



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 17 July 2019 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:39 P.M., 17 July 2019). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

CONTENTS

ANSWERS	4	■ Climate Change	12
BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY	4	■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Iron and Steel	12
■ Employment: Yorkshire and the Humber	4	■ Dogs: Quarantine	12
■ Offshore Industry	4	■ Japanese Knotweed: Weed Control	13
CABINET OFFICE	5	■ Meat: Consumption and Exports	14
■ Conflict, Stability and Security Fund	5	■ Plastics: Recycling	14
■ Referendums: Brexit	6	■ Poultry: Animal Welfare	14
DEFENCE	6	EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION	15
■ Armed Forces	6	■ British Nationals Abroad: EU Countries	15
■ Intelligence Services: Disclosure of Information	7	■ UK Membership of EU: Referendums	16
■ Royal Fleet Auxiliary	7	FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE	16
■ Royal Fleet Auxiliary: Tankers	7	■ Abdullatif Nasser	16
■ Unmanned Air Vehicles	8	■ Ahmed Mansoor	17
EDUCATION	9	■ Armed Conflict: Children	17
■ Academies	9	■ Bangladesh: Politics and Government	17
■ Academies : Finance	9	■ Guantanamo Bay: Detainees	18
■ Teachers: Dismissal	10	■ India: Islam	18
ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	10	■ Jagtar Singh Johal	19
■ Air Pollution: Kent	10		
■ Animal Welfare: East Midlands	11		
■ Chemicals: Registration	11		

■ Malaysia: Diplomatic Relations	20	INTERNATIONAL	
■ Pakistan: Diplomatic Relations	20	DEVELOPMENT	33
■ Russia: Ukraine	20	■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]	33
■ Sri Lanka: Human Rights	21	INTERNATIONAL TRADE	35
■ Ukraine: Sanctions	22	■ Exports: Import Duties	35
■ Yemen: Military Intervention	22	■ GATT	35
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	23	■ Surveillance: Human Rights	36
■ Autism and Learning Disability: Health Services	23	■ Surveillance: Philippines	36
■ Autism: Diagnosis	24	JUSTICE	36
■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People	24	■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Reform	36
■ Pregnancy: Mental Health Services	25	■ Legal Aid Scheme	37
■ Restraint Equipment: Dementia	26	■ Lincoln Prison: Prisoners' Release	38
HOME OFFICE	26	■ Ministry of Justice: Pay	39
■ Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences: Victim Support Schemes	26	■ Personal Names: Deed Poll	39
■ Immigration: EU Nationals	27	■ Prisoners: Human Trafficking	40
■ Immigration: Windrush Generation	28	■ Prisons: Staff	40
■ Police: Disciplinary Proceedings	28	■ Probate	40
■ UK Visas and Immigration: Staff	29	■ Trials: Sexual Offences	41
HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	29	■ Working Links	41
■ Buildings: Fire Prevention	29	■ Youth Offending Teams: Grants	42
■ Buildings: Insulation	30	TRANSPORT	42
■ Housing: Construction	31	■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points	42
■ Housing: Fire Prevention	31	■ High Speed Two: Freedom of Information	43
■ Leisure: Learning Disability	32	■ Manston Airport	43
■ Social Services and Transport: Expenditure	33	■ Motorcycles: Greater London	44
		■ Railways: Standards	45
		■ Road Signs and Markings: Languages	45
		■ Roads: Safety	46

TREASURY	46	■ Universal Credit: Proof of Identity	54
■ Climate Change	46	WRITTEN STATEMENTS	55
■ Diesel Fuel: Excise Duties	46	CABINET OFFICE	55
■ Pay	47	■ The European Union (Withdrawal) Act and Common Frameworks	55
■ Self-employed	47	FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE	55
■ Tobacco: Smuggling	48	■ UK Support and Funding for International Criminal Justice	55
WORK AND PENSIONS	48	HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	57
■ Child Maintenance Service	48	■ Grenfell update	57
■ Department for Work and Pensions: Marketing	48	JUSTICE	58
■ Flexible Support Fund and Universal Credit	49	■ Consultation on Proposals for revising the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime	58
■ Industrial Diseases: Death	49	TREASURY	60
■ Mesothelioma: Death	50	■ Replacement of EU International Agreements with Third Countries	60
■ Pension Credit	50		
■ Pension Credit and Universal Credit	50		
■ Social Security Benefits	52		
■ Universal Credit	52		
■ Universal Credit: Fraud	53		

Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Employment: Yorkshire and the Humber

Mr David Davis:

[\[275116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps he has taken to increase employment in (a) Yorkshire and the Humber and (b) Haltemprice and Howden constituency.

Andrew Stephenson:

The Industrial Strategy is our long-term plan to boost productivity by backing businesses to create high-quality, well paid jobs throughout the United Kingdom, with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure. The Government is supporting businesses in both the Yorkshire and Humber and Haltemprice and Howden constituencies. For example, the Government-backed British Business Bank's Start-Up Loans programme provides loans to entrepreneurs seeking to start and grow their own businesses. Since 2012, 5,482 loans have been issued in the Yorkshire and the Humber region, totalling over £45m, and with an average loan amount of £8,249. In the Haltemprice and Howden constituency, 103 loans have been issued, totalling £926,277 (as at end-June 2019).

The Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, which brings together world class UK research with business investment to develop the technologies that will transform existing industries and create entirely new ones, has allocated to date £49,970,387.29 grants to establishments registered within Yorkshire and Humber.

The Government is investing over £1.3 billion through Yorkshire and Humber Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Deals This is providing financial assistance to local businesses to help create jobs, as well as improving infrastructure and skills. It has also established Enterprise Zones across the region, including the largest award in the country to the Humber, which are attracting business investment and new jobs to the region.

Also, £13.6m has been awarded through Local Growth Funding for projects in this area to safeguard jobs from flood risks and for road improvements.

■ Offshore Industry

Seema Malhotra:

[\[275756\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the financial contribution of the oil and gas sector to the economy of (a) each region of the UK and (b) the UK; and how many jobs the oil and gas sector supports in each region of UK.

Chris Skidmore:

The Department estimates that the oil and gas sector, defined as the combination of Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes 6 and 19, made a financial contribution of £23.9bn of Gross Value Added (GVA) to the UK economy in 2018[1]. The latest release of the UK Business Register and Employment Survey indicates that there were 20,700 direct jobs in the sector, with a further 124,100 roles supported in the immediate supply chain.[2] While it is not possible to estimate the economic contribution of the oil and gas sector to each region of the UK with sufficient granularity, the latest Oil and Gas UK Workforce Report estimates that Scotland, Greater London and the South East of England account for three-fifths of total employment supported by the offshore oil and gas industry.[3]

[1] 'Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas' and 'Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products' respectively. Note that as SIC code 19 includes coke oven products, this measure may lead to a slight overestimate. For context, the balance of GVA generated is £20.5bn and £3.4bn for SIC codes 6 and 19 respectively: [GDP output approach – low-level aggregates, ONS - June 2019](#)

[2] [Industry \(2, 3 and 5 - digit SIC\) - Business Register and Employment Survey \(BRES\), ONS - September 2018](#)

[3] [Workforce Report, Oil & Gas UK - 2018](#)

CABINET OFFICE**■ Conflict, Stability and Security Fund****Dan Jarvis:****[276193]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 13 May 2019 to Question 249954, if the Government will publish the recommendations of the Joint Funds Unit audit of Overseas Security and Justice Assistance; what steps have been taken in response to the recommendations of that audit; who was responsible for conducting that audit; and what the cost was to the public purse of that audit.

Mr David Lidington:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office lead HMG policy on the Overseas Security and Justice Assistance (OSJA) Guidance. The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) takes its responsibility to do no harm seriously. At the direction of the Joint Funds Unit (JFU), the Stabilisation Unit (SU) commissioned Palladium, a SU provider, to undertake an audit of OSJAs across CSSF programmes, at a cost of £31,801.64. The audit showed that the majority of programme teams have a good understanding of the human rights risks their programmes are operating in, and a realistic view of the extent to which risks can be mitigated. The audit's findings also highlighted areas where the process could be improved.

In response to the audit's recommendations, the JFU is updating CSSF programmatic guidance and the Stabilisation Unit is also updating its core security and justice training for HMG staff to align with the revised guidance.

As the Government stated in its response to Question 249954, there are no plans to publish the OSJA audit.

■ Referendums: Brexit

Ruth Jones: [\[275840\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what preparations his Department has made for holding a second referendum on UK membership of the European Union.

Mr David Lidington:

The Government has not made preparations to hold a second referendum.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces

Dan Jarvis: [\[276190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent estimate he has made of the size of the (a) regular armed forces community and (b) reserve armed forces community including the partners, spouses and children of people serving in the armed forces.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The requested information is provided below:

Number of Service Personnel and Estimate of the Number of Children and Marital Status as at 1 April 2019

	NUMBER OF SERVICE PERSONNEL	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CHILDREN	ESTIMATED NUMBERS MARRIED OR IN A CIVIL PARTNERSHIP
UK Regular Forces ¹	144,430	48,160	62,680
Future Reserves 2020 ²	36,400	10,610	14,380
Total	180,830	58,770	77,060

Notes:

1. Figures exclude Gurkhas, Regular Reserve, Sponsored Reserve, Military Provost Guard Service, Locally Engaged Personnel and elements of the Full-time Reserve Service (FTRS).

1. Future Reserves 2020 includes volunteer reserves who are mobilised, High Readiness Reserves and Volunteer Reserve personnel serving on Additional Duties Commitment or FTRS contracts. Non Regular Permanent Staff, Expeditionary Forces Institute and University Officer Cadets and Regular Reservists are excluded.

1. Figures for the number of children and marital status are estimates as the data is self-declared and has not been verified by Defence Statistics.
1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10, figures ending in "5" have been rounded to the nearest 20 to avoid systematic bias.

■ Intelligence Services: Disclosure of Information

Stewart Malcolm McDonald: [\[276562\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to her oral contribution of 8 July 2019, Official Report, column 19, if she will publish the review by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner on guidance on sharing and receiving intelligence.

Penny Mordaunt:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr David Lidington) on 15 July 2019 (Official Report, column 595).

Attachments:

1. 276562 - Detainee Mistreatment [Detainee Mistreatment - Judge Led Inquiry.docx]

■ Royal Fleet Auxiliary

Nia Griffith: [\[276529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much money the Royal Fleet Auxiliary spent on vessel maintenance in each financial year since 2009-10.

Stuart Andrew:

The amounts spent in each financial year on vessel maintenance for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (rounded to the nearest million) are shown in the following table:

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL SPEND (£ MILLION)
2015-16	116
2016-17	56
2017-18	96
2018-19	76

Data for financial years 2009-10 to 2014-15 is no longer held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

■ Royal Fleet Auxiliary: Tankers

Nia Griffith: [\[276527\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what additional funding has been (a) required and (b) allocated to the Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability programme for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary's (RFA) Tide-Class tankers (a) Tidesurge, (b) Tidespring, (c) Tidewave and (d) Tideforce since each of those vessels was delivered to the RFA.

Stuart Andrew:

Three Tide Class Tankers are in service with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary; the fourth (TIDEFORCE) will enter service soon. No additional funding has been required or allocated.

Nia Griffith:[\[276528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, on what date the Royal Fleet Auxiliary's Tide-Class tankers (a) Tidesurge, (b) Tidespring, (c) Tidewave and (d) Tideforce completed their first Replenishment At Sea exercise.

Mark Lancaster:

Each Tide Class tanker conducted their first Replenishment at Sea on the following dates:

RFA TIDESPRING replenished RFA WAVE KNIGHT on 13 November 2017.

RFA TIDERACE replenished HMS SOMERSET on 21 July 2018.

RFA TIDESURGE replenished HMS DEFENDER on 16 February 2019.

RFA TIDEFORCE replenished RFA FORT VICTORIA on 1-2 May 2019.

■ Unmanned Air Vehicles**Keith Vaz:**[\[276153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Black Hornet drones the British Army (a) possesses and (b) has deployed in active service.

Keith Vaz:[\[276154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how much her Department has spent on the acquisition of Black Hornet drones.

Stuart Andrew:

The Army first purchased 160 Black Hornet 1 Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) in 2011 as part of a £20 million contract with FLIR UAS (formerly Prox Dynamics). The systems were used on operations in Afghanistan, but that capability has since been phased out. In 2019 the Army purchased 90 of the upgraded Black Hornet 3 UAS at a contract value of £1.7 million. There is no intention to deploy the capability on operations at this time.

EDUCATION**■ Academies**

Eddie Hughes: [\[276587\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps he has taken to help ensure that schools take the leading role in deciding whether to (a) form and (b) join a multi-academy trust.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The process to become an academy is school led, with schools' Local Governing Bodies taking the initiative to apply to their Regional School Commissioners' office on whether to join an existing academy trust, or form one with partner schools. The only exception to this, where the department takes a leading role, is where a school is judged as 'inadequate' by Ofsted, as the law requires the Secretary of State to make an order enabling the school to become an academy.

The department aims to ensure that all schools considering becoming academies are able to join strong academy trusts, and this has historically been supported through trust capacity funding. Ultimately, our ambition is for every school that wants to, to benefit from the autonomy and freedom to innovate that academy status offers, and for schools to collaborate through strong academy trusts.

■ Academies : Finance

Eddie Hughes: [\[275237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to review the 3,000 pupil threshold for academy capital funding; and if he will make a statement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Condition funding is allocated each year to those responsible for school buildings to improve and maintain the condition of the school estate. Schools and those responsible for school buildings receive condition funding through different routes depending on their size and type.

Local authorities and larger multi-academy trusts (MATs) receive a school condition allocation to invest in condition priorities across their schools. School condition allocations for 2019-20 are available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-capital-funding>.

MATs and opted in academy chains currently receive school condition allocations if they have 5 or more academies and at least 3,000 pupils. Smaller and stand-alone academy trusts instead apply for capital funding to the Condition Improvement Fund. All schools also receive an allocation of devolved formula capital to invest in smaller capital projects to meet their own priorities.

The department keeps condition funding policy under review and plans to publish the methodology for school condition allocations for the 2020-21 financial year in autumn 2019. The eligibility for school condition allocations in 2020-21 will remain consistent with previous years.

■ **Teachers: Dismissal**

Layla Moran: [\[276604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, in what circumstances the dismissal of a teacher must be reported to his Department.

Nick Gibb:

Schools and colleges are responsible for staff appointments, discipline, and dismissals. Where a relevant employer, as defined in section 141D(4) of the Education Act 2002, has ceased to use the services of a person who was employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at an institution listed in section 141A Education Act 2002, because of serious misconduct or because they may have ceased to use their services had the person not resigned, the employer has a duty to consider making a referral to the Secretary of State. The Teaching Regulation Agency acts on the Secretary of State's behalf to consider referrals received and to decide whether to make an order that will prohibit the teacher concerned from carrying out teaching work in the future.

For the purposes of this duty, the definition of teaching work is set out in section 141A of the Education Act 2002 and regulation 3 of The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ **Air Pollution: Kent**

Tracey Crouch: [\[275174\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to improve air quality in (a) Medway, (b) Tonbridge and Malling and (c) Maidstone.

Tracey Crouch: [\[275175\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of air pollution levels in (a) Medway, (b) Tonbridge and Malling and (c) Maidstone.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Air pollution is reducing in the UK, as set out in the annual National Statistics report:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/air-quality-statistics>

There are 169 national automatic monitoring stations in the UK, of which 2 stations are in Medway. Chatham Roadside measures hourly concentrations of nitrogen

dioxide and particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5); Rochester Stoke measures concentrations of ozone and sulphur dioxide in addition to these pollutants. Near real-time measurements from these sites and further data tools can be found on the UK-AIR website (<https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/>).

There are no national automatic monitoring stations in Tonbridge and Malling or Maidstone.

All local authorities also carry out their own air quality monitoring activities and produce annual status reports on air quality within the local authority boundaries.

Each of the local authorities has air quality management areas which can be found online at <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/maps>

Councils have statutory duties to tackle air pollution and already have considerable powers.

Defra's Air Quality Grant Programme provides funding to local authorities for projects in local communities to tackle air pollution and reduce emissions. The scheme has awarded over £60 million in funding to a variety of projects since it started in 1997 and over £3 million will be awarded this year.

We will bring forward provisions on air quality in 2019 in the forthcoming Environment Bill.

■ **Animal Welfare: East Midlands**

Ben Bradley: [\[275244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the number of animal inspectors in the East Midlands.

David Rutley:

Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, Local Authorities, the Animal and Plant Health Agency and the police all have powers of entry to inspect complaints of suspected animal cruelty and to take forward prosecutions.

It is for local authorities, such as those within the East Midlands region, to determine how to prioritise their resources as well as the number of animal inspectors they appoint under the Animal Welfare Act. Local Authorities must be able to make decisions based on local needs and resource priorities and the arrangements that work best for them.

We do not hold data centrally on the number of inspectors appointed under the Act.

■ **Chemicals: Registration**

Neil O'Brien: [\[275251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of proportion of registrations held by UK firms with the European Chemicals Agency to export to the EU in August 2018 that have been transferred to a non-UK EU-based entity.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The European Chemicals Agency reported on 3 April 2019 that approximately 4,800 UK-based registrants had initiated a transfer to a EU-based company. This is out of a total of around 12,000 UK registrations in total.

■ Climate Change**Daniel Zeichner:** [\[275213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on fiscal measures to support his work on tackling climate change.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Secretary of State has had discussions on a number of occasions with the Chancellor regarding action on climate change and uses taxpayers' money to support nature based solutions.

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Iron and Steel**Nic Dakin:** [\[275186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 5 July 2019 to Question 270365, for what reasons his Department has not signed the UK Steel Charter.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

As a customer of this country's steel sector, Defra is already taking action to level the playing field for UK steel producers when competing for central Government contracts. Our commercial activities comply with current Government policy on steel procurement as set out in Cabinet Office guidance, Procurement Policy Note 11/16.

We can confirm that Defra, like the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, is happy to commit to supporting the Charter where it is relevant to our commercial activities and where consistent with the relevant regulations.

■ Dogs: Quarantine**Nigel Huddleston:** [\[275780\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many dogs have been (a) seized and (b) taken into quarantine at (i) the Port of Dover and (ii) Eurotunnel in each month in 2019.

David Rutley:

The number of dogs seized and taken into quarantine at the port of Dover and the Eurotunnel for each month of 2019 are as follows.

MONTH (2019)	PORT OF SEIZURE	TOTAL SEIZED	DETAINED IN QUARANTINE	
	Jan	Eurotunnel	24	7
Dover	13	10		
	Feb	Eurotunnel	7	2
Dover	20	4		
	March	Eurotunnel	5	2
Dover	22	12		
	April	Eurotunnel	8	5
Dover	29	5		
	May	Eurotunnel	3	3
Dover	19	9		
	June	Eurotunnel	13	7
Dover	16	8		

The number of animals detained in quarantine for Eurotunnel may also include dogs that were seized at Coquelles and moved into the United Kingdom for quarantine purposes.

Some of animals will have been seized on welfare grounds only and therefore not put in quarantine.

The numbers provided are a true reflection of the information that we have access to. We cannot guarantee the accuracy of this data, as it is provided by a third party.

■ Japanese Knotweed: Weed Control

Paul Farrelly:

[\[276522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that homeowners are aware of Japanese knotweed, and what guidance his Department provides to homeowners who are affected by that invasive species.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Gov.uk contains a guidance page that provides information on the identification and treatment of Japanese Knotweed as well as providing links to The Invasive Non-Native Specialists Association and Property Care Association website for further advice.

The Non-Native Species Secretariat website includes general information on Japanese knotweed and has also made a good practice management guide for Japanese knotweed freely available for download.

■ Meat: Consumption and Exports

Neil O'Brien:

[\[275255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what (a) proportion (b) value and (c) volume of (i) lamb, (ii) beef, (iii) pork and (iv) chicken produced in the UK is (A) consumed in the UK, (B) exported to the EU and (C) exported to the rest of the world.

David Rutley:

According to analysis of HMRC Overseas Trade Statistics and Defra agricultural statistics, in 2018:

UK produced Lamb - (A) consumed in the UK = (a) 68%, (b) £856m, (c) 202 thousand tonnes (B) exported to the EU = (a) 31%, (b) £355m, (c) 92 thousand tonnes and (C) exported to the rest of the world = (a) 1%, (b) £12m, (c) 4 thousand tonnes.

UK produced Beef - (A) consumed in the UK = (a) 85%, (b) £2.6bn, (c) 785 thousand tonnes (B) exported to the EU = (a) 14%, (b) £398m, (c) 125 thousand tonnes and (C) exported to the rest of the world = (a) 2%, (b) £37m, (c) 15 thousand tonnes.

UK produced Pork - (A) consumed in the UK = (a) 71%, (b) £888m, (c) 636 thousand tonnes (B) exported to the EU = (a) 19%, (b) £186m, (c) 173 thousand tonnes and (C) exported to the rest of the world = (a) 9%, (b) £106m, (c) 81 thousand tonnes.

UK produced Poultry - (A) consumed in the UK = (a) 82%, (b) £2.2bn, (c) 1.6 million tonnes (B) exported to the EU = (a) 14%, (b) £222m, (c) 272 thousand tonnes and (C) exported to the rest of the world = (a) 4%, (b) £78m, (c) 82 thousand tonnes.

■ Plastics: Recycling

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[276508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of a return scheme for plastic bottles of all sizes for the economy.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

We are currently analysing the responses and evidence submitted to the consultation on introducing a deposit return scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

■ Poultry: Animal Welfare

Paul Farrelly:

[\[276519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to encourage (a) supermarkets, (b) restaurant chains and (c) hotel groups to sign up to the European chicken commitment.

David Rutley:

The Government shares the public's high regard for animal welfare, and the welfare of our farmed livestock in all systems is protected by comprehensive and robust legislation. After we leave the EU we will look to strengthen our world class welfare standards as new research and evidence emerges. In England, we intend to develop publicly funded schemes for farmers to deliver animal welfare enhancements beyond our high regulatory baseline that are valued by the public, but not sufficiently rewarded by the market. We also want to provide greater transparency and certainty for consumers, so that they have a clear understanding of the animal welfare standards applying to products. We note that the European Chicken Commitment initiative is also promoting enhancements beyond the regulatory baseline and we look forward to seeing how this voluntary initiative progresses.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION**■ British Nationals Abroad: EU Countries****Neil O'Brien:**[\[275253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, which non-UK EU member states have not announced unilateral arrangements for (a) the rights of resident UK nationals and (b) UK nationals to work in those countries in the event that the UK leaves the EU without an agreement.

Mr Robin Walker:

Following extensive engagement by the Government, we are pleased that all Member States have now made commitments to protect the residence rights of UK nationals in a no deal scenario, albeit to varying degrees of detail. The EU Commission has published details at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/brexit/brexit-preparedness/citizens-rights_en.

Member States have also made some unilateral commitments to protect the right to work, study, and access to benefits and services in a no deal scenario. For example Poland has committed to offering permanent residency covering the right to work and Malta will create a new 'ad hoc' status allowing UK nationals to work without a permit. To understand the extent to which each Member State has put in place protections, UK nationals should visit the FCO "living in guides" on gov.uk and the relevant web pages of their host countries.

We continue to engage our EU counterparts to encourage full reciprocity of our offer to EU citizens in the UK, in which they will continue to be able to work, study, and access benefits and services in a no deal exit as they can today.

Neil O'Brien:[\[275254\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what unilateral arrangements for the rights of UK citizens living in other EU member states have been put in place in each of those other member states.

Mr Robin Walker:

The UK government has been clear that in any scenario, including no deal, EU citizens and their family members living here by exit day will be able to stay. EU citizens resident in the UK by exit day are able to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to secure their status. The scheme fully opened on 30 March and so far over 800,000 applicants have applied. Applications to the scheme are free.

Following extensive engagement by the Government, we are pleased that all Member States have now made commitments to protect the rights of UK nationals in the EU and have guaranteed that UK nationals legally resident by exit day will be able to stay. We continue to encourage Member States to fully reciprocate our offer and communicate plans as soon as possible.

The EU Commission have published details of each Member State's unilateral measures on https://ec.europa.eu/info/brexit/brexit-preparedness/citizens-rights_en. Furthermore, UK nationals can find details of each system on the FCO "living in guides" on gov.uk.

■ UK Membership of EU: Referendums**Ruth Jones:****[275841]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what preparations his Department has made for holding of a second referendum on UK membership of the EU.

Kwasi Kwarteng:

The Government has been clear that it does not support a second referendum. The priority of the Government is to deliver on the result of the first referendum by trying to find a deal that could command majority support in Parliament.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ Abdullatif Nasser****Tom Brake:****[276505]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has made representations to the US Administration for the release of Abdullatif Nasser after Mr Nasser was cleared for transfer in 2016.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Government has not made representations to the US Administration in relation to this specific case. The British Government's long-standing position remains that the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay should close.

■ Ahmed Mansoor**Paul Farrelly:**[\[276520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to his counterpart in the Emirati Government to allow Ahmed Mansoor access (a) to an independent lawyer of his choice and (b) regular family visitation rights.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The case of Ahmed Mansoor was raised by my officials with senior Emirati officials in the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. The UK urges all countries to comply with their human rights obligations. When we have concerns in this regard, we raise those concerns at senior level levels with foreign governments.

■ Armed Conflict: Children**Thelma Walker:**[\[275240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the Protection of Civilians strategy makes the protection of children a priority.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The Government is currently reviewing its strategy for the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, and is committed to ensuring that its approach benefits all civilians, including children and other vulnerable groups, and that it reflects the changing international landscape and the complexity of many conflicts. The Government welcomes recent research carried out by academics and Non-Governmental Organisations in this field and is taking their work into account as it undertakes its review. The Government aims to complete the review by the end of 2019.

■ Bangladesh: Politics and Government**Ruth Jones:**[\[275838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the political situation in Bangladesh.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) makes regular assessments of the political situation in Bangladesh, including through the British High Commission in Dhaka. Bangladesh is a close partner of the UK and a fellow Commonwealth member, and we welcome our joint reaffirmation of democratic values at the Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers' Meeting on 10 July.

A general election took place in December in which the Awami League won 96% of seats in Parliament. The Minister for Asia and the Pacific issued a statement on 1 January noting credible accounts of obstacles and irregularities in the conduct of elections, and deploring the acts of intimidation and violence that took place. The UK

called for the full and transparent resolution of complaints about the conduct of the elections.

The Foreign Secretary also wrote to Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen in January to express our concerns and to encourage the Government of Bangladesh to maintain dialogue with opposition parties and civil society. In April 2019, Minister Field reiterated these concerns and the importance of engaging with opposition parties and freedom of expression when he met the Prime Minister and ministers during his visit to Bangladesh.

Bangladesh remains a human rights priority country for the FCO. Ministers, and our High Commission in Dhaka, carry out a wide range of activities to promote human rights and freedom of expression in Bangladesh, working with civil society and other like-minded partners. We frequently raise these concerns with the Government of Bangladesh.

The UK will continue to engage with the Government of Bangladesh to address these concerns and will support efforts towards a stable, prosperous and democratic Bangladesh.

■ **Guantanamo Bay: Detainees**

Tom Brake:

[\[276506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the US Administration on releasing Guantanamo Bay inmates who have been cleared for release by the Periodic Review Board.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The British Government's long-standing position remains that the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay should close and we continue to engage with the US Government on this issue to make this position clear. The UK continues to work closely with the US on a wide range of national security issues.

■ **India: Islam**

Lyn Brown:

[\[275716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make an assessment of trends in the level of religious violence directed against Muslims in India in the last 10 years.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

We maintain a continuous assessment of the human rights situation across India. India has a strong democratic framework and constitutionally enshrined protections for freedom of religious belief, but faces some challenges enforcing these due to its size and social and economic development. The situation for religious minorities in India varies, depending on location, socio-economic background and proportion of religious minorities.

We condemn any instances of discrimination because of religion or belief. We engage with India on the full range of human rights matters, working with Union and State Governments, and with non-governmental organisations, to build capacity and share expertise to promote human rights for all. The British High Commission in New Delhi, and our Deputy High Commissions across India, also run projects promoting minority rights and regularly meet with religious representatives, as well as official figures such as the Chair of the National Human Rights Commission and the National Commission for Minorities. Recent project work included 'Empowering Muslim youth' which reached 150 youths, 20 teachers and over 100 educational institutions.

Lyn Brown: [\[275717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential effect of Hindu nationalist rhetoric publicly used by members of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in inciting violence against Indian Muslims.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

We maintain a continuous assessment of the human rights situation across India. India has a strong democratic framework and constitutionally enshrined protections for freedom of religious belief, but faces some challenges enforcing these due to its size and social and economic development. The situation for religious minorities in India varies, depending on location, socio-economic background and proportion of religious minorities.

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■ **Jagtar Singh Johal**

Eddie Hughes: [\[276588\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Indian counterpart on the time taken to conduct the trial of Jagtar Singh Johal in that country.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

We regularly make representations on Mr **Johal's** behalf, including raising his right to a fair trial. Our High Commissioner in India raised this with the Indian High Commissioner to the UK most recently on 10 June.

■ Malaysia: Diplomatic Relations**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[275149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to improve diplomatic relations with Malaysia.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The British government has long-standing diplomatic relations with Malaysia.

We have had a high number of inward and outward ministerial visits over the past year, including a visit by the Foreign Secretary in January. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, Deputy Prime Minister Wan Azizah and the Malaysian Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah have visited the UK during that period.

The UK works closely with Malaysia in a number of areas including trade and defence. We have strengthened our defence relationship with the launch of the Ministerial level Defence Strategic Dialogue in 2018. We have a growing collaboration on climate change and our education partnership continues to grow with five British university campuses in Malaysia and 19,000 Malaysian students in the UK. The UK is also supporting the Malaysian government's institutional reform agenda.

■ Pakistan: Diplomatic Relations**Andrew Rosindell:**[\[275151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps he has taken to improve diplomatic relations with Pakistan.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK and Pakistan enjoy a strong relationship based on our shared history, wide people to people links and growing economic ties. Pakistan's Foreign Minister has made two recent visits to the UK in June and July this year. The Development Secretary and the Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations visited in February this year. The Home Secretary visited Pakistan in September 2018. We look forward to building on this partnership and continuing our cooperation, including on security and bilateral trade.

■ Russia: Ukraine**Theresa Villiers:**[\[276524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Russian counterpart on the role the Russian military in Ukraine.

Sir Alan Duncan:

When I met with First Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Titov in February, I made clear that Russia must address the concerns of the international community, including ending their destabilising activity in Ukraine. Our position is clear that Russia needs to end its financial and military support for armed separatists and fully respect

Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity. We will continue to be one of the strongest supporters of Ukrainian defence and security.

Theresa Villiers:

[\[276525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Ukrainian counterpart on the involvement of the Russian military in Ukraine.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The British Government has regular discussions with Ukraine, including at Ministerial level, on Russia's aggression against Ukraine and continued threats to Ukrainian sovereignty. Our position is clear that Russia must end its financial and military support for armed separatists and fully respect Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity. We will continue to be one of the strongest supporters of Ukrainian defence and security. Since 2015 the UK has helped build the resilience and capacity of the Ukrainian Armed Forces through Operation Orbital, providing training to over 16,000 personnel so far. HMS Duncan visited Odessa on 7 July as part of Exercise Sea Breeze and hosted Ukrainian President Zelenskyy on board the ship.

■ Sri Lanka: Human Rights

Theresa Villiers:

[\[276526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Sri Lankan counterpart on the implementation of UN Human Rights Council resolutions regarding the aftermath of the Sri Lankan civil war.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK continues to encourage and support Sri Lanka to deliver the commitments it made to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) through Resolutions 30/1, 34/1 and 40/1. We firmly believe that this is the best framework for establishing truth and achieving justice and lasting reconciliation. The Government has made these points regularly to Sri Lankan Ministers, including during a Ministerial visit to Colombo in October and in a number of meetings since. The British High Commissioner in Colombo also holds regular discussions on the implementation of the UNHRC resolutions with the Government of Sri Lanka.

In March the UK welcomed the Annual Report of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, which assessed progress made by the Sri Lankan Government in the implementation of UNHRC resolutions 30/1 and 34/1. The Report found that the Government of Sri Lanka had taken some steps to address human rights concerns and to introduce more democratic and accountable government, including the return of some military-held civilian land, the establishment of an Office of Missing Persons and the ratification of the Convention on Enforced Disappearances.

However, more needs to be done. The UK has urged further progress on these issues, and encouraged the Government of Sri Lanka to deliver meaningful devolution through constitutional reform, and to establish and then utilise credible

mechanisms for transitional justice. We continue to urge the Government to prioritise the steps required to deliver fully on the commitments it made in resolutions 30/1, 34/1 and 40/1, and to develop a comprehensive and time bound implementation strategy.

■ **Ukraine: Sanctions**

Paul Farrelly:

[\[276521\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the decision of the European Court of Justice to annul sanctions on members of Ukraine's Yanukovych regime; and whether the Government remains committed to recovering those assets in the UK.

Sir Alan Duncan:

EU sanctions against members of Ukraine's Yanukovych regime were originally imposed on 5 March 2014 and were renewed on a yearly basis. The decision by the European Court of Justice annuls sanctions decisions made in March 2017 and March 2018. However, the EU decided on 4 March to extend asset freezes against the individuals in question until 6 March 2020. The UK continues to freeze the assets of listed individuals under this regime.

■ **Yemen: Military Intervention**

Keith Vaz:

[\[275110\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of Emirati military personnel based in Yemen in (a) 2017, (b) 2018 and (c) 9 July 2019.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

There has been a downward trajectory in the number of Emirati military personnel based in Yemen since 2017. Our Emirati counterparts have recently expressed their commitment to the phased and partial redeployment of troops from Yemen as part of their strategy moving away from a military led to a more politically led action. In this context they have also made clear their support for the UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and UN-led peace process.

Keith Vaz:

[\[275111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has held with his Emirati counterpart on the withdrawal of their military forces from Yemen; and if he will make a statement.

Keith Vaz:

[\[275112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has held with his Saudi Arabian counterpart on the withdrawal of Emirati troops from Yemen.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

We are aware of reports that the United Arab Emirates has begun withdrawing its forces from Hodeidah and welcome all efforts to de-escalate the conflict in Yemen. We call on the Yemeni parties to cooperate with the UN to implement the Hodeidah Agreement and work towards a resolution of this brutal conflict.

We have been clear that a political settlement is the only lasting solution to the Yemen conflict. It is crucial that all parties implement agreements made in Stockholm and continue to engage with UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and the UN-led political process. During the meeting of the Yemen Quad on 22 June, representatives of the UK, US, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates reiterated their support for UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and the peace process.

Keith Vaz:[\[275113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number and size of armed groups trained by the UAE in Yemen since the beginning of 2015.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The complex situation on the ground makes it difficult to assess the number and size of armed groups trained by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in Yemen. We are however aware of UAE media reporting quoting a UAE official statement claiming the Emiratis had trained 90,000 Yemeni government fighters.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Autism and Learning Disability: Health Services****Barbara Keeley:**[\[276531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan Implementation Framework: system support offer, what his timescale is for completing the national review of Care Treatment Review policies.

Caroline Dinenge:

The timescale for completing the national review of Care Treatment Review policy is by spring 2020.

Barbara Keeley:[\[276532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan Implementation Framework: system support offer, whether the quality assurance framework to strengthen existing oversight arrangements for autistic people and people with learning disabilities will be mandatory; and what funding local authorities and CCGs will receive to ensure they can follow that framework.

Caroline Dinenge:

All commissioners in England have a responsibility to assure themselves of the quality of the services that they commission. The Quality Assurance Framework and

Commissioning for Quality Toolkit provide support and guidance for commissioners to undertake this appropriately, in line with their responsibilities. Annex A of the Long Term Plan for the National Health Service sets out the funding which has been allocated to support the commitments in the Long-Term Plan and the previous requirements from the Five Year Forward View, in addition to the published five-year clinical commissioning group allocations.

■ **Autism: Diagnosis**

Dr Paul Williams: [\[276605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to reduce waiting times for autism assessments for adults.

Dr Paul Williams: [\[276606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps with NHS England to implement a waiting time standard for autism diagnosis in the CCG Improvement and Assessment Framework in order to tackle regional differences.

Dr Paul Williams: [\[276607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make it his policy to work with NHS England to establish autism diagnosis waiting times standards for each (a) sustainability and transformation partnership and (b) integrated care system.

Caroline Dinenage:

No one should have to face long waits for an autism assessment. We expect services to adhere to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) quality standard which recommends that the length between referral and a first appointment to start an assessment should be no more than three months.

We are determined to drive up performance nationally. We will use data on autism diagnosis waiting times, available for the first time later this year, to hold local areas to account and act where waiting times exceed the NICE standard.

Whilst a diagnosis of autism should happen as soon as possible, it is important to recognise that a diagnosis is often complex and can involve different professionals and agencies. We are following the prevailing clinical guidance set out by NICE.

NHS England and NHS Improvement encourage local areas to follow existing NICE guidelines and quality standards when commissioning and delivering diagnosis services for both children and adults.

■ **Mental Health Services: Children and Young People**

Barbara Keeley: [\[276534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan Implementation Framework, what the timeframe is for meeting the target of 345,000 additional children and young people being able to access NHS-funded mental health services.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

As set out in the NHS Long Term Plan, by 2023/24 at least an additional 345,000 children and young people aged 0-25 will be able to access support via National Health Service-funded mental health services and school or college-based mental health support teams.

Barbara Keeley:[\[276535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan Implementation Framework, how much additional funding he plans to allocate to support the development of school or college-based Mental Health Support Teams.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The NHS Long Term Plan committed that investment in mental health services will grow faster than the National Health Service budget overall for each of the next five years, creating a new ringfenced local investment fund worth at least £2.3 billion a year by 2023/24. In addition, funding for children and young people's mental health services, including mental health support teams, will grow faster than both overall NHS funding and total mental health spending.

Funding allocations will be made to local areas in consultation with NHS England and NHS Improvement regions to support the development of school or college-based mental health support teams in all regions, additional to clinical commissioning group baseline funding.

Details of the funding to be made available to individual systems will be decided through the five-year planning process.

■ Pregnancy: Mental Health Services**Barbara Keeley:**[\[276533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the NHS Long Term Plan Implementation Framework, what targets his Department has set for increased access to specialist community perinatal mental health services in 2019-20.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

NHS England has invested in better perinatal mental health care for new and expectant mothers, with at least 9,000 additional women receiving treatment last year. This represents significant progress against the target set out in the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health for at least 30,000 additional women each year to access evidence-based specialist perinatal mental health treatment by 2020/21.

The NHS Long Term Plan includes a commitment for a further 24,000 women to be able to access specialist perinatal mental health care by 2023/24, building on the additional 30,000 women who will access these services each year by 2020/21. Specialist care will also be available from preconception to 24 months after birth, which will provide an extra year of support.

■ Restraint Equipment: Dementia**Debbie Abrahams:** [\[276537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department plans to take to prevent online retailers from selling products that are labelled dementia restraints to the public.

Debbie Abrahams: [\[276538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department plans to take to raise awareness among online retailers of the risks and ethical implications of selling products that are labelled dementia restraints to the public.

Caroline Dineneage:

There is a robust legal framework relating to the use of restrictive practices, including the Human Rights Act 2008, Mental Health Act 1983, and the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Restrictive interventions should only be used in line with the legal framework, and by people with the appropriate training in the application of those practices, where there is a real possibility of harm to the person or to staff, the public or other. Mechanical restraints should never be a first line means of managing disturbed behaviour.

We will consider the most effective way to ensure all online retailers are made aware of the risks and ethical implications of selling products labelled in this way to the public.

The Government remains committed to delivering the Challenge on Dementia 2020 in full to make England the best place in the world for people with dementia to live.

HOME OFFICE**■ Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences: Victim Support Schemes****Jim Shannon:** [\[275191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support the Government is providing to victims of (a) domestic and (b) sexual abuse.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government is committed to tackling all forms of violence against women and girls. Since 2016 we have pledged increased funding of £100m to support victims of violence against women and girls (VAWG).

The funding has been used for specific services for victims and survivors of sexual violence. This includes £12.5m provided by the Ministry of Justice, of which £7.2m was allocated to 97 rape support services across England and Wales and £4.7m to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to deliver local support services for victims of Child Sexual Abuse across England and Wales.

From April 2019, rape and sexual abuse support services received an £800,000 increase in funding, allowing them to help more victims of sexual violence including

recent and non-recent child sexual abuse. This funding, now totalling £24 million over the next three years, will help provide advice, support and counselling to victims of these appalling crimes. We have also provided £150,000 per year core grant funding to national third sector organisations who support victims of rape and sexual violence since 2011.

We are also supporting victims of domestic and sexual abuse through the £17m VAWG Transformation Fund. From 2017 to 2020, the Government is funding 41 local areas to promote early intervention and prevention.

In addition funding has been allocated across a range of projects focused on supporting those affected by domestic abuse including; £8m specifically for children; £2m for female offenders; and £2m to improve the health service response to domestic abuse.

In November 2018, we announced £22m to provide over 2,220 new beds in refuges and other safe accommodation – supporting more than 19,000 survivors with a safe space to rebuild their lives.

There are a range of other Government funding sources which are supporting victims of domestic and sexual abuse including; the £15m Police Transformation Fund; the £9m Tampon Tax Fund; the £16.9m Children's Social Care Innovation Fund; £27m of funding to support 47 Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) in England and; £63m of annual funding to PCCs for Victims Services.

The Government has also recently committed to provide over £1m of funding per year, until 2021/22, for the seven national helplines which provide support to victims of domestic abuse, victims of stalking, perpetrators of abuse, victims of revenge porn and victims of honour-based abuse.

As part of the Government's continued commitment to tackle VAWG, this year we have published the draft Domestic Abuse Bill and the VAWG strategy refresh.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals

Paul Blomfield:

[\[252532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to page six of the Data Protection Impact Assessments cited in the Memorandum of Understanding on information sharing between the Home Office and Department for Work and Pensions and page nine of the Memorandum of Understanding on information sharing between the Home Office and HMRC on the EU Settlement Scheme, if he will place copies of those Data Protection Impact Assessments in the Library.

Paul Blomfield:

[\[252533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Equality Impact Assessment cited in the Memorandum of Understanding on information sharing between the Home Office and Department for Work and Pensions on the EU Settlement Scheme, if he will place a copy of that Equality Impact Assessment in the Library.

Caroline Nokes:

The Home Office has carried out a Data Protection Impact Assessment as part of the data sharing arrangements with Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs and the Department for Work and Pensions to support the EU Settlement Scheme, and a copy of this will be placed in the Library shortly.

As part of this process, we have had due regard, in accordance with the public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, to impacts on those who share a protected characteristic. This is reflected in the Policy Equality Statement for the EU Settlement Scheme, and a copy of this will be placed in the Library shortly.

■ Immigration: Windrush Generation**Afzal Khan:**[\[276279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether compensation awarded from the Windrush compensation scheme is taken into account in an assessment for an application for (a) universal credit, (b) tax credits and (c) other benefits.

Caroline Nokes:

The Treasury has agreed that payments made under the Windrush Compensation Scheme and the Windrush Urgent and Exceptional Payments Scheme will be disregarded on an extra-statutory basis in the calculation of Universal Credit and other DWP means-tested benefits.

Similarly, payments under, or in connection with, the Windrush Compensation scheme will be disregarded in full for 52 weeks from the date the payment is made when calculating for tax credit awards.

■ Police: Disciplinary Proceedings**Liz Saville Roberts:**[\[276577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 25 June 2019 to Question 267262 on Police: Disciplinary Proceedings, what information a written explanation is required to include in the event of an investigation going beyond 12 months.

Liz Saville Roberts:[\[276578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 25 June 2019 to Question 267262 on Police: Disciplinary Proceedings, what plans he has to ensure the (a) police and (b) Independent Office for Police Conduct take forward the next steps identified in the event of an investigation going beyond 12 months.

Liz Saville Roberts:[\[276579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 25 June 2019 to Question 267262 on Police: Disciplinary Proceedings, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of requiring a written explanation in the event of an investigation going beyond 12 months times on lowering investigation times; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The Government intends to legislate to establish a requirement for the police and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) to provide written notification to the Local Policing Body and, as appropriate, other prescribed parties, when an investigation into alleged police misconduct takes more than 12 months to complete.

A further notification will be required every 6 months thereafter if necessary. The notification will require the police or IOPC to provide an update on the progress of the investigation, an estimate of when it expects the report of the investigation to be submitted, an explanation for any delay and a summary of planned steps to bring the investigation to a conclusion.

This is the first time that the police or IOPC will have a statutory requirement to report on timeliness of investigations. This increased level of scrutiny is intended to improve accountability, and greater transparency will help to deliver further improvements in timeliness.

■ UK Visas and Immigration: Staff**Gill Furniss:**[\[276581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many staff are employed in the processing asylum applications in the UK Visa and Immigration team.

Caroline Nokes:

The number of staff who are employed by UK Visas and Immigration in the processing of asylum applications, is not held in a way that can be easily aggregated. To obtain this information would require detailed reporting against multiple cost centres and could only be obtained at disproportionate costs.

Decisions on asylum claims are made by decision makers in Asylum Operations. There are recruitment strategies in place to maintain staffing at the required levels to allow us to manage asylum intake and reduce the overall time to make initial asylum decisions.

All asylum claim lodged in the UK are carefully considered on their individual merits against a background of relevant case law and up to date country information.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Buildings: Fire Prevention****Mr Steve Reed:**[\[276199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the National Fire Chiefs Council or his Department's Independent Expert Panel have been invited to witness the large-scale fire safety tests commissioned by his Department in July 2019.

Kit Malthouse:

[Holding answer 16 July 2019]: Members of the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Independent Expert Advisory Panel were invited.

Mr Steve Reed:**[276200]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 11 July 2019 to Question 274551 on Buildings: Fire Prevention, what steps leaseholders are able to take in the event of being presented with high charges for non-cladding fire safety remedial work.

Kit Malthouse:

[Holding answer 16 July 2019]: The Government has made it clear that building owners should protect leaseholders from bearing the costs of remediation.

Specialist advice for help to understand leaseholders' rights can be accessed through the Leasehold Advisory Service (LEASE). The Government has allocated additional funding to LEASE to provide independent, free, initial advice to leaseholders on building safety issues to ensure they are aware of their rights and are supported to understand the terms of their leases. More information on LEASE, including how to contact them for advice, is available here: <https://www.lease-advice.org/>.

■ Buildings: Insulation**Mr Steve Reed:****[276196]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department is aware of buildings for which cladding has needed to be remediated on more than one occasion since June 2017.

Kit Malthouse:

[Holding answer 16 July 2019]: MHCLG is not aware of any cases where the cladding on a building has needed to be remediated on more than one occasion since June 2017.

Mr Steve Reed:**[276197]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, for what reasons his Department is not providing funds for the remediation of non-Aluminium composite cladding where it is found to be unsafe.

Kit Malthouse:

[Holding answer 16 July 2019]: Government intervention to provide funding for the removal of unsafe Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding is wholly exceptional. It is based on the unparalleled risk ACM poses, very real public safety concerns and the failure of many building owners to do the right thing by their residents.

Government intervention does not remove responsibility for overall building safety from the building owner and if fire safety risks are uncovered, they must remedy them, or potentially face enforcement action from the local authority. We have made it clear that building owners should protect leaseholders from bearing the costs of

remediation, and that the clearest way to ensure safety is to remove unsafe materials.

Mr Steve Reed:

[\[276198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference the article in the Oxford Mail entitled, Hockmore Tower among five Oxford blocks facing post Grenfell scrutiny, published 11 July 2019, what information his Department has provided to local authorities in July 2019 on the need to remediate high-pressure laminate cladding.

Kit Malthouse:

[Holding answer 16 July 2019]: The Department has not issued specific advice to local authorities on the remediation of High Pressure Laminate cladding (HPL).

The Department has published guidance to reiterate the importance of building owners assessing their buildings and ensuring that non-Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding systems are safe. Advice Note 14, published in 2017 and updated in December 2018, reiterates that the clearest way to ensure safety is to remove unsafe materials. This can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765761/Expert_Panel_advice_note_on_non-ACM.pdf

■ Housing: Construction

Julia Lopez:

[\[276602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent estimate he has made of the number of Local Plans which include a requirement for new homes to be accessible and adaptable.

Kit Malthouse:

At present, the Government does not collect this data. A recent report by Habinteg suggests that less than a third of all English local plans currently set specific requirements for a percentage of new homes to be built to accessible or adaptable standards.

We have strengthened policy in the revised National Planning Policy Framework, published in July 2018, so that local planning authorities are expected to put in place specific policies to address the housing needs of older and disabled people. We have also strengthened the policy approach to accessible housing by setting out an expectation that planning policies for housing should make use of government standards for accessible and adaptable housing.

■ Housing: Fire Prevention

Jim Shannon:

[\[274543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department has issued on fire safety for the construction of wooden dwellings.

Kit Malthouse:

The Building Regulations in England set minimum fire safety requirements for new homes and non-domestic buildings. They are couched in functional terms, and the Building Regulation guidance sets performance recommendations rather than prescribing the materials or technologies to be used. Similar provisions exist in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. For example, Building Regulation guidance for fire resistance is provided in terms of ratings, these can be achieved by a range of materials and designs (e.g. steel, concrete, wood) by demonstrating they have met the requirements through recognised test methods and classifications. The Guidance for England has recently been revised in a new clearer format and is available on-line at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-approved-document-b>

Leisure: Learning Disability**Mrs Kemi Badenoch:****[276263]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that local authorities provide adequate leisure and recreational facilities for people with learning disabilities.

Rishi Sunak:

The Government recognises that access to high-quality inclusive spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities.

In 2015, the Government sport strategy, *Sporting Future: A Strategy for an Active Nation* placed a focus on encouraging activity amongst those less likely to be active - including people with disabilities. The Government supports efforts that aim to encourage people with all forms of disability to become active and to fulfil their sporting potential.

The Activity Alliance's '*Inclusive Fitness Initiative*' is supporting leisure centres to become more welcoming and accessible environments to disabled people. Activity Alliance run the initiative in collaboration with Sport England and UK Active and aim to give the active leisure sector support to improve, modernise and invest in its facilities, with the ambition that every facility in the country complies with the Activity Alliance '*Inclusive Fitness Initiative*'.

In 2018-19 the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government committed over £15 million to support a robust package of new Government initiatives to support vibrant and inclusive open spaces to enable more people to participate in leisure activities. This included the Pocket Parks Plus programme which is providing funding for 198 community-led projects across England to create new or renovate existing parks. A number of the successful projects will be creating open spaces that address social inclusion - and increasing access for people with different disabilities to leisure and wellbeing activities.

■ Social Services and Transport: Expenditure

Bim Afolami: [\[276597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much money has been spent in each English local authority area on (a) social care, and (b) transport in each year since 2010.

Rishi Sunak:

Expenditure data on all services delivered by local authorities, including social care and transport, are published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing>.

Further detail on expenditure on adults' and children's social care are available at <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/adult-social-care-activity-and-finance-report> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/section-251-materials>.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ [Subject Heading to be Assigned]

John Spellar: [\[911993\]](#)

What recent discussions he has had with his (a) European and (b) other international counterparts on the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK regularly discusses the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela in international fora.

This includes with our European counterparts, as well as during the visits to the UK by the Colombian President Duque and US Secretary of State Pompeo.

Together with our international partners, we continue to call for unimpeded access for humanitarian aid in to Venezuela.

Christian Matheson: [\[911994\]](#)

What progress his Department has made on achieving sustainable development goal 4 on education for children.

Rory Stewart:

We are one of the largest bilateral donors to education globally

Between 2015 and 2019 we supported 14.3 million children to gain a decent education of which at least 5.8m were girls.

DFID's focus is on ensuring that children have access to a quality education.

My ambition is that DFID increases the number of its education specialists in the field to support the major shift required in education systems and teaching to deliver improved learning for children.

Andrew Rosindell: [\[911995\]](#)

What steps he is taking to improve English literacy throughout the Commonwealth.

Harriett Baldwin:

DFID is tackling the learning crisis by supporting children to learn the basics of literacy, including in Commonwealth countries.

We are investing in English language learning, for example through our new skills hub, which includes Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria.

We also work directly to boost the quality of teaching in English, for example through the Girls' Education Challenge.

Faisal Rashid: [\[911998\]](#)

What recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the humanitarian situation on the US-Mexico border.

Rory Stewart:

I share the hon Gentleman's concerns about the reports of poor conditions and overcrowding in US detention facilities on the border with Mexico.

I very much welcome the steps already taken by the Administration and Congress to address these issues, including the emergency funding signed off by the President on 1 July.

These are difficult issues, and the UK has also struggled sometimes to get this right.

But we very much encourage our US friends to continue to work to improve the conditions in these facilities.

I have seen the excellent work the US has done around the world to promote human rights, and so it is important that they uphold these standards as they continue to tackle the situation at the US-Mexico border.

Martyn Day: [\[911999\]](#)

What support his Department provides to victims of forced displacement.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The UK remains at the forefront of refugee responses globally, providing both immediate lifesaving aid and access to jobs and education.

We helped develop and agree the new Global Compact on Refugees and have backed the call for a new UN High Level Panel to tackle internal displacement.

John Howell: [\[912000\]](#)

What steps he is taking to ensure that UK aid to the Occupied Palestinian Territories facilitates peacebuilding with Israel.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

DFID's people-to-people programme builds support for peace by bringing together Palestinians and Israelis to promote tolerance and work on shared problems.

So far, over 1,200 young Israelis and Palestinians have taken part in holy site tours aimed at increasing understanding of religious tolerance. Ultimately the only way to achieve peace is through a negotiated two-state solution.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Exports: Import Duties

Jo Stevens:

[275226]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what estimate his Department has made of the annual gross value of tariffs that would be paid by UK businesses on exports in the event that the UK leaves the EU without an agreement.

George Hollingbery:

[Holding answer 16 July 2019]: The UK remains committed to leaving the EU with a deal prior to the 31st October, however should it leave without a deal, UK producers may face new tariffs on some of their exports, which importers of their products will be liable to pay. The annual gross value of these tariffs would be subject to the volume of trade that is likely to take place after exit, as well as the tariff rates applied by specific trading partners.

Information on the current EU's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) tariff rates are published by the Commission at the following website: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018R1602&from=EN>

UK producers who export to existing preferential trading partners by virtue of existing EU free trade agreements may face these countries' MFN tariff rates, but only where these agreements have not been successfully rolled over prior to leaving. To date, the UK has signed or agreed in principle agreements with countries that account for 63% of the UK's trade with all the countries with which the UK is seeking continuity in the event of a potential No Deal (based on total goods and services trade - imports and exports - with the UK, according to ONS data, 2018). Work is continuing intensively on remaining agreements.

There will be no change to the tariff rates faced by UK exporters exporting to countries with which we do not have a preferential trading agreement.

■ GATT

Neil O'Brien:

[275257]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which countries have used GATT Article XXIV to ensure tariff-free access to their markets in each of the last ten years.

George Hollingbery:

The WTO maintains a list of all agreements that WTO Members have entered into in order to eliminate tariffs on trade between them. A full list of such agreements concluded since 1995 can be found on the Regional Trade Agreements database on the WTO website, at: <http://rtais.wto.org/UI/PublicAllRTAListAccession.aspx>

■ Surveillance: Human Rights**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:** [276582]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to comply with the recommendation of the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression to impose an immediate moratorium on the export, sale, transfer, use or servicing of privately developed surveillance tools until a human rights-compliant safeguards regime is in place.

Graham Stuart:

The Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria provide a thorough risk assessment framework for considering licence applications, and take into account the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in the country of final destination.

Licensing decisions are based on the most up-to-date information and analysis available at the time, including reports from NGOs and our overseas network.

■ Surveillance: Philippines**Lloyd Russell-Moyle:** [276583]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether the UK exported surveillance equipment to the Philippines in 2019.

Graham Stuart:

The Government publishes Official Statistics (on a quarterly and annual basis) about export licences granted, refused and revoked on GOV.UK. These reports contain detailed information by destination, including the overall value, type (e.g. Military, Other) and a summary of the items covered by these licences. These can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/strategic-export-controls-licensing-data>.

The data currently provides details of licences up to 31 March 2019. Information about the period 1 April to 30 June will be published in October 2019 and data covering the period 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019 will be published in January 2020.

All export licences are issued in strict accordance with the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria.

JUSTICE**■ HM Courts and Tribunals Service: Reform****Yasmin Qureshi:** [263790]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the total spending was on (a) academic research and (b) public consultations undertaken by his Department to inform the HMCTS reform programme in each financial year since 2011-12.

Paul Maynard:

HMCTS and the Ministry of Justice have undertaken a number of formal written consultation exercises since the Reform Programme began in 2016. This included the Ministry of Justice consultation on the Reform Programme entitled Transforming our Justice System, which set out the Government's broad approach to reform and sought views on three specific sets of proposals: the assisted digital strategy; automatic online conviction and statutory standard penalty; and tribunal panel composition.

HMCTS has spent the following amounts on academic research for evaluation of reform:

2016/17: £220,000 for research on the Citizen user Experience

2017/18: £50,000 for research on the Professional User Experience

2017/18: £40,000 for a survey of SSCS appellants digital capability

2018/19: £49,000 for LSE evaluation of video hearings in tax

2018/19: £47,976 for research on Flexible Operating Hours

HMCTS undertakes public consultation when reorganising estate or closing a tribunal building. This work is conducted by civil servants alongside other duties and it is not possible to capture an accurate assessment of the time and cost spent on this.

Legal Aid Scheme**Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[276509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the number of not-for-profit legal aid providers that have closed in each year for the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement.

Paul Maynard:

The LAA does not hold data on Not For Profit (NfP) organisation closures, only whether they hold a contract to deliver legal aid services. Under the LAA's contracting regime, an organisation may be contracted to deliver services from one or multiple offices. Contracts may be ended by either party; providers may choose to withdraw from the whole contract, an office or a category of law or the LAA may take action should a provider breach its contract obligations. All contracted providers make their own commercial decisions and withdrawal from a legal aid contract may not be as a result of a closure. For example, NfPs may withdraw from a legal aid contract but continue to operate reliant on other funding, or may choose to consolidate offices but continue to deliver larger volumes of work across a wider area. The table below shows the number of NfP providers (at office level) holding a legal aid contract in any given year. While NfP organisations play a role in helping people access justice, they are not the sole means. We have 1,439 organisations delivering legal aid contracts across the England and Wales – 1,356 of which are with legal firms rather than the not-for-profit sector which includes law centres. We spent £1.6 billion on legal aid last year and in addition to the Civil Legal Advice Telephone service, we are investing

£5m in innovative technologies to help people access legal support wherever they are. Financial

Year 2010/11 2011/12 2012/13 2013/14 2014/15 2015/16 2016/17 2017/18 2018/19 2019
September 2019/20596495456395397320311295285233213

■ Lincoln Prison: Prisoners' Release

Karen Lee: [\[275821\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Lincoln for reporting Year 1 February 2018 to 31 January 2019, published on 8 July 2019, what plans his Department has to reduce the 30 per cent of prisoners that leave HMP Lincoln to homelessness or to no fixed abode.

Karen Lee: [\[275822\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Lincoln for reporting Year 1 February 2018 to 31 January 2019, what plans his Department has to tackle the 49 per cent increase in incidents of self-harm recorded at HMP Lincoln between 2017 and 2019.

Karen Lee: [\[275823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Lincoln for reporting Year 1 February 2018 to 31 January 2019, what representations has he made to that Board on its statement that there was an extremely tardy manner in which the numerous repair and maintenance jobs across the establishment were dealt with.

Karen Lee: [\[275824\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Lincoln for reporting Year 1 February 2018 to 31 January 2019, what assessment has he made of the adequacy of the provision of rehabilitative programmes and courses offered to prisoners upon their release by HMP Lincoln.

Karen Lee: [\[275825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Lincoln for reporting Year 1 February 2018 to 31 January 2019, published on 8 July 2019, what representations has he made to that Board on its statement that there was an apparent lack of co-ordination across government departments to tackle the high level of homelessness of discharged prisoners.

Karen Lee: [\[275826\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of support provided to disabled prisoners at HMP Lincoln.

Karen Lee:

[\[275827\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of the stay of six weeks or less for 60 per cent of prisoners in HMP Lincoln on the ability of that prison to provide adequate rehabilitative services.

Robert Buckland:

I am currently considering the content and recommendations of the report from the IMB at HMP Lincoln which was published on 8 July 2019. I will respond to the report as soon as that process is completed, and I will ensure a copy of the response is sent to the Hon Member for Lincoln.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Pay**

Richard Burgon:

[\[275792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, on how many occasions staff have had their pay deducted for not being able to complete a shift due to their incapacity following an assault in each year since 2010.

Robert Buckland:

HMPPS does not deduct pay if an employee is sent home as a result of sickness or if they have been assaulted at work.

HMPPS is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff in England and Wales, with all staff having access to a comprehensive occupational health service and employee assistance programme. HMPPS has systems in place to deal with perpetrators of violence against staff quickly and robustly, with serious incidents referred to the police for prosecution.

■ **Personal Names: Deed Poll**

Heidi Allen:

[\[275802\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether he has plans to end the requirement for the consent of a spouse when entering into a change of name deed to be enrolled at the Royal Courts of Justice using form LOC020.

Paul Maynard:

The Government has no current plans to end the requirement, in the Enrolment of Deeds (Change of Name) Regulations 1994, that a court should satisfy itself that the spouse or civil partner is aware when an applicant wishes to change their name through the courts by deed poll. This recognises that the change of name may have implications other than for the applicant. It is not mandatory in all cases – an applicant may seek to demonstrate to the court that there is good reason to dispense with such consent.

This process is for those who wish to have a court-based verification and validation of the change of name. Under the common law, it is open to a person aged 16 or above to change their name by deed poll themselves through the 'unenrolled' process. This

simply requires the deed to be witnessed and attested by the signature of two witnesses.

■ Prisoners: Human Trafficking

Richard Burgon: [\[275794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2019 to Question 205340 on Prisoners: Human Trafficking, what estimate he has made of the cost of collating that information.

Edward Argar:

In order to gather this information, the Department would need to check the c.4,000 individual records of women held in prison. We estimate that this would cost of approximately £16,700.

■ Prisons: Staff

Richard Burgon: [\[276574\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, on how many occasions prison staff in each prison had their pay deducted for not being able to complete a shift as a result of an assault in 2018.

Robert Buckland:

HMPPS does not deduct pay if an employee is sent home as a result of sickness or if they have been assaulted at work.

HMPPS is committed to safeguarding the safety and wellbeing of its staff. A comprehensive occupational health service and employee assistance programme is available to all staff and systems are in place to deal with perpetrators of violence against staff quickly and robustly. Safety remains a top priority and we recently changed the law to double sentences for those that attack our hardworking staff. Additionally, we introduced body-worn cameras and are rolling out PAVA incapacitant spray to keep officers safe.

■ Probate

Simon Hart: [\[265484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the average length of time for probate to be granted in the last (a) three months and (b) financial year.

Paul Maynard:

Official statistics are not published on the average length of time from receipt of the application to the issue of a grant of probate. Internal management information, which is not subject to the rigorous quality assurance processes of official statistics, however shows that in the last financial year (2018/2019) the average time was three weeks.

Whilst timeliness data are not yet available for the last three months, it is clear that waiting times have increased. Urgent action has been taken to address these

temporary delays, staffing has been increased and the digital service further improved, and as a result waiting times are starting to reduce.

There are no prescribed target times for dealing with probate applications. The recent increase in waiting times has been caused by a combination of an increased volume of incoming work and the transition to a new case management IT system. The move to the new system meant that staff had to spend time being trained and familiarising themselves with the system – which also had some initial performance issues that have been addressed.

■ Trials: Sexual Offences

Richard Burgon:

[\[276572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average waiting time was for a not guilty plea trial for an alleged sexual offence in each court in (a) 2011 and (b) 2018.

Paul Maynard:

The information requested about Crown Court waiting times can be found in the attached excel document. However, due to small numbers of defendants pleading not guilty to sexual offences at magistrates' court, we are unable to supply the average time between first listing and trial start date – basing an average on such small numbers can skew the mean and result in the figures being unrepresentative.

The overall median waiting time in Crown Courts for defendants in sexual offence cases tends to be higher than that for other offences due to a lower guilty plea rate for these cases. However, from a peak of 25.9 weeks in Quarter three 2018, the average waiting time has fallen by 12% to 22.7 weeks in Quarter one 2019.

Performance, demand and waiting times in the courts are constantly reviewed to balance sitting days with waiting times, disposals and receipts. Resources are adjusted when required. Demand has been falling in recent years and sitting days have been reduced accordingly. Waiting times for trials in the Crown Court for 2018 have been the lowest since 2014, despite the challenge of increasingly complex cases.

Attachments:

1. Crown Court Info [Crown Court Info.xls]

■ Working Links

Sarah Newton:

[\[275187\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps he is taking to ensure creditors of Working Links are paid for services provided on behalf of the Government.

Robert Buckland:

As set out in the Secretary of State's Direction of 8 May, it has been concluded, on this occasion, that it is reasonable for Government to protect Permitted Subcontractors who suffered losses as they relate to the collapse of Working Links and their Community Rehabilitation Companies. These organisations are directly

involved in the delivery of vital frontline probation services. Further to the Direction, we have worked with the Permitted Subcontractors to agree the monies that are owed, after undertaking extensive assurance checks against their Proof of Debt applications. We are now in the process of signing the Grant Agreements with each of the Permitted Subcontractors and validating their payment details in order to expedite payment of the monies owed.

We have been very clear that this is a unique response to a unique and specific set of circumstances. This should not be viewed as setting a precedent for future scenarios.

■ Youth Offending Teams: Grants

Richard Burgon: [\[276570\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2019 to Question 252658 on Youth Offending Teams: Grants, what the value was of youth justice grants allocated to each local authority to fund Youth Offending Teams in 2010-11.

Richard Burgon: [\[276571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 5 June 2019 to Question 252658 on Youth Offending Teams: Grants and with reference to allocation of funding for 2019-20, what the value was of youth justice grants allocated to each local authority to fund Youth Offending Teams in 2010-11.

Edward Argar:

The value of youth justice grants allocated to each local authority to fund Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) in 2010-2011, is set out in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. Table: Funding paid to YOTs [Table for PQ 276570 and 276571.xlsx]

TRANSPORT

■ Electric Vehicles: Charging Points

Andrew Percy: [\[275731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many electric vehicle charge points there are in the UK.

Michael Ellis:

Government funding and leadership, alongside private investment has supported the installation of more than 20,000 public chargepoints, according to figures made available by the charging point information platform zap-map. This includes over 2,000 rapid chargepoints – one of the largest networks in Europe. Members of the public and businesses are able to install chargepoints without Government support, and information on these are not routinely collected

Our grant schemes and the £400m public-private Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund will see thousands more electric vehicle chargepoints installed across the UK.

The Road to Zero strategy published last year, includes new commitments to expand significantly electric and low emission vehicle infrastructure across the country.

■ High Speed Two: Freedom of Information

Jon Trickett: [\[276515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of freedom of information requests received by HS2 Limited were resolvable requests withheld in full for (a) 2015, (b) 2016, (c) 2017, (d) 2018 and (e) the first quarter of 2019.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

From 2015 up to the end of first quarter of 2019, HS2 Ltd received 1,224 Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests. Where an exemption (FOI) or an exception (EIR) applied, all of the requested information was withheld on 239 occasions. The proportion of resolvable requests withheld in full for each period is as follows: (a) 2015, 12% (b) 2016, 19% (c) 2017, 25% (d) 2018, 19% and (e) first quarter of 2019, 24%.

■ Manston Airport

Andy McDonald: [\[275761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the implications of the purchase of Manston airport site by Riveroak Strategic Partners from Stone Hill Park in July 2019 for (a) his freight network capacity plan in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal and (b) the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Manston Airport) Special Development Order 2019.

Andy McDonald: [\[275762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what due diligence his Department undertook on Riveroak Strategic Partners before that company's purchase of Manston Airport in July 2019.

Chris Grayling:

The Department worked with both Stone Hill Park and River Oak Strategic Partners prior to the completion of sale of Manston Airport, and are satisfied that the sale does not have any implications for our contingency plans.

Andy McDonald: [\[275764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what role he played in Riveroak Strategic Partners' application for a Development Consent Order on the site of Manston Airport; and what the (a) process and (b) timeframe is for his granting of consent after the Planning Inspectorate's examination has concluded.

Michael Ellis:

The Secretary of State for Transport has played no role in RiverOak Strategic Partners Ltd application for a Development Consent Order on the site of Manston airport.

The Examination of this application concluded on 9th July 2019. The Examining Authority now have three months to write their report and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will then have three months in which to issue a decision.

■ Motorcycles: Greater London

Kate Hoey:

[\[275650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many road accidents have been recorded in London involving learner motorcyclists in each of the last five years.

Michael Ellis:

The department does not collect data specifically on whether drivers and riders involved in road accidents are learners. The department collects data on personal injury road accidents reported to the police, including contributory factors which the police select when they attend the scene. This does not assign blame for the accident but gives an indication of factors the attending officer thought contributed to the accident.

The number of accidents in London with a contributory factor of 'Learner or inexperienced driver/rider' being allocated for the years 2013 to 2017 is given in the table below:

YEAR	'LEARNER OR INEXPERIENCED DRIVER/RIDER' ALLOCATED TO ANY ROAD USER	'LEARNER OR INEXPERIENCED DRIVER/RIDER' ALLOCATED TO A MOTORCYCLE
2013	201	74
2014	258	96
2015	223	98
2016	278	101
2017	544	248

Source: DfT Stats 19

Please note that this does not simply record the presence of a learner or inexperienced driver/rider, but indicates where inexperience of driving in general, or inexperience of the particular type of vehicle, caused or contributed to the accident.

■ Railways: Standards

Andy McDonald: [\[275204\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the finding of the July 2019 Railway Gazette International report that the real time performance speed of trains in the UK were 13th in a table of world rankings; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Jones:

The type of role that railways play, for example the relative mix of local and commuter demand versus regional and longer distance travel, varies from country to country. The UK has one of the most intensively utilised rail networks in Europe, with many commuter services and over 4,000 extra services per week having been added over the past couple of years. The UK rail system has some of the highest passenger satisfaction levels in Europe, and the recent Transport Focus National Rail Passenger Survey Spring 2019 reported that the biggest single factor impacting on passenger satisfaction was punctuality, at a 36% contribution, whilst 'journey length' only made a 7% contribution. Furthermore, to the limited extent that journey length is considered important, 84% of passengers surveyed were satisfied with 'the length of time the journey was scheduled to take (speed)', the third highest satisfaction level out of the 40 different aspects of a rail journey assessed.

Once construction of HS2 has been completed trains would be capable of operations up to 360km/h, however HS2 is about much more than just speed, it brings enhanced capacity, in particular released capacity on the existing rail network connectivity and wider economic benefits.

■ Road Signs and Markings: Languages

Keith Vaz: [\[276150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, in what languages he plans to display electronic road signs on road closures on A-roads and motorways.

Keith Vaz: [\[276151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department plans to spend on displaying electronic road signs in foreign languages on A-roads and motorways.

Keith Vaz: [\[276152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, in which parts of the UK his Department plans to install road signs on road closures in foreign languages.

Michael Ellis:

Using foreign languages on Variable Message Signs (VMS) to provide roadworks information was piloted in early 2019 for a limited time on the M6 and A66 in Cumbria. There are no current plans to roll out the use of foreign languages on VMS in any other parts of the country.

■ Roads: Safety**Andy McDonald:** [\[275760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the (a) finding in the July 2019 Highways England Strategic Road Network Star Rating Report that for the funding period 2015-2020 60 per cent of journeys on Highways England's single carriageways are forecast to be below the three-star road safety benchmark under the EuroRAP/iRAP rating system for the safety of road infrastructure and (b) statement in the March 2015 Highways England 2015-2020 delivery plan that the organisation will ensure that by the end of 2020 more than 90 per cent of travel on the strategic road network will be on roads with a safety rating of EuroRAP3* (or equivalent).

Michael Ellis:

The Road Investment Strategy (RIS 1) 2015 - 2020 has enabled Highways England to deliver unprecedented levels of investment on the strategic road network in England and the star rating system is an assessment tool which Highways England continue to use to assist them in prioritising future investment opportunities.

On single carriageways Highways England are committed to investing £77 million in improvement schemes by 2020, which is over and above enhancements through routine maintenance such as new road markings, signing and vegetation clearance. Highways England will review the star rating of the network when it is re-evaluated as part of RIS 2.

TREASURY**■ Climate Change****Daniel Zeichner:** [\[275212\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of imposing taxes on polluting goods to tackle climate change.

Robert Jenrick:

The Government has legislated to amend its long-term greenhouse gas emissions target to reach net zero by 2050.

The Government has a number of policies in place to tax polluting goods in order to tackle climate change. These include the Carbon Price Support rate, a tax on fossil fuels used in power generation, and the Climate Change Levy, a tax on businesses' consumption of gas, electricity and solid fuels.

■ Diesel Fuel: Excise Duties**Alan Brown:** [\[275232\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 8 July 2019 to Question 272300, what the diesel duty revenues were from (a) shipping, (b) agriculture,

(c) road users, (d) rail and (e) any other sectoral information held by his Department in each of the last 10 years.

Robert Jenrick:

Duty is collected when fuel leaves a refinery or import terminal, so HMRC data does not break down diesel duty revenues by sectors where fuel is used. HMRC publishes information on historic fuel duty receipts on Page 5 of the [Hydrocarbon Oils Bulletin](#). This shows receipts for diesel taxed at the full rate of duty for road use and also for rebated 'gas oil'. This refers to marked diesel which is taxed at a reduced rate of duty because it is intended for off road use in sectors such as agriculture and construction, as well as for maritime and rail transport.

■ **Pay**

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[275158\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that employees are not inadvertently penalised because of incorrect earning reports by employers.

Jesse Norman:

HMRC continually monitor the data provided by employers through Real Time Information (RTI) to understand issues, drive improvements and help employers ensure their returns are correct. While incorrect data is sometimes submitted, HMRC systems have been designed to use different mixes of that data to match records correctly where possible. HMRC and DWP work together to ensure that any issues with data are resolved quickly.

■ **Self-employed**

Alan Brown:

[\[275231\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to support self-employed professionals and consultants.

Jesse Norman:

The Government is committed to supporting self-employed professionals and consultants. From April 2019, the UK will have increased its Personal Allowance by over 90% in less than a decade. The self-employed have also been given access to the full rate of the new State Pension, worth over £2,000 a year more to a self-employed individual than under the previous system.

Budget 2018 announced that the Government is extending the New Enterprise Allowance, to help people start a business; introducing a £10m pilot to support self-employed training; and equalising the treatment of all self-employed people with respect to the Universal Credit Minimum Income Floor.

■ Tobacco: Smuggling**Carolyn Harris:** [\[275233\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will ensure that economic operators who are unable to comply with the Tobacco Products (Traceability and Security Features) Regulations 2019 due to software issues will not be penalised.

Robert Jenrick:

The Tobacco Products (Traceability and Security Features) Regulations 2019 require the movement of tobacco products to be recorded by economic operators through the supply chain.

Tobacco manufacturers are required to provide economic operators with the software necessary to record movements.

If an economic operator is unable to comply with the Regulations due to software issues, HM Revenue & Customs will consider what action to take on a case-by-case basis according to the facts of the particular case.

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Child Maintenance Service****Faisal Rashid:** [\[275246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department has plans to increase (a) funding and (b) staffing of the Child Maintenance Service.

Will Quince:

Child Maintenance Service funding and staffing is determined as part of the funding settlement that DWP receives to provide the range of services that it provides. DWP, along with all other Government Departments, is currently agreeing its budgets for the approaching Spending Review period with HM Treasury. No decisions on the level of future budgets has been agreed at this point but is expected to be resolved in the latter part of 2019.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Marketing**Frank Field:** [\[275119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what her Department's budget is for advertising and marketing in 2019-20.

Will Quince:

The Department for Work and Pensions is the biggest Government department with around 22 million citizens depending on our services on a daily basis. However, we are conscious that many people who want information about the services and support we provide won't be aware of the different Government channels they can use to access that information, or may not have easy access to them. Equally, it is right that we advertise our services widely so that, should people need urgent support, they will

have a level of awareness about where they can find that help and what that support might look like. Actively trying to reach the widest possible audience around the country is both necessary and responsible. This is in line with other Government departments.

The current predicted DWP communications budget for advertising and marketing in 2019-20 is £13,332,000. This budget is constantly under review as we need to be flexible, ensure best value for money for the taxpayer and meet our responsibility to communicate Government policies effectively.

■ Flexible Support Fund and Universal Credit

Neil Coyle:

[\[275211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans her Department has to increase awareness of the (a) universal support and (b) flexible support fund.

Alok Sharma:

Alongside the Universal Credit telephony and face to face support for non-digital and vulnerable claimants, The Help to Claim service is being delivered from 1 April 2019 by Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland. Some aspects of this were previously delivered by Local Authorities before 31 March 2019 under the name "Universal Support".

DWP works together with Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland through the Help to Claim partnership to ensure that support is signposted for claimants and partners: this is not a fund but a support offer for claimants making their claim to Universal Credit through to receiving their first payment.

The Flexible Support Fund (FSF) is a discretionary fund that work coaches can use to support eligible claimants to get closer to or move into work. On 11 January 2019, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced that the FSF could also be used more widely to pay for upfront childcare costs until the claimant receives their first wage. The availability of this fund is actively promoted in jobcentres and to all claimants who might benefit.

■ Industrial Diseases: Death

Daniel Zeichner:

[\[275214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, for what reasons his Department does not record deaths caused by (a) industrial disease and (b) other occupational hazards after the age of 75.

Justin Tomlinson:

The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) estimates of the annual number of deaths linked to past exposures at work include deaths occurring at all ages. However, analyses of national mortality data based on the last occupation of the deceased recorded on death certificates, such as the mesothelioma analyses published by HSE, do not include deaths beyond age 74. This is because it is known that the accuracy of occupational information recorded on death certificates declines for older

ages. Therefore, the data on the last occupation of the deceased is only coded for those aged 16 to 74 in England and Wales by the Office for National Statistics.

■ Mesothelioma: Death

Daniel Zeichner: [\[275215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the number of deaths caused by mesothelioma in each of the last three years.

Justin Tomlinson:

The number of mesothelioma deaths in Great Britain occurring in each of the last three years for which data are available is provided in the following table:

YEAR	2015	2016	2017
Number of mesothelioma deaths*	2547	2606	2523

Figures for 2018 are not yet available due to the length of time taken for some mesothelioma deaths occurring in a given year to be registered.

**All deaths where the death certificate mentioned mesothelioma within the description of the cause of death.*

■ Pension Credit

Clive Lewis: [\[274594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how long on average it takes to (a) agree and (b) allocate pension credit to eligible claimants.

Guy Opperman:

The specific information requested is not available.

■ Pension Credit and Universal Credit

Clive Lewis: [\[274595\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps she is taking to improve accessibility to pension credit and universal credit for pensioners.

Guy Opperman:

Pension Credit is an important benefit specifically intended to help the poorest pensioners. There are over 1.6m pensioners already claiming Pension Credit worth over £5billion a year. However, the Government wants to ensure that all pensioners eligible can claim the Pension Credit to which they are rightly entitled.

We also welcome and encourage initiatives to promote take up of Pension Credit by national and local organisations who may often be best placed to understand the local circumstances and needs in the community. For this reason we have developed the Pension Credit toolkit, as an on-line tool for agencies and welfare rights

organisations to use in order to encourage Pension Credit take-up. It can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pension-credit-toolkit>

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

Organisations can use the Pension Credit calculator <https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator> to help people check if they are likely to be eligible and get an estimate of what they may receive.

In addition, the DWP targets activity on engaging with people who may be eligible to benefits at pivotal stages, such as when they claim State Pension or report a change in their circumstances. The DWP uses a wide range of channels to communicate information about benefits to potential claimants; including information on <https://gov.uk/> but also in leaflets and by telephone. DWP staff in Pension Centres and Jobcentres including visiting officers are able to provide help and advice about entitlement to benefits, as are staff in Local Authorities who administer Housing Benefit.

People can telephone either the Pension Service helpline for general enquiries on 0800 731 0469 or those wishing to claim Pension Credit can do so by calling 0800 99 1234.

Universal Credit is designed to target resources at those that need them most and to provide support for people who cannot work or need help moving towards the labour market.

For those that are unable to access or use digital services, assistance to make and maintain their claim is available via the Freephone Universal Credit helpline on 0800 328 5644 and face-to-face support is available in Jobcentres. In exceptional circumstances, a home visit can be arranged to support a claimant in making and maintaining their claim.

Additionally, claimants can access support with their Universal Credit application through the Citizen's Advice Help to Claim service which, offers tailored, practical support online, over the phone, and face-to-face. You can contact an adviser through the free national Help to Claim phone service:

England: 0800 144 8 444

Wales: 08000 241 220

Scotland: 0800 023 2581

We are continuously reviewing and improving the service for people who claim Universal Credit to ensure that it is accessible and responsive to their needs. This

includes how they are identified and supported, either from our own staff or via referrals from local services.

■ Social Security Benefits

Ian Lavery:

[275194]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the extent to which people are excluded from unemployment statistics as a result of not being eligible for social security benefits.

Alok Sharma:

The UK's official measure of unemployment is produced by the independent ONS and based on the International Labour Organisation's long-standing definition of unemployment: persons without work, available for work in the next 2 weeks, and who have actively sought work in the last 4 weeks.

The latest available statistics were released by the ONS on 11 June 2019 and show an unemployment rate (for ages 16+) of 3.8% - the lowest since 1974. This statistic is estimated using responses to the Labour Force Survey and is unrelated to a person's eligibility for social security benefits.

■ Universal Credit

Chris Ruane:

[275122]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the cost to her Department of fraudulent universal credit claims since the roll-out of universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

The Department is open and transparent about the cost of fraud and error in the benefit system, publishing our National "Fraud and Error in the Benefit System" statistics each year which detail the amount we estimate is lost to both fraud and error across all benefits.

The latest publication to Gov.uk was made on 9 May 2019 and contains estimates of fraud and error in Universal Credit. The publication can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fraud-and-error-in-the-benefit-system-financial-year-2018-to-2019-estimates>

As UC expenditure increases, we would also expect to see an increase in the value of fraud and error. We also expect a further increase as UC involves significantly expanding the Department's caseload and expenditure to include Tax Credits, which were previously administered by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs.

The design of UC is expected to lead to a reduction in overpayments across welfare. UC allows us to adjust benefit entitlement in line with changing circumstances in real time. Internal and external data matches are increasingly helping to inform benefit payments and alerting staff to check for any undeclared changes in people's circumstances.

Chris Ruane:

[\[275123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate she has made of the number of fraudulent universal credit loan claims since the roll-out of those loans.

Alok Sharma:

Advances are designed to ensure that the most vulnerable claimants receive the money they need to live on during their transition to Universal Credit (UC).

It is important to make clear that the vast majority of claims to UC Advances are legitimate.

As at the end of June 2019, potential fraudulent advance claims equate to less than 1 per cent of all Universal Credit claims.

The Department takes this issue very seriously and will investigate all claims where fraud may have been committed. Indeed, we have set up a dedicated team to investigate this specific type of fraud.

We are also committed to the use of penalties such as prosecutions and tough financial penalties to discourage this fraudulent behaviour.

■ Universal Credit: Fraud

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[276511\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent steps he is taking to tackle universal credit fraud.

Alok Sharma:

The Department takes its obligation to prevent, detect and investigate fraud very seriously and will investigate all claims where fraud may have been committed. We have recently set up a dedicated team to investigate a specific type of emergent fraud, and we are also committed to the use of penalties such as prosecutions and tough financial penalties to discourage fraudulent behaviour.

The Department has also recently been working to further improve knowledge and awareness of Universal Credit (UC) fraud amongst Jobcentre and Service Centre staff. Guidance has also been issued to ensure that all staff are aware how to quickly refer cases of suspected fraud to the Department's Counter-fraud team.

Most welfare losses, across Government, arise from claimants failing to report changes of circumstances. UC provides a single, digital interface through which claimants can more easily report these changes. UC also allows us to adjust benefit entitlement in line with changing circumstances in real time. Internal and external data matches are increasingly helping to inform benefit payments and alerting staff to check for any undeclared changes in people's circumstances. Once UC is fully rolled out, we expect cross-welfare losses to fraud, error and overpayments to be reduced by around £1 billion per year

As of June 2019, potential fraudulent advance claims equate to less than 1 per cent of all Universal Credit claims.

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[276513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps her Department is taking to support victims of universal credit scams.

Alok Sharma:

The Department takes benefit fraud very seriously and is committed to taking appropriate action when it is detected.

If a claimant has been the victim of fraud, and has not benefitted financially in any way, they will not be asked to repay the money. The Department considers all cases on their individual merits and decisions are made on the strength of the evidence provided.

The Department has been working to improve knowledge and awareness of advances fraud amongst Jobcentre and Service Centre staff. Guidance has also been issued to ensure that staff are aware how to refer cases of suspected fraud to the Department's Counter-fraud team.

Most welfare losses, across Government, arise from claimants failing to report changes of circumstances, Universal Credit (UC) provides a single, digital interface through which claimants can more easily report these changes. As such, once UC is fully rolled out, we expect cross-welfare losses to fraud, error and overpayments to be reduced by around £1 billion per year.

■ **Universal Credit: Proof of Identity**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[276512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to ensure accurate verification of universal credit claimants who request an advance.

Alok Sharma:

As of June 2019, potential fraudulent advance claims equate to less than 1 per cent of all Universal Credit claims.

The Department has been working to improve knowledge and awareness of advances fraud amongst Jobcentre and Service Centre staff. Guidance has also been issued to ensure that staff are aware how to refer cases of suspected fraud to the Department's Counter-fraud team.

We are developing our service iteratively and improving any areas in the service that may currently be presenting issues, to minimise the risk of fraud while ensuring that we can continue to provide financial support to those claimants who need it.

We cannot share advance detail of the specific security improvements we are making but this includes improving our process for verifying a claimant's circumstances.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

CABINET OFFICE

■ **The European Union (Withdrawal) Act and Common Frameworks**

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr David Lidington): [\[HCWS1732\]](#)

I am today laying before Parliament a report, 'The European Union (Withdrawal) Act and Common Frameworks - 26 March 2019 to 25 June 2019' as required by paragraph 4 of Schedule 3 to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018.

The report is available on Gov.uk and details the progress made in discussions between the UK Government and devolved administrations regarding common frameworks in the fourth reporting period covered under the legislation, and sets out that no 'freezing' regulations have been brought forward under section 12 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act.

The publication of the report reflects the Government's continued commitment to transparency.

Attachments:

1. Section 12 - Common Frameworks report[Section 12 report.pdf]

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ **UK Support and Funding for International Criminal Justice**

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr Jeremy Hunt): [\[HCWS1729\]](#)

Today we mark the Day of International Criminal Justice, which provides an opportunity to update Parliament on the UK's support for the principles and institutions of international justice in the previous calendar year.

Support for international criminal justice and international humanitarian law is a fundamental element of the UK's foreign policy. The UK believes that justice and accountability for the most serious international crimes is crucial to building lasting peace and security.

The UK government believes that the International Criminal Court has an important role in pursuing accountability, but only when national authorities are either unable or unwilling to do so. The UK has long provided political, financial, and practical support to the ICC. We are one of the largest financial contributors to the Court, contributing £9.7m in 2018. An example of the UK's practical support was the sentence enforcement by the Scottish Prison Service of Mr Ahmad Al Faqi Al Mahdi, who was convicted of destroying cultural heritage sites in Timbuktu.

In 2018, the ICC considered situations from across Africa, the Middle East, Europe, South East Asia and South America, with eleven situations subject to formal

investigations, and proceedings continuing in three trials: the Ongwen Case (Uganda), the Ntaganda case (Democratic Republic of Congo), and the Gbagbo and Blé Goude case (Ivory Coast). Al Hassan (Mali), and Yekatom (Central African Republic) were surrendered to the ICC.

The ICC's Trust Fund for Victims plans to launch an assistance programme in the Central African Republic, to provide physical and physiological rehabilitation, alongside material support for victims and their families. The UK contributed funds to the TFV for reparations to victims in Mali.

While the UK continues to support the role of the ICC, reform is required for the ICC to fulfil its mandate as intended under the Rome Statute. The UK will work with other States Parties, the Court, and Civil Society, to achieve this goal.

The International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT) continued its mandate to fulfil the residual functions of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The IRMCT delivered an appeals judgment in the case of Radovan Karadžić, the former Bosnian Serb politician convicted in 2016 of genocide in Srebrenica. Karadžić's sentence, increased from 40 years to life, sends a clear message that those who commit atrocities will be held to account. The IRMCT continued to hear the retrial in the case of Stanišić and Simatović and issued a decision in the Šeselj contempt case.

The UK supported the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia and the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone through a total contribution of over £500,000. The UK has also been at the forefront of international efforts to gather and analyse evidence of atrocities committed in the Middle East. Since 2016, we have committed £950,000 to the UN International Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) to support the preparation of legal cases for serious crimes committed in the Syrian conflict. The UK also led efforts to adopt a UN Security Council resolution establishing an Investigative Team to collect, preserve and store evidence of Daesh atrocities in Iraq, and contributed £1m towards its operation. The first mass grave exhumation was in March 2019 in the Yazidi village of Sinjar.

In reaction to the Rohingya crisis in Burma, the UK worked closely with the EU and the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation to secure a UN Human Rights Council Resolution to establish a mechanism to collect and preserve evidence of human rights violations to support future prosecutions.

We will continue to update parliament on our support to international criminal justice through our Annual Human Rights Report.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Grenfell update**

Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (James Brokenshire): [\[HCWS1733\]](#)

Two years on from the Grenfell Tower tragedy, my priority is to ensure that everyone affected is receiving the support they need and deserve. The Independent Grenfell Recovery Taskforce continues to provide challenge and advice to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) in their response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy. I recently received their fourth report, which I am today depositing in the Library of the House and publishing in full at gov.uk, alongside my response.

The Taskforce have outlined the progress that the Council have made since their last report of November 2018. RBKC have published their Grenfell Recovery Strategy and committed £50 million over the next five years to develop services to support the recovery. The Recovery Strategy is also prioritised in the new Council Plan. The Taskforce report that the dedicated service for the bereaved and survivors is the successful result of the Council co-designing the service with its users. I welcome these significant steps forward.

On rehousing, the Taskforce have again offered reassurance to Ministers that the Council's approach is appropriate and sensitive to the long-term needs of survivors. I am pleased that there has been further progress since I received the Taskforce's report with two more families moving into permanent accommodation. However, as I said in my oral statement on 10 June I remain concerned that households are still in emergency accommodation, including one in a hotel.

The Taskforce have also welcomed the Council's demonstrable appetite to modernise their governance procedures. They cite their implementation of recommendations by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, including establishing a programme of Listening Forums. The Taskforce have also identified the beginning of a culture change initiated by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.

The Taskforce have highlighted developments in the Council's approach to community relationships and communications. RBKC have increased the number and means by which they engage with their residents including new meetings between the political leadership and some of those most affected by the tragedy. The Taskforce also report that they are seeing pockets of good practice pertaining to fostering good relationships with service users and the community.

Whilst the Taskforce have noted good progress in many areas they are also clear that the Council still faces significant challenges. The Taskforce have identified that the pace by which the recovery is being implemented is still too slow and that this needs to be addressed. The Taskforce have highlighted that strands of the Recovery Strategy remain in development, as well as the Community Programme and Economy Strategy. The Taskforce therefore remain concerned about the capacity and corporate capability of the Council to drive sustainable change. Although the rehousing programme is nearing

completion the Taskforce state that the Council still faces substantial wider housing challenges. Whilst there is a programme to support and develop all councillors, the Taskforce have noticed occasions where member behaviour has caused them concern. There is a high degree of social capital that the Council are yet to fully tap into and the Taskforce call for an innovative approach to harness this enthusiasm. The Taskforce have also highlighted that the culture change has still not permeated all levels of the Council and silo working remains an issue.

The Taskforce has set the bar high for RBKC's recovery. It is important there is ambition and pace in the Council's recovery efforts over the next three to four months in responding to the Taskforce's recommendations, including:

- Urgently implementing their recovery strategy;
- Fostering a council-wide culture change so that everyone is working together;
- Clearly communicating their recovery plan and develop stronger communications skills;
- Ensuring that the senior team has the appropriate skills and resilience;
- Making a clear commitment to creating a better relationship with its community.

I am assured the Council have already set in train action to meet these recommendations. This includes a paper outlining their plans to implement organisational change at the Council by 2020.

I will review the process in September, by which point I hope the Council will have made sufficient further progress. I look forward to continuing to work with the Taskforce.

JUSTICE

■ Consultation on Proposals for revising the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Edward Argar): [\[HCWS1730\]](#)

Today, I am launching the Government's Consultation on revising the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (the Code), which sets out our proposals for improving the Code.

This consultation is the first step in strengthening the Code, one of the overarching improvements to victims' experiences of the criminal justice system which we committed to in the cross-government Victims Strategy, published in September last year.

The vision we set out in the Victims Strategy is one of a justice system that supports even more victims to speak up by giving them the certainty that they will be understood, that they will be protected, and that they will be supported throughout their journey, regardless of their circumstances or background.

As part of delivering on that vision one of our key commitments was to amend the Code to address its complexity, accessibility and language and consult on a revised version. We also committed to update entitlements in the Code so they are better reflective of

victims' needs. This thematic consultation sets out our proposals for amending the Code and will inform our second consultation on a revised draft Code.

Some of the proposals included in the consultation are:

- Greater clarity around victims' rights, such as a right to be given information about the investigation and criminal proceedings and the right to make a Victim Personal Statement (VPS);
- A statement within the Code that victims who do not report the crime or withdraw from the criminal justice process are entitled to the same support as those who do report the crime;
- Creation of a short, user-friendly overview of the Code to summarise the key points that all victims need to know (and a separate one for children/young people);
- Creation of a guide for practitioners working in the criminal justice sector on how to apply the Code;
- Revising the current categories for victims entitled to an enhanced service to make it simpler, with a greater focus on identifying and meeting the needs of the victim.

However, amending the Code is only part of the picture. To strengthen the Code we also committed to:

- Introduce improved reporting, monitoring and transparency to strengthen compliance with the Code.
- Bring forward proposals for a consultation on the detail of the Victims' Law, including strengthening compliance with the Code and the powers of the Victims' Commissioner.

We are already working with Police and Crime Commissioners and Local Criminal Justice Partnerships to improve compliance with the Code through improved reporting, monitoring and transparency on whether victims are receiving entitlements. This goes hand in hand with amending the Code. On 1 April we issued the first iteration of a framework for compliance with the Code.

Once we have revised the Code we will then consult on the detail of victim focussed legislation. As part of that we want to strengthen the enforcement of the Code to make sure victims receive the services they are entitled to, and criminal justice agencies are held to account if they don't. We also want to explore increasing the Victims' Commissioner's powers to better hold government to account. However, to do that we first need to revise the Code to make sure that the entitlements victims receive are the right ones in the first place.

In developing the consultation, we have engaged extensively with victims and victims' groups and considered the views and recommendations made by key stakeholders

including the Victims' Commissioner and the London Victims' Commissioner. This has ensured the consultation is informed by those who have had direct experience of being a victim, as well as those with frontline expertise.

The consultation is available in full at: <https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/proposed-changes-to-the-victims-code>

TREASURY

■ Replacement of EU International Agreements with Third Countries

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Jesse Norman): [\[HCWS1731\]](#)

The Government is undertaking a programme of work to replace EU international agreements with bilateral agreements ready for a UK exit from the EU either in the event of no deal or at the end of the proposed implementation period. This is essential preparation for the UK's withdrawal from the EU to ensure that the UK can, where relevant and possible, maintain the benefits of these agreements, thereby providing continuity and stability to businesses and individuals.

As part of this programme, officials in HM Treasury and HM Revenue & Customs are working with their international partners to replace EU Customs Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance (CCMAA) agreements with UK-third country bilateral agreements. These agreements will provide a legal framework for the exchange of information between the UK and international partners on customs matters and continued cooperation between the Parties' customs authorities, both facilitating legitimate trade and supporting international efforts in fighting customs fraud. They also fulfil domestic legal requirements for Authorised Economic Operator Mutual Recognition Agreements (AEO MRAs), which deliver important trade benefits to some UK businesses.

In cases where the other Party's domestic law allows, the "replacement" UK-third country CCMAA agreements will include provision for them to enter into force upon signature (often referred to as "definitive signature"). The Parties would thus be bound by these agreements upon signature, although the agreements' provisions would not have effect until the EU CCMAA agreements cease to apply to the UK. Use of definitive signature in this case would enable the UK and its international partners, in the event of EU exit without a deal, to transfer without interruption key customs agreements that are currently in place by virtue of the UK's membership of the EU. This is because there will be no change in effect of the agreement due to it being a replication of the arrangement the EU currently has in place with the third country. While many international treaties are expressly subject to ratification, it is also common in both UK and international practice, where practicable, for treaties to enter into force upon signature. In UK law, where a treaty enters into force upon signature, it is not subject to the procedures for parliamentary scrutiny as provided in Section 20 of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010. However, as CCMAA agreements are straightforward bilateral agreements, and rely on provisions in the Taxation (Cross-Border Trade) Act 2018, which

has already been approved by Parliament, the Government considers that definitive signature is appropriate in these instances.

The Taxation (Cross-Border Trade) Act 2018 provides the necessary powers for the UK to create a standalone customs regime once the UK exits the EU. In particular, Section 26 of this Act allows for the UK to share information on customs matters with international partners and therefore provides the necessary legal basis from a UK perspective for the cooperation between Parties outlined in the CCMAA agreements.

Once signed by both Parties, a copy of each UK bilateral CCMAA agreement subject to definitive signature will be laid before Parliament as a Command Paper in the Treaty Series for information in the normal way.

Where third country partners' domestic law does not permit them to be bound by signature, thereby requiring ratification by them, the CCMAA agreement will not use definitive signature but will be drafted to provide for consent to be bound by a two-stage process of signature and ratification.