr David Drew: [245592]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Sudanese politician Sadiq al-Mahdi.

Harriett Baldwin:

Following the removal of President Bashir on 11 April, we continue to engage frequently with a broad range of Sudanese actors, including opposition groups, civil society and the Sudanese authorities, to call for a peaceful and swift transition to an inclusive government that is civilian led. This includes Sadiq al-Mahdi and the leadership of his Umma Party. Officials from British Embassy Khartoum last met with Sadiq al-Mahdi on 30 March to discuss the prospects for political reforms and wider internal politics in Sudan.

■ Syria: Detainees

Tom Brake: [245540]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 1 April 2019 to Question 236249 on Syria: Detainees, what his Department's policy is on the transfer of UK nationals detained in North East Syria to Iraq for prosecution in Iraqi domestic courts.

Tom Brake: [\[245541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the level of risk of (a) the death penalty and (b) torture for UK nationals transferred to Iraq from North East Syria.

Tom Brake: [\[245542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 1 April 2019 to Question 236247 on Syria: British Nationals Abroad and the Answer of 28 March 2019 to Question 236249 on Syria: Detainees, what assessment he has made of Iraq's domestic court system as an (a) appropriate jurisdiction and (b) appropriate means of justice for trying UK nationals held in North East Syria suspected of serious crimes.

Mark Field:

Any decision in relation to the continued detention, transfer or prosecution of detainees is ultimately a matter for authorities under whose jurisdiction the individuals are detained. The UK opposes the death penalty in all circumstances, as a matter of principle. We have human rights concerns relating to the trials in Iraq's domestic courts of Iraqi nationals suspected of support for Daesh: we regularly raise these concerns, including our opposition to the death penalty, with the Iraqi authorities.

The UK will continue to work closely with international partners in addressing the issues associated with foreign terrorist fighters and in the pursuit of justice of those who have participated in terrorism overseas.

■ Syria: Islamic State

Tulip Siddiq: [\[245904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of children of UK nationals associated with ISIS residing in north-east Syria.

Mark Field:

We are aware that some British nationals including children are currently in north-east Syria. Due to the circumstances on the ground, we are not in a position to make an accurate estimate of the number. The UK has no consular presence within Syria and has advised against all travel to Syria since 2012 because of the dangers associated with the conflict there.

■ Thailand: Politics and Government

Helen Goodman: [\[245693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the charges made against Future Forward leader Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit on political stability in Thailand.

Mark Field:

We continue to monitor the situation in Thailand following 24 March's elections. I issued a statement welcoming the fact that elections had taken place and highlighting that it was important that any reported irregularities were investigated swiftly, fairly and transparently. I also emphasised that the process of government formation should be conducted in a proper and open manner to reflect what people voted for.

On 6 April our Embassy joined 11 other diplomatic missions in observing Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit, the leader of the Future Forward Party, attend a police station to hear several charges, including one of sedition. These charges relate to an incident in 2015 and could lead to him facing trial in a military court, despite being a civilian.

The United Kingdom has a long standing position against the use of military courts for civilians, including in Thailand. Observing trials, court hearings, and charges at police stations is normal diplomatic practice, which we and other states follow around the world.

The British Government does not support any Thai political party and believes that the outcome of the election should reflect the will of the Thai people.

■ Yemen: Diplomatic Service**Stephen Twigg:**[\[245564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has made an assessment of the viability of re-establishing a diplomatic presence in (a) Sana'a and (b) Hodeidah in Yemen.

Mark Field:

The security situation in Yemen means that we are unable to re-establish a diplomatic presence in Yemen. We will continue to keep this under review.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Cancer: Drugs****Mr Clive Betts:**[\[R\] \[245610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 15 April 2019 to Question 242692 on Cancer: Drugs, what steps the Government is taking to give timely NICE and NHS approval to enable access to maintenance medication for people with cancer.

Seema Kennedy:

Through its technology appraisal programme, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) makes recommendations for the National Health Service on whether drugs and other treatments represent an effective use of NHS resources. NHS England is legally required to fund cancer drugs recommended in NICE technology appraisal guidance.

The Government wants patients with cancer to be able to benefit from rapid access to effective new drugs, including for maintenance treatment. Under arrangements introduced in 2016, NICE now develops technology appraisal guidance for the NHS on all new cancer drugs. Wherever possible, NICE aims to issue draft guidance on new cancer drugs before licensing and to publish final guidance within 90 days of licensing.

Funding is available through the Cancer Drugs Fund from the point at which NICE draft recommendations are published, or if the drug is not currently licensed, from the point of licensing. This ensures patients are able to benefit from effective new cancer drugs as quickly as possible.

■ Cancer: East Sussex

Peter Kyle:

[\[245901\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps his Department has taken to reduce waiting times for NHS hospital appointments for cancer patients in (a) East Sussex and (b) Brighton and Hove.

Seema Kennedy:

Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust has taken several steps to reduce waiting times for cancer patients and as a result there has been a 40% reduction in the number of patients waiting greater than 104 days since January 2019, and an overall reduction in the size of the cancer waiting list. Additional funds have been secured from the Cancer Alliance, and improvement plans are in place at tumour site level.

In addition, to improve elective waiting times more broadly, local clinical commissioning groups have commissioned significantly more elective activity this year than was delivered last year to improve Referral to Treatment performance, and there is a focus on reducing the number of cancelled operations at the Trust. Additional capacity has also been secured to support a reduction in diagnostic waiting times.

Reducing waiting times continues to be a high priority for the National Health Service. Nationally, the NHS Long Term Plan sets out the NHS priorities going forward and reiterates the focus to increase the amount of planned surgery year-on-year, to cut long waits, and reduce the size of hospital waiting lists.

The Clinical Standards Review is all part of delivering the clear commitments set out in the NHS Long Term Plan to improve urgent and emergency care performance and reduce provider waiting lists over the next five years, as well as delivering the new ambitions set out, all within the final long-term funding settlement. The clinically-led review of standards is considering the appropriateness of operational standards for physical and mental health relating to planned, unplanned urgent or emergency care, as well as cancer.

Furthermore, we have committed to introducing a new 28-day faster diagnosis standard from next year so that patients are able to start treatment as quickly as

possible. The new standard will see patients who are referred for investigation with suspected cancer receive a diagnosis or have cancer ruled out within 28 days. Trusts will be performance managed from April 2020.

■ Cancer: Medical Treatments

Anne Marie Morris:

[\[245799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress is being made on the development of the UK CAR-T Cell Therapy Strategy; when stakeholders will be invited to participate in the development of that strategy; and when he plans to publish that strategy.

Seema Kennedy:

The National Health Service in England is one of the first health services in the world to deliver Chimeric Antigen Receptor T Cell (CAR-T) Therapy. The first patient began their treatment in October 2018 for B cell acute lymphoblastic leukaemia. NHS England continues to focus on supporting implementation of these CAR-T products in the first wave of treatment centres, and are preparing for a potential second wave of treatment centres to begin delivering the treatment later in 2019. There are no plans to develop or publish a strategy.

■ Epilepsy: Drugs

Patrick Grady:

[\[245842\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the answer of 1 April 2019 to Question 237706 on Epilepsy: Drugs, and with reference to the publication entitled, Epilepsy Society Calls For Urgent Review Of Medicines Supply Chain, published by the Epilepsy Society on 8 April 2019, if he will make an assessment of trends in the level of people with epilepsy that are unable to obtain epilepsy medication.

Patrick Grady:

[\[245843\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will respond to the request from the Epilepsy Society for an urgent review of the medicines supply chain.

Seema Kennedy:

The Department fully understands that maintaining access to epilepsy medications is vitally important to many people in this country.

The production of medicines is complex and must meet rigorous quality and safety standards. Disruption to the medicines supply chain is rare, but can occur due to manufacturing issues, supply of raw materials or batch failures.

The Department has well established processes to monitor the medicines supply chain, and to manage and mitigate the small number of supply problems that may arise at any one time. In addition, from January this year, it became a legal requirement for pharmaceutical companies to report this information to us in a timely manner. The new requirements aim to address the ongoing concerns about medicine supply issues and to ensure that the Department has relevant information at the

earliest point possible to help manage supply shortages and mitigate any potential impacts on patients.

The Department responded to concerns over medicines used in epilepsy by seeking specialist advice to develop a clinical management plan. The clinical management plan aims to ensure treatment for affected patients can be managed appropriately in the unlikely event of any disruption to supply. We communicated information about the supply issue and clinical management plan to the National Health Service and affected patients via patient groups.

We continue to work closely with industry and partners in the health system to help prevent shortages and to ensure that the risks to patients are minimised when supply issues do arise.

■ **Females: Carers**

Anna Turley: [\[245854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to support female kinship carers who care as a result of alcohol misuse.

Caroline Dinenge:

The Department for Education has advised that the Government issued statutory guidance in 2011 for local authorities about supporting family and friends providing care for children who cannot live with their parents. The guidance makes it clear that children and young people should receive the support that they and their carers need to safeguard and promote their welfare. It explains that support, can be provided under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. There is no limit on the level of support, that local authorities can provide. Local authorities are required to publish a policy setting out their approach to promoting and supporting the needs of all children living with family and friends carers, regardless of their legal status.

■ **Food: Labelling**

Catherine McKinnell: [\[246524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to his Department's public consultation entitled Calorie labelling for food and drink served outside of the home, which closed on 7 December 2018, how many responses the consultation received; and if he will commit to publish a response to that consultation before the next Parliamentary recess.

Seema Kennedy:

The consultation on mandating calorie labelling in the out-of-home sector received a high level of interest with over 1,000 responses from members of the public, businesses and organisations. We will publish the results and set out the timetable for further action later this year.

■ Gender Recognition: North East**Dr Paul Williams:**[\[245989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of state for Health and Social Care, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of waiting times to access NHS specialised gender services in the North East.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

NHS England has launched an ambitious programme to tackle waiting times, overseen by a Programme Board for Gender Identity Services. NHS England agreed new service specifications for gender dysphoria services in 2018 following a process of extensive stakeholder engagement and public consultation.

In April 2019 NHS England began a process of national procurement that will determine which organisations are best able to deliver specialist gender services in the future against the new service specifications, and this process is open to new providers. NHS England has also announced plans to establish for evaluation new gender services in primary care settings and other community care settings which if positively evaluated could be rolled out nationally, thereby helping to increase clinical capacity.

■ Hospitals: East Sussex**Peter Kyle:**[\[245900\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps his Department has taken to reduce waiting times (a) for NHS operations and (b) between admission and treatment at A&E in (i) East Sussex and (ii) Brighton and Hove.

Stephen Hammond:

This information is not collected in the format requested.

Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust has been supported to invest £30 million in new facilities to reduce waiting times in accident and emergency (A&E) departments. This includes 18 additional acute beds at the Royal Sussex County Hospital, and as a result has seen a 4% improvement in performance against the four hour A&E standard compared to previous months.

The Trust is planning for further additional bed capacity, including a £500 million capital build to improve acute bed capacity, and there has been significant system support from clinical commissioning groups and community trusts to increase out of acute hospital support.

■ Incontinence**Catherine West:**[\[245921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many unplanned admissions there were to hospitals in England as a result of urinary incontinence by (a) NHS Trust and (b) region in 2018.

Seema Kennedy:

The data is not collected in the format requested.

■ **Liver Diseases: Young People****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[245601\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the level of fatty liver disease among young people.

Seema Kennedy:

The following table from NHS Digital shows a count of finished admission episodes (FAEs) with a primary diagnosis of K76.0 - Fatty (Change of) liver, for patients aged under 18, for the financial years 2013-14 to 2017-18. Clinical code K76.0 includes, but is not limited to, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

Activity in English National Health Service hospitals and English NHS-commissioned activity in the independent sector

YEAR	FAES
2013-14	96
2014-15	115
2015-16	185
2016-17	157
2017-18	195

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Digital

An FAE is the first period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. FAEs are counted against the year or month in which the admission episode finishes. Admissions do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the period. Changes to the figures over time need to be interpreted in the context of improvements in data quality and coverage, improvements in coverage of independent sector activity and changes in NHS practice. For example, apparent reductions in activity may be due to a number of procedures that may now be undertaken in outpatient settings and so are no longer included in admitted patient HES data. Conversely, apparent increases in activity may be due to improved recording of diagnosis or procedure information.

■ **Maternal Mortality: Ethnic Groups****Anneliese Dodds:**[\[245968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reduce maternal mortality among BAME women.

Anneliese Dodds: [\[245969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, for what reason maternal mortality rates are higher among BAME women.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The higher rates of maternal mortality experienced by black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) women is a complex and serious issue. The Department has commissioned the Policy Research Unit in Maternal and Neonatal Health and Care at Oxford University to undertake a research project in 2019-20 to investigate the factors associated with excess perinatal and maternal mortality. The Department will use findings from research to inform future maternity policies.

Current plans to reduce inequalities are set out in the NHS Long Term Plan, we aim to tackle maternal mortality inequality through the introduction of an enhanced continuity of carer model. By 2024, 75% of women from BAME communities and other vulnerable women will receive continuity of care from their midwife. This will also help reduce pre-term births, hospital admissions, and the need for intervention during labour.

■ Medical Examiners

Dr Paul Williams: [\[245986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government has plans to bring forward secondary legislation to implement proposed Medical Examiner reforms set out in the Coroners Act 2009 before 2020-21.

Dr Paul Williams: [\[245987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the Government has plans to amend regulations in relation to cremation fees to enable the implementation of the Medical Examiner reforms set out in the Coroners Act 2009.

Dr Paul Williams: [\[245988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the changes required to cremation fee regulations to enable the implementation of the Medical Examiner reforms set out in the Coroners Act 2009.

Caroline Dinéage:

The Government is committed to introducing the reforms to death certification and to the introduction of a medical examiner system, as detailed in the Government's response to consultation published in June 2018. Draft regulations were published alongside that consultation and it remains the intention to bring these forward when Parliamentary time allows for amendment to the primary legislation, to enable the reforms fully to be delivered.

With the introduction of a statutory scheme of medical examiners, the Government is committed to reform of the cremation regulations, removing the requirement for separate cremation medical certification and the fees associated with that function.

■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck:

[\[245807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the recommendations in the Royal College of Psychiatrists position statement on consultant psychiatrists working across specialities outside normal working hours, what guidance his Department has issued to mental health providers to ensure the adequacy of arrangements for out of hours mental health care for children and young people.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Currently, out of hours mental health care is available at accident and emergency departments, emergency general practitioner appointments, crisis resolution and home treatment services, crisis houses, and by calling NHS 111 or the Samaritans.

The 2019 NHS Planning Guidance states that “CCGs should ensure there is a crisis response that meets the needs of under 18-year olds. These should be staffed by practitioners who are trained and competent in meeting the specific mental health needs of children and young people. CCGs should work towards delivering age-appropriate 24/7 crisis provision for children and young people (CYP) which combine crisis, liaison and intensive community support functions. This should apply whether or not the model selected by the CCG is a dedicated CYPMH service for 24/7 or extended hours, or a blended model that relies on Core24 to support CYP at some point during the 24 hours.”

Setting up 24 hours a day, seven days a week crisis care provision for children, young people and their families is a key priority for the Government in the NHS Long Term Plan. All children and young people experiencing crisis will be able to access crisis care 24 hours a day, seven days a week by 2023/24 via NHS 111.

■ NHS: Finance

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[245796\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much funding from the (a) Sustainability and Transformation Fund and (b) subsequent Provider Sustainability Fund has been (i) awarded to and (ii) spent by (A) NHS trusts, (B) NHS foundation trusts in each financial year since 2016-17.

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[245797\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much and what proportion of the funds awarded from the (a) Sustainability and Transformation Fund and (b) Provider Sustainability Fund remained on the balance sheet of each NHS organisation in the 2018-19 financial year; and if he will make a statement.

Stephen Hammond:

The amounts received by National Health Service trusts and foundations trusts from the Provider Sustainability Fund (PSF) have been published by NHS Improvement at the following links:

2016-17:

https://improvement.nhs.uk/documents/1264/M12_201617_provider_sector_performance_report_-_Fin_Accts_-_FINAL.pdf

2017-18:

https://improvement.nhs.uk/documents/2852/Quarter_4_2017-18_performance_report.pdf

The final distribution of the 2018-19 PSF will be published by NHS Improvement on 30 May 2019.

NHS trusts' expenditure is not reported by its income stream; therefore, it is not possible to determine what proportion of the PSF has been spent, though the intention of the fund is that it directly improves trust's bottom-line surplus/deficit position.

The balance sheet shows all assets and liabilities held by trusts. However, trusts do not report the source of these assets, i.e. it is not possible to determine what proportion of cash held relates to the PSF.

■ NHS: Negligence

Jonathan Ashworth:

[245798]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many litigation claims have been brought against the NHS as a result of a problem with (a) equipment, (b) technologies and (c) the NHS estate; how many of those claims were successful; and what were the total awards were for those claims in each financial year since 2012-13.

Seema Kennedy:

NHS Resolution handles clinical negligence claims and non-clinical negligence claims on behalf of National Health Service organisations and independent sector providers of NHS care in England.

The question has been interpreted as relating to non-clinical negligence claims.

NHS Resolution manages three non-clinical negligence schemes under the heading of the Risk Pooling Schemes for Trusts:

- Property Expenses Schemes which covers 'first party' losses such as property damage and theft, for incidents on or after 1 April 1999; and
- the Liabilities to Third Parties Scheme which covers non-clinical claims such as public and employers' liability.

In addition, NHS Resolution manages one other non-clinical scheme:

- Department of Health and Social Care Non-clinical, which covers non-clinical negligence liabilities that have transferred to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care following the abolition of any relevant health bodies.

The following table shows the number of claims received each year in relation to problems with equipment.

YEAR INCIDENT WAS RAISED	NUMBER OF CLAIMS RECEIVED
2012/13	4,566
2013/14	4,367
2014/15	3,760
2015/16	2,726
2016/17	1,725
2017/18	590
2018/19	98

The following table shows the amounts paid out during each financial year for claims relating to problems with equipment. The entries refer to when payments were made and does not necessarily relate to the financial year an incident occurred.

FINANCIAL YEAR	AMOUNTS PAID OUT FOR CLAIMS RELATING TO PROBLEMS WITH EQUIPMENT
2012/13	£8,204,771
2013/14	£7,014,972
2014/15	£8,726,029
2015/16	£7,936,048
2016/17	£8,436,601
2017/18	£7,895,749
2018/19	£9,154,852

In relation to problems with technologies and problems with the NHS estate, NHS Resolution has advised that it does not have the information in the format requested.

■ Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust: Correspondence

Rosie Cooper:

[\[245723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the planned timescale is for Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for West Lancashire of 12 February 2019 on eye care.

Stephen Hammond:

Silas Nicholls, chief executive of Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust, has informed us that a response to the letter of 12 February was sent on 23 April 2019.

■ Urinary Tract Infections

Catherine West: [\[245919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the cost to NHS Trusts in England of (a) urinary tract infections and (b) blocked catheters in 2018.

Seema Kennedy:

The data is not collected in the format requested.

Catherine West: [\[245920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many cases of urinary tract infection there have been in each NHS Trust in England in 2018.

Seema Kennedy:

The data is not collected in the format requested.

HOME OFFICE**■ Crimes of Violence**

Sir Edward Davey: [\[245574\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many analyses his Department has made since 2015 of the effect of decreased funding for the police on levels of serious violence; and what the conclusions of those analyses were.

Sir Edward Davey: [\[245575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many analyses his Department has made since 2015 of the effect of decreased funding for youth services on levels of serious violence; and what the conclusions of those analyses were.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government's Serious Violence Strategy published in April last year sets out our analysis of the trends and drivers of rises in violent crime. The strategy is clear that there are a range of factors driving increases in serious violence most notably changes in the drugs market. The focus of the strategy is on early intervention and prevention, together with a robust law enforcement response. The action delivered includes:

- Our Early Intervention Youth Fund of £22m which is already supporting 29 projects in England and Wales to deliver interventions to young people at risk of criminal involvement, gang exploitation and county lines
 - A new National County Lines Co-ordination Centre to tackle violent and exploitative criminal activity associated with county lines
 - The new Offensive Weapons Bill to strengthen legislation on fire-arms, knives and corrosive substances which has now completed its passage through Parliament
 - Delivering our national knife crime media campaign - #knifefree - to raise awareness of the consequences of knife crime
- On 2 October 2018 the Home Secretary announced further measures to address violent crime in the UK including:

The new £200 million Youth Endowment Fund which will be delivered over 10 years and will support interventions with children and young people at risk of involvement in crime and violence, and which started this month. • An Independent Review of Drug Misuse, to be chaired by Dame Carol Black, which will look into ways in which drugs are fuelling serious violence • A consultation on a new legal duty to underpin a 'public health' approach to tackling serious violence. This consultation launched on 1 April 2019. On 13 March the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced further funding of £100 million in 2019/20 to help tackle the rise in serious violence. Two thirds of the funding will enable priority forces to immediately begin planning to put in place the additional capacity they need and the other third of the funding will be invested in Violence Reduction Units, bringing together a range of agencies to develop a multi-agency approach in preventing serious violence altogether. The initial allocation to forces of £51 million was announced on 17 April.

In addition to this funding, in 2019/20, total police funding will increase by around £970m including council tax precept, additional pensions funding and national investment, the most substantial investment in policing since 2010. The settlement for local government for 2019/20 will also mean that core spending power increases from £45.1bn in 2018/19 to £46.6bn in 2019/20. This settlement sees a real-terms increase in resources available to local authorities.

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[245577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which (a) Police and Crime Commissioners and (b) Chief Constables have informed him in the last year that they require more funding to tackle serious violent crime.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Home Secretary has regular meetings with senior police officers and Police and Crime Commissioners in which they discuss a range of issues, including serious violence.

We have engaged closely with the police about the additional complex demands they face, including from serious violence. In response, we increased funding for policing by over £1 billion this year, including the £100 million announced at Spring Statement to tackle serious violence which includes £80m of new funding from the Treasury.

This additional funding follows the Home Secretary's roundtable on 6 March with senior police officers from Metropolitan Police, West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, West Midlands, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, where they discussed what more can be done to tackle serious violence and the resources they needed to fight violent crime.

The majority of this additional investment will go towards supporting police forces where violent crime is impacting the most, to take immediate action to suppress the violence we are seeing, to make our streets safer. Officials are engaging with the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners in relation to this funding.

Last year we also provided £4.6m of Special Grant funding to Bedfordshire Police to support Operation Boson, the force's specialist response to gang, gun and knife crime.

■ **Deportation: Kenya and Tanzania**

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[245600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Bajuni asylum seekers have been deported to (a) Kenya and (b) Tanzania in each of the last three years.

Caroline Nokes:

The number of enforced returns from the UK, country of nationality, destination (Home/EU/other), and whether the return is asylum-related is published in table rt_04 (returns data tables, volume 3). The number of returns from the UK by country of destination, and whether the return is asylum-related is published in table rt_05 (returns data tables, volume 5)

The latest data are available in 'Immigration Statistics, year ending December 2018', available from the GOV.uk website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-december-2018>.

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.

Asylum-related returns relate to cases where there has been an asylum claim at some stage prior to the return. This will include asylum seekers whose asylum claims have been refused and who have exhausted any rights of appeal, those returned under third-country provisions, as well as those granted asylum/protection, but removed for other reasons (such as criminality).

Data on the number of Bajuni (or other ethnic groups) asylum seekers is not separately identifiable from the published statistics and would involve a manual review of individual cases to identify.

■ **Fire and Rescue Services: County Durham**

Grahame Morris:

[\[245752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what fire protection plans are in place to protect world heritage sites in County Durham.

Grahame Morris:

[\[245753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many specialist (a) aerial ladder platforms and (b) high rise platforms are available in County Durham to respond

within 15 minutes of a fire at (i) world heritage sites and (ii) high rise buildings in that county.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England sets out the Government's expectations of Fire and Rescue Authorities. As such, it reflects the Government's firm commitment to the principles of localism and decentralisation: giving Fire and Rescue Authorities the freedom to determine and articulate their priorities for service delivery in accordance with their assessment of local risk (reflected in their Integrated Risk Management Plan); and to increase their accountability to the communities they serve.

Local operational planning and decision making, including fire protection plans, and specialist fleet and equipment are the responsibility of the Chief Fire Officer.

■ **Home Office: Newspaper Press**

Sir Edward Davey:

[\[245578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on how many occasions in the past year he has (a) been interviewed by and (b) written an op-ed for (i) The Times and The Sunday Times, (ii) The Daily Telegraph, (iii) The Guardian, (iv) The Sun, (v) The Daily Mail and The Mail on Sunday, (vi) The Mirror, (vii) The Daily Express, (viii) The Evening Standard and (ix) the Metro.

Victoria Atkins:

Over the last 12 months, the Secretary of State for the Home Department has been interviewed by the following publications on one occasion.

The Times/The Sunday Times, the Daily Telegraph, the Metro, the Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday.

He has not been interviewed by the Guardian, Sun, Mirror, Daily Express or Evening Standard.

He has written opeds for the following publications on the following number of occasions.

The Times/The Sunday Times: 2 The Daily Telegraph: 5 The Guardian: 1 The Sun: 1 The Daily Mail/ Mail on Sunday: 2 The Daily Express: 4

He was not written any opeds for the Evening Standard, The Mirror or Metro.

■ **Immigration Controls: British National (Overseas)**

Stuart C. McDonald:

[\[245815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether British National (Overseas) Passport Holders from Hong Kong should be able to use the United Kingdom's e-passport gates.

Stuart C. McDonald:

[\[245816\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the criteria are for selecting which passport holders have access to e-passport gates; and what assessment he has made of the potential merits of granting access to those gates to British National (Overseas) Passport Holders.

Caroline Nokes:

The Government is prepared to consider whether British National (Over-seas) passport holders can be added to the list of those able to use ePass-port gates routinely. In doing so, they will be assessed against the full range of factors used to determine ePassport gate access including immigration abuse, security, cooperation on border matters, prosperity etc). If this group are found to be suitable, we will endeavor to add them at the next available opportunity.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals

Tom Brake:

[\[245547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate he has made of the number of EU citizens in the UK who are eligible to apply for Settled Status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

Tom Brake:

[\[245548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate he has made of the number of EU citizens in the UK who have applied for Settled Status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

Caroline Nokes:

Over 400,000 EU Citizens have applied to the Scheme so far.

An estimated 3.4m EEA nationals currently resident in the UK are eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme (based on Home Office internal analysis of ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data for year October 2017 to September 2018).

The Impact Assessment for the EU Settlement Scheme was published in July 2018 (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukia/2018/116/pdfs/ukia_20180116_en.pdf) and an updated version was published in March 2019 (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukia/2019/74/pdfs/ukia_20190074_en.pdf).

The Home Office has estimated that the total number of EEA citizens and their family members eligible to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme by the end of the planned implementation period on 31 December 2020 is likely to be between 3.5 million and 4.1 million. This estimate is based on a number of assumptions as to how the size of the eligible EEA population will change over the period. The range should be considered indicative as future migration flows can be affected by many factors and are difficult to predict.

Two reports on the private testing phases have already been published (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-private-beta-1>

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

Paul Blomfield:

[245763]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 28 March 2019 to Question 236486, how many and what proportion of applicants had received a refund as of 15 April 2019.

Caroline Nokes:

We have processed all relevant refunds through Home Office systems. We cannot advise on how many refunds have been received by customers, as this depends on the individual's bank/card issuer and whether the payment has credited yet, and some will take longer than others. We have bespoke support arrangements in place for any customers who believe there is an issue with their refund. Further information on refunds can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eu-settlement-scheme-application-fee-refunds>

Luke Pollard:

[246001]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps he is taking to make the EU Settlement Scheme application available on operating systems other than Android.

Caroline Nokes:

EU citizens make a huge contribution to our economy and society, and we want them to stay. The EU Settlement Scheme enables them to do so. The application process is short and user-friendly, and is accessible on any smartphone, tablet or computer with an internet browser, including Apple devices.

The 'EU Exit: Identity Document Check' app is an optional aspect of the service which allows applicants to prove their identity remotely

The Home Secretary confirmed at the start of April, that Apple will be making the necessary changes and the EU Exit: Identity Document Check' app will be working on their devices by the end of the year

Applicants can also post their document and have it returned immediately up-on inspection or visit one of 50 locations to have their document checked.

If a person wishes to use a family, friend or employer's Android device until the app is available on Apple then it is perfectly safe and secure for them to do so.

■ Immigration: Windrush Generation

Afzal Khan:

[245990]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answers of 4 April 2019 to Questions 239289 and 239288 on Immigration: Windrush Generation, and with reference to page 8 of the December update submitted to the Home Affairs Select Committee on the work of the Department in connection with Windrush, if he will publish figures on the outcome of the over 1000 cases that are outstanding.

Caroline Nokes:

Pursuant to the Answers of 4 April 2019 to Questions 239289 and 239288, the Home Secretary will continue to provide the Home Affairs Select Committee with monthly updates on the work of the department in connection with Windrush.

The updates include information on all decisions made by the Taskforce, confirmation of status, grants of citizenship and NTL or ILR and refusals (page 8) and can be found at the following link, which includes the most recent letter to the Chair of HASC sent in March 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/correspondence-on-the-work-of-the-home-office-windrush>

Knives: Crime**Alex Sobel:****[245977]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of knives carried on the streets in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government is very concerned about increases in knife crime and its impact on victims, families and communities. The action we are taking is set out in our Serious Violence Strategy and includes new legislation in the Offensive Weapons Bill, raising awareness among young people of the dangers of carrying a knife, supporting local early intervention projects and continuing police action under Operation Sceptre. The latest anti-knife crime week of action under Operation Sceptre took place from 11-18 March.

We are encouraging the police to use stop and search. It is a vital policing tool when used correctly and officers have the Government's full support to use these powers in a targeted way that is fair, lawful and effective. The Home Secretary has announced he is relaxing voluntary best practice guidance around the use of Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, which allows officers to stop and search anyone in a designated area in anticipation of serious violence.

The changes will allow the police to more quickly and effectively use these powers in anticipation of serious violence, safeguarding the public. We have also listened to the police request that we introduce new Knife Crime Prevention Orders to help them to divert those involved in knife crime away from a violent lifestyle. The Government introduced the new Order in the Offensive Weapons Bill, currently awaiting Royal Assent.

The Offensive Weapons Bill includes specific new knives offences, in particular making it an offence to possess certain offensive weapons in private, and stopping knives being sent to residential addresses after they are bought online unless the seller has arrangements with a delivery company to verify age. These measures are designed to help the police in their re-sponse to knife crime.

In addition to supporting the police on law enforcement, our Serious Violence Strategy stresses the importance of early intervention to tackle the root causes of serious violence and provide young people with the skills and resilience to lead productive lives free from violence. This is why we are providing £22 million to support early intervention and prevention projects through our Early Intervention Youth Fund which is already supporting 29 projects in England and Wales, including the Box Clever project in Humber-side.

We are also supporting a national knife crime media campaign - #knifefree - to raise awareness of the consequences of knife crime. Its initial campaign was launched in March 2018 across England and Wales and activity included video on demand, street posters, social media, digital audio and video and partner engagement. The latest campaign went live on 1 April 2019.

Last October, the Government also announced a new £200 million Youth Endowment Fund to be delivered over 10 years to support interventions with children and young people at risk of involvement in crime and violence, focusing on those most at risk to steer them away from becoming serious offenders. This is now up and running and the charity Impetus, working in partnership with the Early Intervention Foundation and Social Investment Business, is operating the Fund.

In addition, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the Spring Statement on 13 March that there will be £100 million additional funding for the police in 2019/20 to tackle serious violence, including £80m of new funding from the Treasury. The majority of the investment will largely go towards supporting police forces most affected by the violence we are seeing, but the funding will also support Violence Reduction Units, bringing together a range of agencies, including health, education, social services and others, to develop a multi-agency approach to preventing serious violence.

The Prime Minister also hosted the Serious Youth Violence Summit from 1 – 4 April that underlined the whole of Government approach we are taking to tackle this issue. At this summit, the Prime Minister announced she would be chairing a new Ministerial Taskforce, supported by a dedicated Cabinet Office team, to oversee the cross-government programme of action.

On 1 April, we also launched our consultation on a new legal duty to ensure public bodies take action to prevent serious violence. The consultation will close on 28 May. It explores how a legal duty will support effective multi-agency work. It is open to everyone to respond and can be found here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/serious-violence-new-legal-duty-to-support-multi-agency-action>.

■ Offenders: EU Nationals

Preet Kaur Gill: [\[245930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU Foreign National Offenders, whose last recorded prison sentence was less than 12 months, have been removed from the UK in each of the last five years.

Preet Kaur Gill: [\[245931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU Foreign National Offenders, whose last recorded prison sentence was greater than four years, have been removed from the UK in each of the last five years.

Preet Kaur Gill: [\[245932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU Foreign National Offenders, whose last recorded prison sentence was between 12 months and four years have been removed from the UK in each of the last five years.

Caroline Nokes:

Providing the information requested would require a manual check of individual records which could only be done at disproportionate cost.

The Home Office does publish quarterly statistics on the numbers of EU Foreign Nationals removed from the UK. This data can be found by accessing the following link:

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

Preet Kaur Gill: [\[245933\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many non-UK EU nationals received a (a) caution, (b) community order and (c) another court disposal in each of the last five years.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The information requested is not held centrally by the Home Office.

■ Police Custody: Mental Health

Andrea Jenkyns: [\[245893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the number of forensic beds available for people with severe mental health conditions held in police custody.

Mr Nick Hurd:

As mentioned in Professor Sir Simon Wessely's review of the Mental Health Act, the Home Office is aware that some individuals who require detention under the Mental Health Act for in-patient assessment or treatment are left for extended periods in police custody pending identification of a suitable bed. The Home Office is working with the Department of Health and Social Care to ensure that local Clinical

Commissioning Groups fulfil their responsibilities to put arrangements in place for the reception of patients in cases of special urgency

■ **Police: Rural Areas**

Daniel Kawczynski: [\[245733\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason rural police forces receive less police funding than urban police forces.

Mr Nick Hurd:

There is no specific definition of “rural” or “urban” forces used by the Home Office in determining the distribution of police funding. Many police forces contain a mixture of urban and rural areas. Some of the socio-demographic indicators used to determine the distribution of police funding by force area include measures of population density, while a small proportion of total funding is distributed based on sparsity.

More information on the distribution formula is included in the Police Grant Report published annually at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-finance>

■ **Religious Buildings: Security**

Matthew Pennycook: [\[245914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Minister for Security and Economic Crime on 18 March 2019, Official Report, column 793, whether he has reviewed the funding for protected security measures for mosques.

Victoria Atkins:

On 19 March 2019, the Home Secretary announced a boost in funding for the hate crime Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme to £1.6 million for 2019/20 (including for Mosques). This is double the amount awarded in 2018/19. £5 million over three years has also been committed to providing security training to places of worship in England and Wales. This will enable staff and volunteers to develop the security understanding necessary to make physical security measures work effectively.

In addition to this, the Home Office announced on 19 April 2019 that it is supporting Faith Associates to provide security training and advice to Muslim places of worship in advance of Ramadan. This short-term, two-month project sits alongside the wider £5m fund for security training.

More widely, the Home Secretary has committed to consulting with faith communities to understand what more could and should be done to help protect faith communities at their places of worship. We are working with groups such as the Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group, Tell Mama and those representing other faiths as part of this consultation.

This increase in funding marks a significant change in our funding for protective security for Mosques and other places of worship. If the threat changes or there is a sense that more money is needed, we will always look at how we should respond.

■ Serious Violence Taskforce

Sir Edward Davey: [\[245576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many times the serious violence taskforce has met since its creation in April 2018; and how many members of the taskforce attended each meeting.

Victoria Atkins:

The Serious Violence Taskforce was established to oversee and drive implementation of Serious Violence Strategy launched in April 2018. The Taskforce has met nine times, on 26 April, 11 June, 17 July, 22 October, 21 November, 9 January 2019, 11 February, 26 March and 24 April.

Chaired by the Home Secretary, the Taskforce brings together Ministers, Members of Parliament, the Mayor of London, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Director General of the National Crime Agency, other senior police leaders, and public sector and voluntary sector chief executives.

■ Stalking: Victims

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[245605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support is in place to help victims of stalking.

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.

Our National Statement of Expectations for Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), published in December 2016, sets out the standards which local commissioners should meet when putting in place services to respond to VAWG, including stalking. This includes the need to put the victim at the centre of service delivery.

The Government part-funds the National Stalking Helpline, operated by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, which has helped over 30,000 people since its inception. We made three grants under the Tampon Tax Fund of 2017 for projects to support victims of stalking – for example, we provided £240,000 to Black Country Women's Aid to run a pilot project to develop the first specialist support service for victims of stalking in the West Midlands.

Through a grant of £4.1m under the Police Transformation Fund, the Government is also funding the Multi-Agency Stalking Intervention Programme. This aims, across

three sites, to test and compare strategies to reduce recidivism on the part of stalking perpetrators and to develop best practice. This should improve the response to victims of stalking, ensuring that they receive consistently high-quality service and improving their satisfaction with police and across the criminal justice system.

The Stalking Protection Act 2019, which received Royal Assent on 15th March, will introduce civil Stalking Protection Orders. These will provide protection to victims at an early stage. Restraining orders can also be issued to those who have been prosecuted for stalking offences, to prevent continued stalking behaviour.

■ Stop and Search

Janet Daby:

[\[246012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to his announcement on 1 April 2019 on the increased use of stop and search to tackle violent crime, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the Home Office research paper, Do initiatives involving substantial increases in stop and search reduce crime? Assessing the impact of Operation BLUNT 2, published in March 2016.

Mr Nick Hurd:

Police have been clear that the power to stop and search under Section 60 (s60) of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 is a powerful tool to combat serious violence. Over 600 people have been arrested for carrying weapons under s60 searches since 2010/11. Every weapon off our streets is a success and helps protect those communities who disproportionately experience serious violence.

On 31 March 2019, the Government announced that we will make it simpler for the police in the seven forces particularly affected by violent crime to use section 60 (area-wide) stop and search powers where they reasonably believe that an incident involving serious violence may occur. The changes are designed to allow the police to use these powers more quickly and effectively in anticipation of serious violence, safeguarding the public. These relaxations will apply for twelve months, with a review at the halfway point, in the West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), South Wales, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, and Merseyside.

The Home Office paper 'Do initiatives involving substantial increases in stop and search reduce crime? Assessing the impact of Operation BLUNT 2' was published in March 2016. The paper reviewed the impact of a substantial increase in stop and search, including those under s60, from an average base level of stop and search which is higher than current levels.

Across the MPS there was a near threefold increase in weapons searches from 70,378 in 2007/08 to 205,704 in 2008/09. The study found that large surges in stop and search activity at the borough level had no discernible crime-reducing effects. However, the study concluded that it did not necessarily follow that stop and search activity does not reduce crime, either through more localised impacts, or through the existence of a 'base level' of stop and search activity where the tactic does have an effect.

Since 2010, the total number of stop and searches in England and Wales has decreased by 78% from 1.3 million in 2010/11 to fewer than 300,000 searches in 2017/18. The number of searches has also decreased by 72% compared to the five-year period prior to the commencement of Operation Blunt 2 in 2008. In addition, weapon specific searches in the MPS fell by 81%, from 136,126 in 2010/11 to 26,188 in 2017/18.

The large decrease in stop and searches, including searches for weapons, changes the operational context significantly and means it is not possible to make meaningful inferences from the 2016 research findings to the current s60 pilot.

■ Travellers: Caravan Sites

Laura Pidcock:

[245985]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 March 2019 to Question 226712 on Travellers: Caravan Sites, what steps his Department is taking during that review to assess the effect of criminalising the act of trespassing when setting up an unauthorised encampment on compliance with legislation on the rights of the child.

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.

■ Visas: Iran

Tulip Siddiq:

[245911]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for visit visas his Department received from Iranian nationals in each of the last four years; and how many of those applications were refused.

Caroline Nokes:

Applications for visit visas are considered against Appendix V of the Immigration Rules and on a case by case basis. Detailed information on how UK Visas and Immigration makes decisions on visitor cases is published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visit-guidance>

Information on total entry clearance visas (the majority of which are visitor visas) broken down by nationality and outcome (grants, refusals, withdrawals, lapsed) is published in the quarterly Immigration Statistics Visas volume 1 table vi_02_q at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-december-2018/list-of-tables>

■ Windrush Generation: Criminal Records

Mr David Lammy: [\[245579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people of the Windrush generation have been refused UK citizenship in each year since 2010 as a result of having a criminal record.

Mr David Lammy: [\[245580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Windrush generation people were refused UK citizenship as a result of a (a) prison sentence of (i) over four years, (ii) between two and four years, (iii) between 12 months and two years, (iv) 12 months or less, (b) community order, (c) fine, (d) caution, (e) reprimand and (f) formal warning.

Caroline Nokes:

We are unable to provide the information requested as this would involve undertaking a manual trawl of individual cases which would incur disproportionate cost.

The number of overall refusals and those refused on criminality grounds for all citizenship casework is published as part of the Migration Transparency data, available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-december-2018/list-of-tables#citizenship - cz_09](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-december-2018/list-of-tables#citizenship-cz_09) for all refusals of citizenship by main reason.

Additionally, the Home Secretary provides regular updates to the Home Affairs Select Committee on the work of the Department in connection with Windrush. These updates can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/correspondence-on-the-work-of-the-home-office-windrush>

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Buildings: Insulation

Mr Steve Reed: [\[245802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department plans to undertake an assessment of the number of buildings over 18 metres in height with non-Aluminium Composite cladding.

Kit Malthouse:

We are conducting a series of non-Aluminium Composite Material cladding tests and we expect the final results to be available by the Summer. A decision on action to be taken to supplement the general information we have on the prevalence of other cladding systems will be taken in the light of the results of these tests.

Mr Steve Reed:[\[245803\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 11 April 2019 to Question 242144 on Buildings: Insulation, if he will publish the revised start date for the testing of non-aluminium composite materials as a result of the damage to the test rig.

Kit Malthouse:

We are advised that testing of non-aluminium composite materials, should start in the week of 29 April 2019, following completion of calibration tests.

Mr Steve Reed:[\[245804\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 11 March 2019 to Question 229147 on Buildings: Insulation, whether the BS 8414 test has now been carried out; and if his Department will publish on completion of that test the (a) full report and (b) video of that test.

Kit Malthouse:

This test has not yet been carried out. Details of the test results will be published in due course.

■ Community Housing Fund**Frank Field:**[\[246009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much funding is currently available in the Community Housing Fund; and how local communities in Birkenhead can bid to access that funding.

Kit Malthouse:

A budget of £97.4 million has been established for the Community Housing Fund in 2019/20. This includes £37.4 million carried forward from 2018/19. Local communities in Birkenhead – as elsewhere in England outside London – may apply for this funding through Homes England. Contact details for all Homes England Operating Areas are given in the prospectus for the Homes England Community Housing Fund prospectus, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-housing-fund>

A similar programme, funded by my Department, is being delivered in London by the Greater London Authority.

■ Housing: Construction

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[245536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what guidelines he provides to (a) local authorities and (b) housing developers on requirements for (i) full-fibre connectivity for new build developments and (ii) electric vehicle charging points.

Kit Malthouse:

The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that full fibre connections to existing and new developments should be supported by local planning policies, and that developments should be designed to allow the charging of electric vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

Part R of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations sets requirements for the physical infrastructure for high-speed electronic communications networks for new buildings or when major renovation works are undertaken. Guidance is given in Approved Document R.

In the Government's Road to Zero Strategy, we committed to consulting on introducing new Building Regulations requirements for electric vehicle charging provision for both domestic and non-domestic buildings. We plan to consult as soon as possible on this matter.

■ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Brexit

Valerie Vaz:

[\[245775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department has deprioritised any Statutory Instruments in relation to the UK leaving the EU; and if he will publish the criteria his Department uses to deprioritise those Instruments.

Jake Berry:

Our objective has always been to have a functioning statute book in place by Exit Day and to ensure that the most critical secondary legislation was made by this point.

My Department successfully made all of its intended EU exit SIs before April 12. My Department will continue to assess the implications of our departure from the EU on our legislation, and will continue to make the necessary amendments to ensure the a fully functioning statute book.

■ Urban Areas: Older People

Vernon Coaker:

[\[245608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the conclusion of the 2018 research conducted by Buffel, Phillipson, Scharf entitled, Ageing in urban environments: Developing age-friendly Cities, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the planning of (a) shopping areas and (b) high streets caters for the needs of older people.

Kit Malthouse:

The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible, and that a positive approach should be taken towards the management and adaptation of town centres. This can include assessing how accessibility and the public realm can be improved for the benefit of the whole community, including for individuals who have specific needs.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Ebola****Stephen Twigg:**[\[245568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking to ensure compliance with (a) UN Security Council Resolution 2286 and (b) the protection of medical facilities and personnel in the relation to the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK will always uphold international laws, use our influence to encourage others to do likewise, seek to condemn those that do not, and push for accountability to abused populations. The UK co-sponsored UNSC Resolution 2286 in 2016, and our support for this agenda remains steadfast. We are committed to respecting and promoting compliance with International Humanitarian Law and condemning serious violations and abuses, including the protection of medical and humanitarian personnel and their assets. We strongly condemn the attacks and threats of violence that have targeted the response to the Ebola outbreak in the DRC. In particular, we express our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Dr Richard Valery Mouzoko Kiboung, a WHO health worker, who was murdered in an attack on 19 April.

The UK is a major donor to the Ebola response in DRC and works closely with partners on the front line. There is a clear and pressing need to protect frontline health workers, Ebola patients and others involved while being sensitive to community dynamics in an area which has faced decades of conflict.

Mr Jim Cunningham:[\[245602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what estimate her Department has made of the number of ebola cases in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Harriett Baldwin:

As of 21 April, the WHO estimate that there have been 1340 Ebola cases in the DRC, 1274 of which are confirmed and 66 are probable. However, given difficulties with surveillance and the high proportion of community deaths, epidemiologists suspect that there may be even more people affected.

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[245603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to support efforts to limit the number of Ebola cases in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the largest in the country's history and the second largest on record. The UK continues to be one of the leading supporters of the response, providing both £33.9 million in funding so far and technical expertise to the WHO and others. Moreover, given the risk of Ebola spreading across borders remains significant, we are the leading donor for regional preparedness providing £14 million so far. Preventing the spread of the disease not only saves lives but also provides the stability necessary for economic growth and security.

With case numbers continuing to rise and the response not yet under control, and ongoing conflict in the region, it is as important as ever to maintain international momentum in tackling the outbreak. Other donors must now step up in terms of funding and the response must double down on efforts to manage the outbreak effectively, including engaging communities effectively to ensure the range of activities needed to break the transmission chain can be carried out.

■ **Department for International Development: Secondment**

Preet Kaur Gill:

[\[245928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 25 March 2019 to Question 243538 on Department for International Development: Secondment, what the (a) mean, (b) median, (c) longest and (d) shortest length of secondment is for those staff already deployed.

Harriett Baldwin:

In light of recent developments, DFID is working closely with other government departments and the Cabinet Office to plan for the return of deployed staff. This is an ongoing process and as such we are not yet in a position to answer this question.

■ **Syria: Migrant Camps**

Stephen Twigg:

[\[245561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment her Department has made of the humanitarian situation in the Rukban camp in Southern Syria.

Stephen Twigg:

[\[245562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to support internally displaced people in Rubkan camp in Southern Syria.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK remains very concerned about the humanitarian situation of the estimated 41,000 people stranded at Rukban camp. DFID engages regularly with the UN to understand the latest assessments of the humanitarian needs of those in the camp – these needs remain high, particularly given the lack of sustained access provided to humanitarian actors. Together with our international partners, we continue to call on the Syrian Regime and its backers to facilitate sustained humanitarian access to the camp.

DFID is continuing to support essential humanitarian assistance to Rukban camp, including contributing to the provision of clean water and medical support for the UN clinic. In 2018 alone, DFID funding to those at Rukban provided 8,000 children with malnutrition screening, 5,000 children with vaccines, 2,500 children with medical consultations and contributed to the provision of safe water and hygiene kits for 50,000 people.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ Ceramics: USA**

Ruth Smeeth: [\[244167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what representations he has made to the US to oppose retaliatory duties of up to 100 per cent against British ceramic products.

Ruth Smeeth: [\[244168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment he has made of the potential effect on the British ceramic industry of US trade action against EU products.

George Hollingbery:

The UK is working closely with the EU and European partners to support a negotiated settlement to the Airbus and Boeing disputes. Through the EU, we are challenging in the WTO the US's claim that it is entitled to impose retaliatory tariffs on the UK. However, it would not be appropriate for the UK to make representations to the US on specific products whilst we are contesting the right of the US to impose any tariffs at all.

We are clear that a tariff war would not be in the interests of UK, EU or US industry. We agree with EU and others that we do not want to see the disputes escalate further. The UK will continue to work closely with the EU on next steps.

Ruth Smeeth: [\[910522\]](#)

What assessment he has made of the potential economic effect of US retaliatory trade actions on the UK ceramics sector.

George Hollingbery:

We are clear that a tariff war would not be in the interests of UK, EU or US industry. The UK continues to work closely with the EU and European partners to support a negotiated settlement to the Airbus and Boeing disputes.

Department for International Trade: Brexit**Valerie Vaz:**[\[245773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether his Department has deprioritised any Statutory Instruments in relation to the UK leaving the EU; and if he will publish the criteria his Department uses to deprioritise those Instruments.

George Hollingbery:

Our objective has always been to have a functioning statute book in place by Exit Day and to ensure that the most critical secondary legislation was made by this point.

Each SI was carefully considered on a case-by-case basis.

The considerations and assessments made have meant that the Government has been able to lay the critical secondary legislation required before we exit the EU.

The laying of EU Exit SIs allows Parliament to fulfil its essential scrutiny role. The exact nature of this scrutiny, and the steps required before an SI completes its passage, is dependent on the type of SI. The Government remains confident of passing the necessary legislation required to ensure a functioning statute book by exit day.

Overseas Trade**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**[\[910521\]](#)

What recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Transport on the potential effect on UK international trade of improving the Reading to Gatwick Airport road corridor.

George Hollingbery:

The Department for International Trade makes the case for high-quality infrastructure across all parts of the UK to ensure our ambition of becoming a truly global trading nation as we leave the EU can be achieved.

Overseas Trade: India**Bob Blackman:**[\[910520\]](#)

What steps he is taking to increase the UK's proportion of global trade with India.

Graham Stuart:

Exports to India were up nearly 20% in 2018 on the previous year, totalling over £7.9 billion.

We have a number of initiatives to strengthen our bilateral trade relationship with India, including the Joint Working Group on Trade, which recently met in March.

Only last night I was at the Grant Thornton tracker event with the Confederation of Indian Industry, to celebrate the success of some of the top Indian companies in the UK.

■ Trade Agreements: China

Scott Mann: [\[244166\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will make an assessment of whether the UK would have to have a trade deal with China in the event it joined NAFTA.

George Hollingbery:

The UK does not comment on the content of agreements signed by other countries, such as the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which is the agreement from the renegotiated NAFTA.

The UK is committed to strengthening our trade relationships with all countries, including the US, Mexico, Canada and China.

■ Trade etc in Dual-use Items and Firearms etc (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

Judith Cummins: [\[244135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to the Trade etc. in Dual-Use Items and Firearms etc. (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, on what basis the Government will determine what constitutes a human rights violation.

Graham Stuart:

After EU Exit export licence applications will continue to be assessed in the same way as they are now, on a case-by-case basis against the eight criteria set out in the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria.

Criterion 2 covers the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the country of final destination as well as respect by that country for international humanitarian law. A licence would not be granted if to do so was inconsistent with the Criteria.

The Criteria are statutory guidance issued under section 9 of the Export Control Act 2002 as most recently announced to Parliament in a Written Ministerial Statement on 25 March 2014. After the UK leaves the EU, the Criteria will remain in force until such time as any new or amended guidance is announced to Parliament.

■ Trade: Developing Countries

Jeremy Lefroy: [\[910519\]](#)

What plans he has to ensure that the poorest countries in the world are able to take part fairly in global trade.

Graham Stuart:

We believe that the global, rules-based system is the most important protection poorer countries have. We will champion their interests through the WTO, enact a UK

trade preferences scheme through the Taxation Cross Border Trade Act and then further improve their access to the UK market after we've left the EU.

Sir Desmond Swayne:

[\[910523\]](#)

What plans he has to ensure that the poorest countries in the world are able to take part fairly in global trade.

Graham Stuart:

We believe that the global, rules-based system is the most important protection poorer countries have. We will champion their interests through the WTO, enact a UK trade preferences scheme through the Taxation Cross Border Trade Act and then further improve their access to the UK market after we've left the EU.

JUSTICE

■ Debt Collection

Rachel Reeves:

[\[245762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when his Department plans to publish its response to the call for evidence on the Review of enforcement agent (bailiff) reforms.

Lucy Frazer:

The Call for Evidence on the review of the enforcement agent (bailiff) reforms closed on 17 February 2019. The Ministry of Justice is considering the responses that we received to it and the recommendations that the Justice Committee made in its recent report about enforcement agents. We will respond to the Call for Evidence in the summer.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Domestic Abuse Bill (Draft): Northern Ireland

Stella Creasy:

[\[245778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what discussions she has had with the Department of Justice in Northern Ireland on the Domestic Abuse bill.

John Penrose:

Under the terms of the EFEF Act, the Department of Justice in Northern Ireland has been able to continue work in line with pre-existing policy decisions on Domestic Abuse, in the absence of a functioning Assembly. Officials are liaising closely with the Home Office and Ministry of Justice to discuss a new Domestic Abuse Offence in Northern Ireland. The NIO is liaising with all departments so that the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and I can be kept up to date with progress.

TRANSPORT**■ Aircraft: Accidents****Mr Clive Betts:**[\[245611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 15 April 2019 to Question 242018 on Aircraft: Accidents, whether he plans to have discussions with representatives of the football industry on the Piper PA-46 Malibu crash of 21 January 2019.

Jesse Norman:

Whilst the investigation into this accident is under way, the Secretary of State has no plans to hold discussions with representatives of the football industry on the Piper PA-46 crash of 21 January 2019.

We would encourage anyone with relevant evidence on this accident to report it to the Air Accident Investigation Branch.

■ Aviation: Certification**Mr Clive Betts:**[\[245612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will require commercial air transport operations to demonstrate to passengers that flights are operated by people with an air operator certificate.

Jesse Norman:

Licensed commercial operators already have to demonstrate to passengers that flights are operated by people with an Air Operator Certificate (AOC) and produce proof of their permissions.

Any individual, organisation or company that intends to undertake commercial air transport is required by law to hold an AOC and an Operating Licence (OL). It is an offence to operate a commercial air transport flight without an AOC or OL. Ultimately it is the responsibility of the pilot in command of each flight to make sure it is operated legally.

The CAA has previously conducted campaigns to raise awareness of the dangers of illegal public transport operations, and to guide consumers on what to look for when chartering an aircraft to ensure the flight is legal. These campaigns have targeted specific sectors where the CAA believed illegal activity may be taking place. The aviation industry was directly involved in promoting these campaigns.

Following the tragic accident on 21 January, the CAA are planning further work to educate consumers about the rules, and potential risks of illegal charter flights.

■ Aviation: Licensing**Mr Clive Betts:**[\[245614\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to require all aircraft to display a notice detailing that they are licensed for such operations.

Jesse Norman:

The Government currently has no plans to require all aircraft to display a notice detailing that they are licensed for such operations.

Any individual, organisation or company that intends to undertake commercial air transport is required by law to hold an Air Operator Certificate (AOC) and an Operating Licence (OL). It is an offence to operate a commercial air transport flight without an AOC or OL. There is no requirement for the AOC to be displayed in the aircraft. However, it must be available to be inspected upon request by passengers and authorities along with the appropriate licence, aircraft registration document and maintenance certificate.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the pilot in command of each flight to make sure it is operated legally. As part of their initial training a pilot studies, and is examined on, air law. This covers the regulations to be met to carry fare paying passengers. A private pilot will therefore know that they do not have the necessary approvals to undertake a commercial flight.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has advised me that they do not believe that the introduction of a notice within the aircraft would be a deterrent to illegal activity taking place unless all passengers are aware of the legal requirements and potential impact of illegal public transport flying. Many aircraft can be used for both commercial and non-commercial flights and so on many occasions could be legally flown without the need for an AOC.

■ Aviation: Qualifications**Mr Clive Betts:****[245613]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will require operators of commercial flights to provide passengers with confirmation of the pilots eligibility to operate that flight.

Jesse Norman:

Any individual, organisation or company that intends to undertake commercial air transport is required by law to hold an Air Operator Certificate (AOC) and an Operating Licence (OL). It is an offence to operate a commercial air transport flight without an AOC or OL.

The AOC, aircraft registration, pilots licence and maintenance certificate are already required to be carried on each flight and to be able to be viewed by a passenger upon request.

The CAA has previously conducted campaigns to raise awareness of the dangers of illegal public transport operations, and to guide consumers on what to look for when chartering an aircraft to ensure the flight is legal. These campaigns have targeted specific sectors where the CAA believed illegal activity may be taking place. The aviation industry was directly involved in promoting these campaigns.

Following the tragic accident on 21 January, the CAA are planning further work to educate consumers about the rules, and potential risks of illegal charter flights.

■ Boating: Sewage

Stephen Morgan: [\[245955\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the disposal of sewerage from leisure boats into the ocean.

Stephen Morgan: [\[245956\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department made of the legality of the effect of sewerage discharge from leisure boats on the environmental health of (a) the ocean and (b) Portsmouth Harbour.

Stephen Morgan: [\[245957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to bring forward legislative proposals to make the discharge of sewerage from leisure boats into the ocean illegal.

Stephen Morgan: [\[245958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the number of pump-out sewerage facilities available to leisure crafts on the amount of untreated sewerage waste entering the ocean.

Stephen Morgan: [\[245959\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to increase the (a) number, (b) quality and (c) maintenance of pump-out sewerage facilities in marinas in (i) the UK and (ii) Portsmouth.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Department for Transport has not undertaken an assessment of the effect of the number of pump-out sewerage facilities available to leisure crafts on the amount of untreated sewerage waste entering the ocean.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency is responsible for the regulation of the prevention of pollution by sewage from ships. These regulations apply to ships engaged on international voyages over 400 gross tonnage and ships less than 400 gross tonnage which are certified to carry more than 15 persons. This means most leisure craft fall outside these regulations.

However, environmental awareness is promoted to the recreational boating sector through voluntary best practice such as the Green Blue created by British Marine and the Royal Yachting Association. Typically, marinas provide suitable facilities for their users, promoting environmental sustainability.

■ Bus Services: Finance

Frank Field: [\[245646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department makes available discretionary funding for the extension of operational hours of bus services in isolated and deprived communities.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

Local authorities have the power to subsidise bus services in isolated and deprived communities. This can include subsidising a service so that its hours of operation are extended. The majority of public funding for local bus services is provided via block grant to local authorities in England from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Department for Transport provides £250 million annually through the Bus Service Operators Grant to support bus services and supports local authority spending of £1 billion a year for free bus travel for older and disabled people.

■ Driving: Diabetes**Ruth George:**[\[245981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what (a) statutory requirements he is subject to in relation to and (b) what is the statutory basis for (i) the production of guidance on driving and diabetes and (ii) the appointment of an honorary medical advisory panel on driving and diabetes.

Jesse Norman:

The overarching legal requirements governing medical fitness to drive are contained in sections 92-96 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

The statutory basis for the standards relating to driving and diabetes can be found in Section 72 of the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1999. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency produces guidance for the public and medical professionals based on the legal requirements.

The appointment of an honorary medical advisory panel on driving and diabetes is not provided for in law. The panel's role is to help maintain and improve road safety by providing the Secretary of State for Transport with expert medical advice about diabetes and its impact on driving. The panel complies with the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Panels, which provides guidance on processes and practices for bodies providing independent scientific advice to government.

■ Railways: Crime**Anna Turley:**[\[245852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of staffing reductions on levels of reported crime on trains.

Andrew Jones:

The Department works with the British Transport Police (BTP) to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour on the railways in Great Britain. Under their franchise agreements, Train Operating Companies are required to work with the BTP to manage and reduce railway crime. British Transport Police officer numbers have remained relatively stable on the network over the last five years and are currently (2017/18) nearly 3,100 by comparison to just over 2,900 in 2009/10.

With growing passenger numbers, the Department has been clear that it wants to see more train operating company customer-facing staff on the railways, not fewer.

The BTP keeps records of crime reported on the railways. Crime figures should be considered in the context of rising passenger numbers, with crimes per million passenger journeys remaining relatively low and having decreased overall between 2014 and 2017.

With regard to factors influencing the levels of report crime on trains, the BTP has run a number of successful initiatives in recent years to encourage more reporting of crimes, which is likely to be a factor in the numbers of crimes reported. For example, BTP has a popular dedicated crime reporting text service - '61016' – which allows people to report offences to the police easily and discreetly.

The levels of crime that are seen on the railway broadly mirror those seen across society as a whole, as recorded by the territorial police forces.

A recent report by the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) concluded that driver controlled train operation by comparison with conductor operation does not increase passenger safety risks.

■ Railways: Franchises

Mr Clive Betts:

[\[245609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the requirement was for companies to cover pension costs as part of the franchising arrangements was first introduced.

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%. Since franchising arrangements were first introduced Train Operating Companies have been, and continue to be, responsible for paying employer pension contributions during a franchise term.

■ Railways: North West

Conor McGinn:

[\[245855\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to improve accessibility on the railway for disabled passengers in the North West.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

We are committed to improving access to the rail network and a further 10 stations in the North West were included in the recent Access for All announcement. Northern Rail are required to spend at least £250,000 on station accessibility improvements in each year of their franchise and in addition deliver 10 accessible hub stations.

New and refurbished trains that meet modern accessibility standards are being introduced in the coming months. These will provide audio visual passenger

information systems, priority seating, and wheelchair spaces among other accessibility features for disabled passengers.

Conor McGinn:

[\[245856\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to improve rural train lines and services in the North West.

Andrew Jones:

The Northern and TransPennine Express franchises will transform rail services across the north. Rural lines in the north west will benefit from the removal of all Pacer trains, and all trains operating will either be new or fully refurbished. Stations in the region are also benefitting from some of the £55m investment by both franchises in improving facilities.

Conor McGinn:

[\[245857\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of rail passenger numbers in the North West in each of the last 20 years.

Andrew Jones:

The Office of Rail and Road publishes annual statistics on regional rail usage. The number of rail journeys made to/from and within the North West region in each of the last 20 years is presented below.

Rail journeys to, from and within the North West: from 1997-98

	TOTAL JOURNEYS (THOUSANDS)
1997-98	49,199
1998-99	50,009
1999-00	52,882
2000-01	51,924
2001-02	51,730
2002-03	51,022
2003-04	55,503
2004-05	58,678
2005-06	64,044
2006-07	67,167
2007-08	71,663
2008-09 (*)	105,819
2009-10	106,098

	TOTAL JOURNEYS (THOUSANDS)
2010-11	111,556
2011-12	115,182
2012-13	113,921
2013-14	121,741
2014-15	124,878
2015-16	128,005
2016-17	133,966
2017-18	134,420

Source: Office of Rail and Road

(*) Methodological changes have improved these statistics over time. Most notably from 2008-09, new estimates of rail travel in passenger transport executives (PTEs) areas were included in the dataset for the first time, providing a more complete representation of rail passenger journeys.

■ Railways: Safety

Anna Turley:

[\[245851\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment his Department has made of the safety of train passengers when train guards are removed.

Andrew Jones:

Whilst decisions on staffing are for individual operators, the Government has been clear that it wants to see more staff on our railway, not fewer, and it is not aware of any plans by franchised operators to remove guards from train services.

With respect to the mode of train operation and guards, the ORR, the independent rail regulator, and the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) have found that Driver Controlled Operation (DCO), where the train driver has responsibility for opening and closing the doors and dispatching the train from a station but a guard / second crew member continues to be rostered on the train, is safe.

An RSSB report also concluded that the introduction of DCO according to the standard safety management requirements that all rail companies routinely meet does not increase any other passenger safety risks and furthermore that cancelling a DCO train in the absence of its guard / second crew member is more risky than running it with only its driver.

■ Road Traffic Control: Kent**Mary Creagh:**[\[245738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether an environmental impact assessment was conducted prior to establishing Operation Brock.

Jesse Norman:

The contingency traffic management measures of Operation Brock consist of three phases: a queuing and contraflow system between junctions 8 and 9 of the M20 (Brock M20); temporary holding areas at Manston Airport; and, if necessary, temporary holding areas on the M26 (Brock M26), if capacity has been exceeded elsewhere within the Brock suite of measures.

As part of the design process of the Operation Brock measures, Highways England undertook legally required environmental screening exercises. These determined that full Environmental Impact Assessments were not required for either the Brock M20 or Brock M26 measures. The formal Notices of Determination were published in The Gazette on 24 May 2018 and 15 November 2018 respectively.

For Manston Airport, environmental and habitat assessments were carried out to inform the conditions of the Town and Country Planning (Manston Airport) Special Development Order 2019 (SDO), which was laid before Parliament on 23 January 2019.

TREASURY**■ Embassies: China****Helen Goodman:**[\[245696\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with the Foreign Secretary on the cost to the public purse of the proposed new embassy building in Beijing.

Elizabeth Truss:

The Foreign Secretary is responsible for developing plans to re-build the embassy and residence in Beijing. These plans, including the estimated costs, are subject to standard HM Treasury spending controls and approval.

■ Financial Services: EU Law**John McDonnell:**[\[245571\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government's ministerial equivalents and exemption directions in financial services for the (a) EU and (b) EEA, made on 11 April 2019 are a result of discussions with the EU on the EU's forthcoming equivalents and exemption directions.

John McDonnell: [\[245572\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions the Government has had with European Commission officials on the ministerial equivalents and exemption directions in financial services for the (a) EU and (b) EEA made on 11 April 2019.

John McDonnell: [\[245573\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government received representations from the European Commission on the Government's ministerial equivalents and exemption directions in financial services for the EU and EEA, made on 11 April 2019.

John Glen:

The Equivalence Directions made with respect to EU-adopted International Financial Reporting Standards (EU IFRS) deliver a commitment made by HM Treasury in November 2018. In the explanatory information for the Draft Official Listing of Securities, Prospectus and Transparency (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, published in November 2018, HM Treasury signalled its intention, in a no-deal scenario, to issue an equivalence decision with respect to EU IFRS in time for Exit day. This will ensure that issuers of securities in European Economic Area (EEA) states can continue to use EU IFRS to prepare financial statements for Transparency Directive requirements, and for the purposes of preparing a prospectus under the Prospectus Directive.

HM Treasury and the EU have decided to provide exemptions for central banks and certain public bodies under specific financial services regulations in the event that the UK withdraws from the EU without an agreement. This decision, in the Exemption Directions made with respect to EU bodies, was taken as a result of an exchange of letters between HM Treasury and the EU Commission specifically on this matter in January 2019.

HM Treasury and the EEA European Free Trade Association (EEA EFTA) countries of Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein have decided to provide exemptions for central banks and certain public bodies under specific financial services regulations in the event that the UK withdraws from the EU without an agreement. This decision, in the Exemption Directions made with respect to EEA bodies, was taken as a result of an exchange of letters between HM Treasury and the EEA EFTA countries specifically on this matter in April 2019.

Both sets of exemptions are important for avoiding disruption to the financial services sector, and the businesses and individuals relying on it, in the event that the United Kingdom withdraws from the European Union without an agreement.

■ Help to Buy Scheme

Peter Kyle: [\[245902\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the timeframe is for new customers to apply for a Help To Buy ISA.

John Glen:

The Help to Buy ISA is due to close to new accounts on 30 November 2019. First Time Buyers can therefore open a Help to Buy ISA account up to, and including, that date. Customers will then be able to save into existing accounts until 30 November 2029 and will have until 1 December 2030 to claim the bonus.

House Insurance**Paul Farrelly:**[\[245669\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the 10 April 2019 Insurance Age article entitled Citizens Advice slams home insurers in dual pricing report, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the finding that home insurance companies make over half of their profits from people defined by the regulator as potentially vulnerable.

John Glen:

The Government is focussed on ensuring that the insurance industry functions well for everyone.

To that end, Government welcomed the launch of the FCA's General Insurance Pricing Practices Market Study in October 2019. The Market Study is investigating consumer outcomes from insurers' pricing practices; it is looking specifically at the potential harm suffered by the vulnerable long-standing customers that Citizens Advice refers to in its press release of 10 April 2019. As a part of the Market Study the FCA will consider all potential remedies that may be required to make the market work well for consumers.

The FCA is empowered to address misconduct, and where this has occurred it can undertake investigations and impose financial penalties or order firms to cease certain activities.

The Government is monitoring the outcome of this Market Study and is prepared to ask the FCA to take further action if required.

Individual Savings Accounts**Peter Kyle:**[\[245903\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to raise public awareness of the Lifetime ISA.

John Glen:

The Lifetime ISA is a tax-free savings account. Anyone between the ages of 18 and 40 may open an account and, until their 50th birthday, may save up to £4,000 each year and receive a 25% government bonus. Savings, including the bonus, can be withdrawn without penalty from age 60, if the saver is terminally ill, or to put towards a first home.

There are currently 21 providers of the Lifetime ISA. As of January 2019, there were 250,000 open accounts on which over £230m has been paid out in bonuses.

The government does not ordinarily promote specific types of ISA. Providers which offer the Lifetime ISA will undertake advertisement and promotion activities in relation to their own products.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Gender Recognition Act 2004

Liz McInnes: [\[910545\]](#)

When the Government plans to publish its response to the Gender Recognition Act consultation.

Penny Mordaunt:

We have had an exceptional response rate to the consultation on the Gender Recognition Act, receiving over 100,000 responses. We are currently analysing all of these contributions and we intend to publish a response later this year.

■ Period Poverty

Janet Daby: [\[910544\]](#)

When the Government plans to establish the taskforce to tackle period poverty in the UK.

Penny Mordaunt:

The first meeting of the taskforce will be in June. Over the last couple of months we have been consulting with a number of charities and other experts on the most effective way for us to use the taskforce.

I will be chairing the taskforce alongside two leading experts in the sector, alongside a number of enthusiastic and skilled experts. The taskforce will build on and promote the great work being done by individual organisations, supporting local partners to make their work more than the sum of its parts.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Access to Work Programme

Stephen Timms: [\[245556\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if it remains the Government's ambition to provide access to work support to over 60,000 people per year by 2020 as set out in the Work, Health and Disability Green Paper published in November 2017.

Justin Tomlinson:

The '60,000 people per year' ambition was proposed in the 'Work, health and disability green paper: improving lives' consultation document, which was published in October 2016, but it was not repeated in the Government's response 'Improving Lives: The Future of Work, Health and Disability', published 30 November 2017.

The figure of '60,000 people per year' was developed using data from the old Access to Work statistics series. These were withdrawn and replaced by the new experimental Access to Work Statistics, first published on 10 October 2017 and available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/access-to-work-statistics>

We explained the reasons for the changes to our methodology for calculating Access to Work statistics in the Statistical Notice that we published on 12 September 2017: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643401/statistical-notice-access-to-work-statistics.pdf

We are committed to improving Access to Work's reach, as well as the support it offers. In 2017/18 expenditure rose to £110.8 million, a 4% increase in real terms on 2016/17, and support was provided to nearly 34,000 disabled people, an increase of 13% on 16/17. Record numbers of people with learning disabilities (up 22%) and mental health conditions (up 34%) were supported by the scheme. We have also expanded the eligibility criteria for the scheme to include a broader range of customers, such as people who have a drug and alcohol addiction and are in a treatment programme.

■ Domestic Abuse

Angela Crawley:

[245861]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what support her Department provides to help women to leave abusive relationships.

Will Quince:

The Department has a range of measures designed to support people who flee abusive households. This includes easements to benefit conditionality to give claimants the space and time needed to stabilise their lives, special provisions in both Housing Benefit and Universal Credit housing support when a claimant is temporarily absent from their home through fear of violence, and exemptions from Child Maintenance application fees.

When a victim of domestic abuse comes into a Jobcentre fleeing abuse, we can support them by helping them to open a new claim, and can put in place a rapid advance where needed, which provides access to funds in 2-3 hours.

As a department, we focus on helping frontline colleagues to recognise signs of domestic abuse and to support victims by signposting to expert organisations who can help. All work coaches undergo mandatory training on how to support vulnerable claimants, including recognising the signs of domestic abuse. Furthermore, any individual can be accompanied by a third party organisation to provide expert support when disclosing domestic abuse to a Work Coach, and a private area can be provided to disclose any information if requested.

The Department published information on DWP support to victims of domestic abuse on gov.uk in January 2018. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-violence-and-abuse-help-from-dwp>

■ Employment and Support Allowance

Marion Fellows: [\[245846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 8 April 2019 to Question 239928 on Employment and Support Allowance, when she plans to complete her update of the ESA65B letter.

Justin Tomlinson:

I refer the right honourable member to Parliamentary Question [242946](#) answered on 15th April 2019.

Marion Fellows: [\[245847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 8 April 2019 to Question 239928 on Employment and Support Allowance, which medical organisations she is consulting to advise on the updating of the ESA65B letter.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Department is consulting the British Medical Association and the Royal College of General Practitioners on the revised wording of the ESA65B letter.

Layla Moran: [\[245962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many ESA65B letters her Department has sent to GPs in 2018.

Layla Moran: [\[245963\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the cost to the public purse of her Department posting ESA65B letters to GPs in 2018.

Layla Moran: [\[245964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the number of staff hours that were used by her Department to issue ESA65B letters to GPs in 2018.

Justin Tomlinson:

The ESA65B letter is sent to GPs when an Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claimant has been found fit for work following a Work Capability Assessment (WCA), to inform them of the outcome of the WCA and advise them that fit notes are no longer required for ESA purposes.

The ESA65B is computer generated and the action of sending it out is a 'business as usual' process. As a result, we do not hold the information required to calculate the number of staff used to issue this type of letter.

Furthermore, due to the volumes of different letters issued by the Department to claimants and third parties, we are unable to provide a figure for how many ESA65B letters were sent to GPs in 2018.

■ Housing Benefit: Social Rented Housing

Anna Turley:

[\[245853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much revenue the removal of the spare room subsidy has generated for the public purse since its introduction.

Will Quince:

The removal of the spare room subsidy (RSRS) policy has not generated revenue for the public purse. However, this policy has saved over £1.7bn since its introduction in April 2013. A breakdown by financial year is provided in the table below:

Total Estimated Housing Benefit RSRS Deductions, 2013/14 to 2017/18 (£m pa)

2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
385	365	355	335	320

Deductions figures do not take into account any additional savings due to behavioural change before/after the policy has been introduced, for example moving to a smaller property to avoid a deduction.

Figures do not include claimants on Universal Credit (UC) with a removal of the spare room subsidy (RSRS) deduction, as these data are not currently available.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Medical Examinations

Marion Fellows:

[\[245849\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, as a result of reassessments of personal independence payment claim eligibility at the end of a payment time frame, how many of such payments have (a) been stopped, (b) been reduced (c) increased and (d) remained the same in each of the last five years.

Justin Tomlinson:

The latest available data on the initial outcomes of PIP award reviews, whether they were increased, maintained, decreased or disallowed each month from June 2016 – October 2018 can be found in Table 3A of the data tables "*PIP: Planned Award Review and Change of Circumstance Registrations and Clearances, October 2018*" which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-independence-payment-april-2013-to-october-2018>.

Note that prior to June 2016, the outcomes recorded for award reviews were either 'changed' or 'unchanged' on the PIP Computer system.

■ Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

Marion Fellows:

[\[245848\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether GP's are required when recommending a claimant has home assessment for the purpose of a benefit claim to

follow her Department's required and accepted terminology; and what guidance her Department has issued to GPs on statements her Department accepts in agreeing to grant a home assessment.

Justin Tomlinson:

DWP has not issued any guidance to GPs on the subject of providing letters to support requests for home visits from assessment providers for their patients.

■ **Unemployed People: Travel**

Stella Creasy:

[\[245779\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many jobseekers have made a claim under the Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount scheme via job centres; and what the value was of those claims in the last three years.

Alok Sharma:

The information requested is not centrally collated in a format that can be easily disaggregated, and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ **Universal Credit**

Stephen Timms:

[\[245555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether she has plans to change her Department's policy on consent requirements for authorised representatives to act on behalf of claimants of universal credit.

Will Quince:

We have had a number of workshops with stakeholders during which consent has been discussed, and we plan to do further work on explicit consent. This activity will include working with claimants and their representatives to ensure the process works effectively for vulnerable claimants to access the service.

■ **Universal Credit: Self-employed**

Marion Fellows:

[\[245845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reason her Department classes the owners of small businesses as self-employed under universal credit while HMRC classes them as employed.

Alok Sharma:

We look at a number of factors to establish whether someone is gainfully self-employed

A claimant is considered to be in gainful self-employment where all of the following apply:

- the claimant is carrying on a trade, profession or vocation as their main employment
- their earnings from that trade, profession or vocation are self-employed earnings

- the trade, profession or vocation is organised, developed, regular and carried out in expectation of profit

If any of these are not satisfied then the claimant is not considered gainfully self-employed.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

CABINET OFFICE

■ Contingent Liability

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr David Lidington): [\[HCWS1525\]](#)

It is normal practice, when a government department proposes to undertake a contingent liability in excess of £300,000 for which there is no specific statutory authority, for the Department concerned to present to Parliament a Minute giving particulars of the liability created and explaining the circumstances; and to refrain from incurring the liability until fourteen parliamentary sitting days after the issue of the Minute, except in cases of special urgency.

It is the intention of the Government to respect the 2016 referendum result and leave the European Union with a deal as soon as possible. However, there is now a legal need to prepare for possible participation in the European Parliamentary elections, although it remains the government's intention for the UK to leave the European Union with a deal before 22 May, so that we do not need to participate in these elections.

It is normal practice for the Government to indemnify returning officers in this way to ensure their personal liabilities are covered. The Cabinet Office previously provided an indemnity in 2014 for the European Parliamentary elections. The Cabinet Office also provided an indemnity for the 2015 and 2017 UK Parliamentary general elections, the 2016 Police and Crime Commissioner elections, and the Recall of MPs petitions. HM Treasury has approved the indemnity in principle.

Given the highly unusual circumstances, as I hope Hon. Members will appreciate, it has not been possible for the indemnity to be laid in Parliament for 14 sitting days before coming into effect.

On this basis, I have today laid a Minute setting out the Cabinet Office's proposal to indemnify returning officers for the European Parliamentary elections on 23 May 2019 against uninsured claims that arise out of the conduct of their duties. We will also provide a certificate confirming that we will bear any employee liabilities of the returning officer which would otherwise be covered by insurance procured under the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ General Affairs Council, April 2019

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union (Mr Robin Walker): [\[HCWS1523\]](#)

Lord Callanan, Minister of State for Exiting the European Union, has made the following statement:

The UK and the EU have agreed an extension to Article 50, until 31 October 2019, which is legally binding in EU and international law. Until we leave the European Union, we remain committed to fulfilling our rights and obligations as a full Member State, and continue to act in good faith.

I represented the UK at the General Affairs Council (GAC) in Luxembourg on 9 April 2019. A provisional report of the meeting and the conclusions adopted can be found on the Council of the European Union's website at:

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/gac/2019/04/09/>

Multiannual Financial Framework 2021 - 2027

The Presidency presented a progress report outlining the latest developments on negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) - related sectoral proposals. The Presidency also highlighted that common understandings have been reached with the European Parliament (EP) on ten sectoral files. Cohesion and Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) continued to be the central pillars of the next MFF. However, the Commission noted that the proposed cuts to Cohesion and CAP were unavoidable due to the loss of the UK's contribution.

The Cohesion Fund aims to reduce economic and social disparities and to promote sustainable development. Ministers discussed how Cohesion policy and CAP can best support EU priorities. Some Member States criticised the proposed cuts and supported maintaining funding for transition regions (where GDP per capita falls between 75% and 90% of the EU average). Other Member States advocated for a stronger link of funds to the EU's core business, such as tackling climate change, rule of law and migration. There was general agreement that cohesion funding should be predictable, whilst allowing for a level of flexibility to manage unexpected events.

Ministers agreed that the funding priorities should be modernisation of the agricultural industry and securing support for young farmers. Some Member States proposed a set target for expenditure contributing to climate change goals, while incentivising farmers to meet the goals.

Conclusions on the Reflection Paper "Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030"

Ministers adopted conclusions on the EU's implementation of the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are targets in 17 priority areas agreed between the members of the UN in 2015, with the aim of making the world a more sustainable place to live. The Council agreed that the SDGs are a key aspect of the EU's Strategic Agenda 2019-2024, making clear reference to "leave no one behind".

The Council's conclusions recognised the importance of the SDGs for the EU, stated that the UN 2030 Agenda was an overarching priority for the EU and stressed that it was in the EU's interest to play a leading role in its implementation, recognising that delivery of this agenda is necessarily a shared responsibility between all stakeholders.

Values of the Union - Hungary / Article 7(1) TEU Reasoned Proposal

The Commission provided an update on the most recent developments regarding EU values in Hungary. Ministers discussed values of the Union in relation to Hungary.

Rule of Law in Poland / Article 7(1) TEU Reasoned Proposal

The Commission provided an update on the rule of law cases in Poland before the European Court of Justice, and its most recent infraction notification against Poland's disciplinary procedures for ordinary judges. The Presidency stated that the Council would return to the issue.

HOME OFFICE

■ **UK opts in to EU Council Decisions allowing Switzerland and Liechtenstein third country access to Prüm**

The Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service (Mr Nick Hurd):
[\[HCWS1524\]](#)

The Prüm framework lays down provisions stating that EU Member States grant each other access to their automated DNA analysis files, automated fingerprint identification systems (AFIS), and vehicle registration data. The European Commission has proposed Council Decisions that, if adopted, would extend participation in the key data-sharing elements of Prüm to Switzerland and Liechtenstein as third countries.

The UK is fully supportive of data sharing to assist the investigation, prosecution and prevention of serious crime and terrorism. It is the Government's position that data sharing regimes between countries, with appropriate safeguards, enhance the safety and wellbeing of citizens of and visitors to those countries. The UK has opted in to the Prüm Decisions and remains committed to fully implementing Prüm in the UK.

The UK is also fully supportive of extending the law enforcement access to Prüm to Switzerland and Liechtenstein. The UK has no current biometrics data sharing agreements in place with Switzerland or Liechtenstein. These states are close partners and enabling further data sharing with them will enhance both their security and ours.

The Government has therefore decided to opt in to the EU Council Decisions authorising the signing and conclusion of agreements between the EU and Switzerland, and the EU and Liechtenstein, to enable their access as third countries to Prüm, stepping up cross border cooperation, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border crime.

The UK 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 the EU on a security partnership once the UK leaves the EU. The UK is committed to fully implementing Prüm and continuing the international exchange of biometric data with the EU as part of this Future Security Partnership.